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# THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By SIR WALTER BESANT,

Author of 'All Sorts and Conditions of Men;' 'Children of Gibeon;' 'The Ivory Gate,' &c.

## PROLOGUE.

On a certain evening of July, in the year of grace 1804, old John Burnikel sat in his own chair—that with arms and a high back—in his own place—the summer place—outside the Long Room of the Red Lion Tavern. This old tavern, which, they say, was once visited by King Charles the First, when he hunted a deer across the Whitechapel meadows, and took a drink on the steps of this hostelry, still stands: it is built of wood, like most of the old houses on the River Wall. It had then, and has now, a tumble-down and rickety appearance; the upper windows project, and are either aslant or askew; the gables stand out high above the red-tiled roof which for two hundred years has threatened to sink in; there are buildings which project over the river, and have looked for two hundred years as if they were falling into it; the place has never got as much painting as it should have: the half-obliterated sign hangs creaking on rusty iron hinges; as it was in 1804, so it is now, tottering but never falling; ready to drop to pieces, but never actually dropping to pieces.

The red blinds in the window, seen from the river, looked inviting in summer; looked warm and comforting on a cold winter's eve. From many a ship making its slow way up the river there were wafted signs of satisfaction that Wapping and the Red Lion Tavern and old John Burnikel could be seen once more.

The Long Room is on the first floor, a room running through the whole depth of the house, with one great window on the north, and another opening from floor to ceiling on the south. From the window on the north side could (in 1804) be seen in spring a lovely view of the trees and hedges of Love-lane and the broad orchards all white and pink with blossoms of apple, pear, and plum, which stretch away to the ponds and fields of Whitechapel and to the tall buildings of the London Hospital.

The tavern, from that window, seemed to be some rural retreat far from the noisy town. In the winter, when the company gathered round the roaring fire, with shutters close, drawn blinds, and candles lit, there was no pleasanter place for the relaxation of the better sort, nor any place where one could look for older rum or neater brandy, not to speak of choice Hollands, which some prefer to rum. For summer enjoyment there was a balcony or terrace overhanging the river where the company might sit and enjoy the spectacle of the homeward-bound ships sailing up, and the outward-bound sailing down, and the loading and unloading with lighters and barges innumerable in midstream.

The tavern stood beside Execution Dock, and the company of drinkers might sometimes, if they pleased, witness a moving spectacle of justice done on the body of some poor sailor wretch — murderer — mutineer — or pirate — who was tied to a stake at low tide, and was then left to wait expecting Death, who dragged his cruel feet and lingered, while the tide slowly rose, and little by little washed over his chin and gently lapped over his lips, and so crept higher and higher till, with relentless advance,

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it flowed over his nostrils, and with eyes of agony and horror the dying man was dead. Then the tide rose higher still, and presently flowed over his head and left no sign of the dreadful thing below.

There had been no execution on this day. John Burnikel sat on the terrace, the time being eight in the evening, before a table on which was a bowl of punch, his nightly drink. With him, one on each side, sat his two grand-nephews, first cousins, partners in the firm of Burnikel & Burnikel, boat-builders, of Wapping High Street—Robert and George Burnikel. The rest of the company consisted of certain reputable tradesmen of Wapping and one or two sea-captains.

At this time John Burnikel was an extremely ancient person. His birth, in fact, as recorded in the register of St John's Chapel, Wapping, took place in the year 1710. It was not everybody who knew that date, but everybody knew that he had far surpassed the limits accorded to man. Nobody in the parish, for instance, could remember any time when John Burnikel was not visible, and walking about, an old man as it seemed in a time when, to this riverside people, greatly addicted as they were to rum, a man at fifty was accounted old. Nor could anybody remember the time when he was not to be found every evening in the Long Room of the Red Lion, or on the terrace overlooking the river.

Old or not, he walked erect and briskly; he looked no more than sixty; his features were not withered or shrunken, or sharpened; he had no look of decrepitude; he had preserved his teeth and his hair; the only sign of age was the network of wrinkles which time had thrown over his face. And when he walked home at night he brandished his trusty club with so much resolution, and in his old arm there was still so much strength, that, though the place was lawless, and robberies and assaults were common, and although he walked through the streets every night alone, at ten o'clock, nobody ever molested him. Such is the virtue of a thick stick, which is far better than sword or pistol, if a man hath a reputation for readiness in its handling.

The old man lived in one of the small houses of Broad Street, an old cottage with four rooms, with diamond panes in the window, and a descent of a foot or so from the street into the front room. The house at the back looked out upon the open expanse of orchards and market-gardens, with a distant prospect of Whitechapel Mount. He lived quite alone, and he 'did' for himself, scrubbing his floors, personally conducting the weekly wash, and cooking his own food. This was simple, consisting almost entirely of beefsteaks, onions, and bread, with beer by the gallon. When he had cooked and served and eaten his breakfast or dinner, and when he had cleaned up his frying-pan and his plates, the old man would sit down in his arm-chair and go to sleep, in winter by the fire, in summer outside, in his backyard. He had no books, and he wanted none; he had no friends except at the tavern, and was cheerful without them. At the tavern, however, whither John Burnikel repaired at nightfall, or about six o'clock every evening, he was friendly, hospitable, and full of talk, drinking, taking his tobacco, and conversing with the other frequenters of the house; and since he was generous, and often called for bowls of punch, grog around, and drams, so that many an honest fellow was enabled to go home drunk who would otherwise have gone home sober, he was allowed and even encouraged to talk and to tell his adventures over and over again as much as he pleased. To do him justice, he was always ready to take advantage of this license, and never tired of relating the perils he had encountered, the heroism he had displayed, and the romantic manner in which he had acquired his riches.

For the old man boasted continually of his great riches, and in moments of alcoholic uplifting he would declare that he could buy up the whole of the company present, and all Wapping to boot, if he chose, and be none the worse for it. These were vapourings; but a man who could afford to spend every day from five to ten shillings at the tavern—drinking the best and as much as he could hold of it, treating his friends, freely ordering bowls of punch—must needs possess means far beyond those of his companions. For Wapping, though there were in it substantial boat-builders, rope-makers, block-makers, sail-makers, instrument-makers, and others connected with the trade and shipping of the Port of London, was not in those days a rich quarter.

The wealthy London merchants, who had houses at Mile End, Hoxton, Bow, Ham, and even Ratcliffe, never chose Wapping for a country residence; and, indeed, the riverside folk from St Katherine's by the Tower as far as Shadwell were, as a whole, a rough, rude, and dishonest people, without knowledge, without morals, without principle, without religion. The mob, however, found not their way to the Long Room of the Red Lion Tavern.

He was always called John Burnikel. Not Captain Burnikel, as was the common style and title of ancient mariners; nor Mr Burnikel, as belonged to business men, but plain John Burnikel, without any title at all. And so he had been called, I say, during the whole length of time remembered by the oldest inhabitants, except himself, of Wapping; and this was nearly seventy years.

It was a romantic history that the old man had to tell. He was the son of a boat-builder—a Wappineer—that was well known and certain; the business was still conducted by those two grand-nephews. At an early age he had run away to sea; this was also perfectly credible, because all the lads of Wapping who possess any generous instincts always do run away to sea or become apprentices on board ship. No one doubted that John Burnikel was an old sailor. He said that he had risen to be mate on an East Indiaman; this may have been true, but the statement wanted confirmation. His manner and habits spoke perhaps of the foc'sle rather than the quarter-deck, but then there are quarter-decks where the manners are those of the foc'sle. However, in the year 1804 nobody cared whether this part of his history was true or not, and at the present moment, ninety years after, it is of still less importance.

On the visit of a stranger, or on any holiday or on any festive occasion, John Burnikel was wont to relate at great length and with many flourishes and continually new embroideries, the series of adventures which enabled him to return to England at an early age—not more than five-and-twenty—the possessor of a handsome fortune. It would take too long to relate this history entirely in the old man's words. Besides which history—told on which evening—should be selected? Suffice it to say that while it was in progress the company finished the bowl, ordered another, and sometimes finished that while the narrative proceeded. For listening without talking is thirsty work, and a thirsty man must drink or die. And since the punch was paid for by the old man, 'twould be the neglecting of chances and opportunities not to take as much of it as the rest of the company allowed.

The substance of the earlier part of the story was this. John Burnikel was on board the East Indiaman, the *Hooghly*, bound from the Port of London to Calcutta. She had a goodly company of passengers, and was laden with a miscellaneous cargo. They fell into a hurricane in the Indian Ocean; the ship was dismasted, and lost her rudder and her boats: she drifted helpless for many days, and at last struck on a rock. When, after dangers and difficulties of the most extraordinary kind, John Burnikel found himself on shore at last, he was alone, naked, destitute, and helpless on a hostile coast, the people of which, he declared, were notorious cannibals.

They did not, however, proceed to eat him; on the contrary, they clothed him, fed him, and presently took him up-country as a present, presumably, to the kitchen of their king, 'or, as in their jargon they call him, gentlemen, their Rajah.'

Here he would break off to reflect upon the situation. Every story-teller loves to take advantage of the reflections suggested by a situation. 'Gentlemen,' he would say, ''tis a melancholy thing to find yourself growing every day fatter and more ready for the spit; and even the honour of being reserved for the private larder of His Majesty could not make me cheerful. What, I ask you, is the idle honour of being served at the table of royalty when one thinks of what you must go through in order to get there? I used to compare, gentlemen, in my own mind, that portion of me which might be on the dish—a sirloin, or a brisket, or a saddle—with a leg or a loin of roast pork; and I would remember that, in order for us to get that toothsome loin, the animal must first be stuck. 'Twas, I confess, mortifying to reflect that sticking must be undergone.

'Gentlemen, with the utmost joy I discovered that this Prince was too great and too high-minded to be a cannibal. Children of tender years, indeed, as we take sucking-pig, he might welcome at his table; but not a sailor grown up and tough. He received me, on the other hand, with a gracious kindness which I cannot forget; he gave me an important office about his person—that of Hereditary Grand Mixer of the Royal Punch—a most responsible office, with a uniform of red silk and a turban stuck all over with diamonds. This, gentlemen, is the Court uniform of that country. Here we know not what uniform means for splendour.'

The story from this point varied from day to day. Let us select the version most in use. He rendered some signal service to His Majesty—the nature of which was differently told; in fact it was impossible to reconcile the various narratives. For he discovered a conspiracy, revealed the conspirators at their work, and saved the King and the Dynasty. Or he rescued the King's daughter from a fierce man-eating tiger; or he captured the kidnappers who were running off with that daughter; or he snatched the whole of the Harem from a consuming fire; or he healed them all of a dangerous sickness by administering tar-water. In fact, John Burnikel had a most lively imagination and used it freely. Choose, therefore, the kind of service which you think most worthy of a great reward.

'For this service, gentlemen, the Great Mogul showed the gratitude of a Christian. He sent for me, and when I fell upon my knees, which is the only way that His Majesty can be approached, he stepped down from his golden throne and bade me graciously to rise. Then he created me on the spot, a Duke, or a Lord Mayor—I forget which. This done, they gave me a splendid cloak to wear. And then—for the best was yet to come—the Emperor bade me prepare for something unexpected. Ah!' Here he drew a long breath. 'Unexpected indeed! With that he led me through the golden halls of his palace, crowded with dancing girls, till he came to a place where there was a heavy door. "Unlock it," says the King. So the door was opened and we went down a few steps till we came to an underground hall. If you'll believe me, gentlemen, that hall hadn't need of candles to light it up. It was full of light; it dazzled one's eyes only to stand there and look around; full of its own light, for it was full of precious stones, heaps of 'em; boxes of 'em, shelves of 'em, strings of 'em, there they were—diamonds, rubies, pearls, emeralds, opals—every kind of precious stone that grows anywhere in the world. Gentlemen, there was a sight. The diamonds came from the Emperor's own diamond ground—Golconda, they call it—where I've been. I will tell you some day about Golconda. The rubies were brought by the King's armies from Burma. I've been to Burma, and I'll tell you about the people there some day; cruel torturers they are. The pearls came from Ceylon, where they are got by diving. I've been a famous diver myself, and I'll tell you, if you ask me to-morrow, how I fought the shark under water; you don't know what a fight is like till you tackle a shark under water, with the conger and the cuttle and the cod fish looking on! As for the emeralds, I don't rightly know how they got there. I have heard of a mountain in South America which is just one great emerald, and at certain times the natives go with hammers and chop off little bits. I'll go out there next year to see it. However, gentlemen, there we were, the Great Mogul and me standing in the middle of these treasures. "Jack," says he, "you shan't say

that the King of India is ungrateful. For the service you have done me, I say—help yourself. Fill your pockets. Carry out all you can!" And I did. Gentlemen, it is seventy years ago and more, and still I could cry only to think that my pockets were not sacks. However, I did pretty well—pretty well; weigh me against any Lord Mayor of London you like, and you would say that I did very well. Better still, I brought these stones home with me. Best of all, I've got 'em still. When I want money I take one of my diamonds or a handful of pearls. Aha! You would like to know where I keep these jewels? Trust me; they are in safe keeping—all that's left of 'em—and that's plenty—in right, good safe keeping.'

Was not this a splendid, a romantic story to be told in Whitechapel by a simple old sailor? Nobody believed it, which mattered nothing so long as the punch lasted out. Yet the old man most certainly must have money, as he showed by his nightly expenditure alone, let alone the fact that for seventy years he had lived among them all at Wapping, and had done no single stroke of work. Among his hearers there sat every night these two grand-nephews of his; they were cousins, I have said, and partners in the boat-building business. They came, moved by natural affection—who would not love an uncle who might be telling the truth, or something like the truth, about these jewels? They also came to learn what the old man might reveal, which would be a clue to finding more; and they came out of jealousy, because each suspected the other of trying to supplant him in the favour of the uncle. They sat, therefore, and endured the company, which was not always of their own rank and station as respectable tradesmen; but still they got nothing for their trouble, because the old man told them no more than he told the rest of the world. Nor did he show the least sign of affection for either. Every evening when the cousins left the tavern, which was not until the old man had departed, one would say to the other, 'Cousin George, our uncle ages; he ages visible. I greatly fear that he is breaking.' And the other would reply, 'Cousin Robert, I greatly fear it too. Yet it is the way of all flesh.' These were times when every event was received in a spirit and with words proper to the occasion. 'We must resign ourselves to the impending blow.'

'Heaven grant'—the tribute to religion having been duly paid, they became natural again—'Heaven grant that we find the truth about these jewels. The story cannot be true.'

'Yet how has he lived for seventy years in idleness?'

'I know not; nor can I so much as surmise.'

'Consider, cousin. He lays out from eight shillings to ten or even twelve shillings every evening at the tavern. And there are his meals, and his rent besides. Say that he spends twelve shillings a day, or eighty-four shillings a week, which is two hundred and eighteen pounds eight shillings a year. In seventy years this makes the prodigious sum of fifteen thousand two hundred and eighty-eight pounds. Where did he get all that money? Cousin, he has either a secret hoard somewhere, or he has property—houses, perhaps, of which we know nothing.'

'When he dies, I suppose we shall learn. A man cannot have his property buried with him.'

Now, one night, as the company at the tavern parted at ten o'clock, instead of shouldering his club and marching off, the old sailor turned to his nephews. 'Boys,' he said—he had never called them 'boys' before—'I have something to say. I had better say it at once, because, look you, I think I am getting old, and in a few score years, more or less, it may be too late to say it. Come with me, then, to my poor house in Broad Street.'

The nephews, greatly astonished and marvelling much, followed him. They were going to be told something. What? The truth about the jewels? The nature of the property?

The old man led the way, brandishing his stick, stout and erect. He took them to his house, opened the door, closed it and barred it; got his tinder-box and obtained a light from a thick ship's tallow candle. Then he barred the window-shutter. His nephews looked round the room. It was the first time they had stood within those walls. There was a table and an arm-chair, a high arm-chair in which one could sit protected from the draughts by the fireside; there was a tobacco-box with two or three churchwarden pipes; there was a cupboard with plates; a kettle was on one side of the hob, and a pot on the other. There was no further furniture in the room. But the door and the window-shutters were thick and massive. And on the wall were hung a cutlass and a brace of pistols.

'Wait here a bit,' said the old man. He took the candle and carried it into the other room, leaving them in the dark. After a few minutes he returned bearing a small canvas sack.

## TO-DAY IN JOHANNESBURG.

The Transvaal and its wonderful cosmopolitan centre Johannesburg are just now of greater interest than ever. Emigration there from all enterprising civilised nations, especially of course from our own, is still on the increase. Let us see what the country with its capital is like—its people, life, commerce, and advantages for settlers. The question of its wretched political present and probable political future will, of course, be always before us till settled; for that a great future is in store for it, and that the present way in which it is governed can only last for a short time longer, is plain to any one who has the merest passing acquaintance with the country.

First to get there. The railway journey from Capetown to Johannesburg of about three days is through a seemingly endless, sandy country, with range succeeding range of distant mountains, all alike, and strikes a greater sense of vastness and desolation than an expanse of naked ocean itself. First and second class have sleeping accommodation, the third being kept for

blacks and the lowest class Dutch. Well, we reach Johannesburg, which has not even yet, with all its wealth, a covered-in railway station; whilst by way of contrast in the progress of the place, just across the road is a huge club, with tennis, cricket, football, and cycling grounds, gymnasium, military band, halls for dancing, operas, and oratorios, &c., which will bear comparison with any you please. Its members are millionaires and clerks, lodgers and their lodging-house keepers, all equal there; for we have left behind caste, cliques, and cathedral cities, and are cosmopolitan, or, in a word, colonial. An institution like this gives us the state of society there in a nut-shell, for, as wages are very high, any one in anything like lucrative employment can belong to it; and the grades in society are determined by money, and money only.

Johannesburg, the London of South Africa, which was nine years ago barren veldt, eight years ago a miners' camp, is now the centre of some one hundred thousand inhabitants, and increasing about as fast as bricks and mortar can be obtained. It is situated directly on top of the gold, and on looking down from the high ground above, it looks to an English eye like a huge, long-drawn-out mass of tin sheds, with its painted iron mine-chimneys running in a straight line all along the quartz gold-reef as far as you can see in either direction. The largest or main reef runs for thirty miles uninterruptedly, gold-bearing and honeycombed with mines throughout. This, even were it alone, could speak for the stability and continued prosperity of the Transvaal gold-trade. On a mail-steamer arriving only a few days ago from the Cape was said to be between £300,000 and £400,000 worth of gold, and the newspapers show that usually about £100,000 worth is consigned by each mail-boat.

As we enter the town we find fine and well-planned streets, crossed at places with deep gutters—gullies rather—to carry off the water, which is often in the heavy summer rains deeper than your knees. Crossing these at fast trot, the driver never drawing rein, the novice is shot about, in his white-covered two-wheeled cab with its large springs, like a pea in a bladder. Indeed, one marvels at the daintily dressed *habitué* of the place being swung through similarly, quite unconcerned, and without rumpling a frill. We pass fine public buildings, very high houses and shops—somewhat jerry-built, it is true, and goodness help them in the event of a large street-fire—but now being added to, or replaced by larger and more solid buildings. Indeed, bricks cannot be made fast enough for the demand, both there and in some of the outlying Transvaal towns where the 'gold boom' is on. There are lofty and handsome shops, with most costly contents, which can vie with London or Paris.

Let us watch from the high-raised stoep outside the Post-office, looking down over the huge market-square. What strikes us first are the two-wheeled two-horsed cabs with white hoods, recklessly driven by Malays in the inseparable red fez, and these with the fast-trotting mule or horse wagons show the pace at which business or pleasure is followed. As a contrast comes the lumbering ox-wagon with ten or twelve span of oxen, a little Kaffir boy dragging and directing the leading couple by a thong round the horns, and the unamiable Dutch farmer revolving around, swearing, and using his fifteen-foot whip to keep the concern in motion at all. Then passes a body of some two hundred prisoners, Kaffirs, and a few whites leading, marched in fours by some dozen white-helmeted police and four or five mounted men, all paraded through the main streets, innocent and guilty alike, to the court-house, and many escaping *en route* as occasion offers. Well-dressed English men of business, and professional men, women in handsome and dainty costumes, hustle Jews of all degrees of wealth; carelessly dressed miners, and chaps in rags come in from prospecting or up-country, with the Dutchman everywhere in his greasy soft felt and blue tattered puggaree, Chinese shopkeepers, Italians, Poles, Germans; whilst outside in the roadways flows a continuous stream of Kaffirs in hats and cast-off clothing of every sort imagination can picture, who are not allowed by law to walk upon the pavement.

Long before daylight the square is full of ox-wagons, some from distances occupying days to traverse; and the buyers of forage, oats, corn, mealie-meal, firewood, poultry, eggs, &c., are busy as soon as they can see. Here the middle-man makes a good profit, often riding far out on the roads to get at the illiterate Dutch farmer before the latter reaches the market. Here is an amusing instance of a bargain recently overheard on the square. An English trader purchased a wagon-load of stuff from a Boer, and by means of a few figures and calculations easily tossed off, and with many flourishes, makes out that the amount he has to pay the Dutchman is about half of what it ought to be, if correctly reckoned up at the price agreed. 'Oom Paul' cannot reckon much, but has a Ready Reckoner, and points to and wants the larger amount. 'What's that?' says the other. 'Let's look at it.' Then, 'Why, that's *last year's* Ready Reckoner! Look here, man, it's marked 1894. It's no good now.' 'Allamachta!' says the Boer, 'I did not notice that;' and plods off home, wagon and all, content with the lesser sum.

No expense is spared in high living. A special fruit-train is run daily from Natal, and fish is brought enormous distances. All South African fish, however, are either tasteless, or of a milk-and-water or insipid flavour. The vegetable market opens each morning at dawn; at eight the lots are all sold by auction, and Malays pile up their carts and pannier-baskets to sell their stuff from house to house before the mid-day heat. In England meat is dear, and bread and vegetables cheap; in the Transvaal bread and vegetables are dear (a small roll, not large enough to be dignified with the name of loaf, costing sixpence), and meat is cheap. Now let us see what advantages the country has to offer to intending emigrants. To young fellows going out with a few hundreds to try their

luck, the old Australian's advice, I think, holds good for Africa—namely, to put your money into safety for a year, and not go into business or speculating until you know your country.

Johannesburg business morality is certainly not London business morality; and leading business men at the former place will tell you themselves that honesty is not expected there. For those who go to earn their livelihood, or to make money, I would say, do not go out without a fixed trade or handicraft, or money to start upon, or a good introduction to some friend already there. But remember that the Transvaal is a veritable Paradise for the working-man who knows his business. All the heavy part of the labour is put out: the Kaffirs do it, directed by him in a few Kaffir words, and generally many English expletives. Wages are paid monthly. Miners make their twenty-five or thirty pounds a month, if first-rate, and the blacks drill their holes for blasting where and as they order them. Carpenters, blacksmiths, masons can get about the same; and whenever a billet is lost or cannot be obtained, a short tramp along the mines generally brings success. Vacancies are constantly occurring, for miners, especially when full of money, are inclined to 'go on the burst,' and their places are ruthlessly filled up (on Monday mornings is the best time to apply) by new-comers, in order to keep the work going at fever-heat, and the output up to the mark. When in cash, these miners often spend six or eight pounds at a sitting, and twenty or thirty pounds in a day or two. A freemasonry exists amongst them, and when one gets into trouble with the authorities, half a dozen turn up to bail him out, or to pay the iniquitously heavy fine imposed by the cunning Dutch officials, who know they will be paid, as the alternative time is too valuable to the delinquent. The miners, except when close to Johannesburg or a town, live in white men's quarters built of wood and corrugated iron; and the mines succeed one another some few miles apart along the open veldt or plain, without a tree to break its barrenness, so the surroundings are grim and uninviting enough. Many miners have horses, many bicycles, the latter just the thing for the long, dry, sandy roads. They feed at a common boarding-house for five or six pounds a month, and sleep two, often four or more, in a small room. No class ever cared less for personal comforts. They pay highly, as money comes in so easily, and without grumbling. Their relaxation, as is natural in places so monotonous and unlovely, is dissipation, and so a steady man can save a small fortune in an incredibly short space of time. Most of those inclined to save have their banking accounts, and very large sums of money are sent monthly to wives and families at home.

Ten shillings for shoeing a horse should tempt a blacksmith. Go out, by all means, any one who has a trade and good health, and you have what is, in serious language, the best chance in the world of making money there. The utterly free life of South Africa has such a charm also, that, as all the colonists tell you, if once you put on the veldt schoons (untanned leather shoes) and drink 'Cape Smoke' (local attempt at brandy), you will never leave the country; and it has a fascination which is believed invariably to attract back to it all who have been there.

## AFTER THE FACT.*

By E. W. Hornung.

### CHAPTER I.

It is my good fortune to cherish a remarkably vivid recollection of the town of Geelong. Others may have found the place quiet or even colourless enough to justify an echo of the cheap local sneer at its expense; to me, those sloping parallels of low houses have still a common terminus in the bluest of all Australian waters; and I people the streets, whose very names I have forgotten, with faces of extraordinary kindness, imperishable while memory holds her seat. So it is probable I should think no less affectionately of Geelong, even had I voted it in my time the dull town that I have heard it styled; but dull it certainly was not during the first few days of my visit, whatever may have been the case before or since. The period was, in fact, an epoch; and I may say at once that the epoch was none of my making. My connection with the singular events of that week was a pure accident, the result of one of those chance meetings which are the veriest commonplace of outlandish travel. It was a Monday afternoon when I arrived by the boat, to find the streets crowded and the populace greatly excited by a sudden run on one of the banks. On the Wednesday, another bank, which had notoriously received much of the money withdrawn from the Barwon Banking Company, Limited, was in its turn the victim of a still uglier fate: the Geelong branch of the Inter-colonial was entered in broad daylight by a man masked and armed to the beard, who stayed some ten minutes, and then walked into thin air with no less a sum than nineteen thousand and odd pounds in notes and gold.

I was playing lawn-tennis with my then new friends when we heard the news; and it stopped our game. The bank manager's wife, a friend of my friends, arrived herself upon the scene, incoherent with horror, and accompanied by her daughter. And I heard at first-hand a few broken, hysterical words from the white lips of an elderly lady, and noted the tearless trouble in the wide blue eyes of the girl, before it struck me to retire. The family had been at luncheon in the private part of the bank, and knew nothing of the affair until the junior clerk broke in upon them like a lunatic at large. He, too, had gone out for his lunch, and returned to find teller and cashier alike insensible, and the safe rifled. That was all I stayed to gather, save that the unhappy lady was agitated by a side issue far worse to her than the bank's loss. There had been no bloodshed. The revolver kept beneath the counter had been used, but used in vain. It was not loaded. Her husband would be blamed,

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nay, discharged to a certainty in his old age. And I, too, walked down the street with the picture of an elderly couple brought to ruin, and a blue-eyed girl gone for a governess, appealing more to me than the immediately dramatic side of the incident.

I found my way to the Inter-colonial Bank; there was no need to ask it. A crowd clamoured at the doors, but these were shut for the day. And I learned no more than I already knew, save that the robber wore a black beard, and was declared by some to be a second Ned Kelly from the Strathbogie Ranges. Nor did I acquire more real information the rest of that day; nor hope for any when late at night I thought I recognised an old schoolfellow in the street.

'Deedes *major!*' I cried, without pausing to make certain; but I was certain enough when my man turned and favoured me with the stare of studied insolence which had made our house-master's life a burden to him some ten years before that night. Among a thousand, although the dark eyes were sunken and devil-may-care, the full lips hidden by a moustache with gray hairs in it, and the pale face prematurely lined, I could have sworn to Deedes *major* then.

'Don't know you from Adam,' said he. 'What do you want?'

'We were at school together,' said I. 'I was your fag when you were in the eleven; I oiled your bat when you made your century against the Free Foresters; I'm proud to meet you again!'

'Do tell me your name,' he said wearily; and at that moment I recollected (what had quite escaped my memory) his ultimate expulsion; and I stood confounded by my maladroitness.

'Bower,' said I, abashed.

'The Beetle!' cried Deedes, not unkindly; a moment later he was shaking my hand and smiling on my confusion. 'Hang school!' said he. 'Where are you staying?'

'Well,' said I, 'I'm supposed to be staying with some people I brought a letter of introduction to; but they hadn't a room for me, and insisted on getting me one outside; so that's where I am.'

'What's their name?' said Deedes; and, when I told him, he nodded, but made no further comment, beyond asking whether I would take him round to my room for a chat. The proposal delighted me; indeed it caused me a positive thrill, which I can only attribute to an insensible return of the small boy's proper attitude towards a distinguished senior. We were twenty-eight and twenty-four now, instead of eighteen and fourteen; but, as we walked, only one of us was a man, and I was once more his fag. I was proud when he accepted a cigarette from my case, prouder yet when he took my arm. The feeling stuck to me until we reached my room, when it suddenly collapsed. He had asked me what I was doing. I had told him of my illness and my voyage, and had countered with his own question. He laughed contemptuously, sitting on the edge of my bed.

'Clerk in a bank!' said he.

'Not the Inter-colonial?' I cried.

'That's it,' he answered, nodding.

'Then you were there to-day. This *is* luck; I've been so awfully keen to know exactly what happened!'

'I was not there,' replied Deedes. 'I was having my lunch. I can only tell you what I saw when I got back. There was our cashier sprawled across the counter, and the teller in a heap behind it—both knocked on the head. And there was the empty safe, wide open, with the sun shining into it like a bull's-eye lantern! No; I only wish I *had* been there: it's such a chance as I shall never get again.'

'You'd have shown fight?' said I, gazing at his long athletic limbs, and appreciating the force of his wish as I perceived in what threadbare rags they were imprisoned. 'Yes, you'd have stood up to the chap, I know; I can see you doing it!'

'There would have been nothing wonderful in that,' was the odd reply. 'I should have had everything to gain and nothing to lose.'

'Not your life?'

'That's less than nothing.'

'Nonsense, Deedes,' said I, although or because I could see that it was not. 'You don't mean a word of it!'

'I do—every word; but that's neither here nor there,' he answered. 'Give me another cigarette, Beetle; you were asking about the robbery, and, if you don't mind, we'll confine ourselves to that. I'm afraid old I'Anson will get the sack; he's the manager, and responsible for the bank revolver being loaded. He swears it was; we all thought it was; but nobody had looked at it for weeks, and you see it wasn't. Yes, that's a rule in all banks in this country, where sticking them up is a public industry. The yarn about Ned Kelly's son? Well, there may be something in it. I've heard there is such a fellow, and a chip of the old block, too. But, if you ask me, we must look a little nearer home for the man who stuck up our bank this afternoon.'

'Nearer home!' said I. 'Then you think it was somebody who knew about the run upon the Barwon Banking Company, and the payments into the Inter-colonial?'

'Obviously; somebody who knew all about it, and perhaps paid in a big lump himself. That would be a gorgeous blind!' cried Deedes, greatly taken with his idea. 'Beetle, old chap, I wish I'd thought of it myself—only it would have meant boning the capital to begin with! I strongly suspect some of these respectable Geelongese and Barwonners of being at the bottom of the whole thing, though; they're *so* respectable, Beetle, there's bound to be villains among 'em! By Jove!' he added, getting to his feet with a sinister light in his handsome, dissipated countenance, 'I'll go for the reward when they put it up! Four figures it can't fall short of; that would be better than junior clerking for eighty pounds a year!' And he walked up and down my room laughing softly to himself.

'I'll join you,' cried I. 'I'll go in for love, or honour and glory, and you shall pocket the £ s. d.'

'That be hanged!' said he, stopping in front

of me with a very penetrating scrutiny. 'But look here, Beetle, you used to be a well-plucked little 'un at school; will you join me in something else?'

'In what?' said I.

'In villainy,' he cried. 'In rank, unadulterated, wholesale villainy!'

'Deedes,' said I, smiling, 'what the dickens do you mean?'

'Mean? What I say, my dear Beetle—every word of it! What's the use of being honest? Look at me. Look at my shirt-cuffs, that I've got to trim every morning like my nails; look at my trousers, as I saw you looking at 'em just now. Those bags at the knees are honesty; and honesty's rapidly wearing them through on an office stool. I'm as poor as a rat; *that's* honesty, and I've had enough of it. Think of the fellow who walked off with that twenty thou. this morning, and then think of me. Wouldn't you like to be in his shoes? No? My stars, you don't know what it is to live, Beetle; honest idiots like us never do. But I'm going to turn it up. I've had enough of this. If one can play at that game, two can; why not three? Come on, Beetle; make a third, and we'll rob another bank to-morrow!'

'You're joking,' said I, returning his smile. 'Still, if I *was* going in for that sort of thing, Deedes, I don't know who I'd rather have on my side than you!'

He was grave and eager in an instant.

'Will you go in for it?' he cried. 'I'm joking far less than you think. My life's a sordid failure. I'm sick of it, and ready for a fling. Will you come in?'

'No,' said I, 'I wont.'

And we looked each other steadily in the eyes, until he led me back to laughter with as much ease as he had lengthened my face a moment before.

'All right, old Beetle,' said he. 'I won't chaff any more—not that it was all chaff by any means. I sometimes feel like that, and so would you in my place. Bunked from school! In disgrace at home! Sent out here to be got rid of—thrown away like a broken cup! The things I've done for a living during these ten years—this is the most respectable, I can tell you that. And it's the respectability drives me mad!'

His bitter voice, the lines upon his face, his gray hairs at twenty-eight (they were not confined to his moustache), all appealed to me with equal and irresistible force; my hand went out to him, and with it my heart.

'I am so sorry, Deedes,' said I nervously. 'If a fiver or two—yes, you must let me! For the sake of the old school!'

He shook his head, and the blood rushed to mine. I offered him a handsome apology, but he cut me short.

'That's all right, Beetle. It was well meant, and you're a good chap. We'll foregather to-morrow, if this wretched business leaves us a spare moment in the bank; meanwhile, good-night—and thanks!'

And he crept down the stairs at my request; for I was not in the position of an ordinary lodger; and having followed and closed the door noiselessly behind him, I returned as stealthily to my room. I did not wish my hospitable friends to know that I had used lodgings, placed at my disposal as their guest, as though I had engaged them on my own account. After all, I was a guest, not a lodger; yet I had behaved as the latter, introducing a man at midnight, and sitting up in conversation with him until two o'clock in the morning. Deedes, moreover, as I suspected from his manner when I mentioned them, was most probably no friend of my friends; indeed, I had no clue to his reputation in the town, and should have been surprised to find it a good one. He had been a reckless boy at school; at the very least he was a reckless man. Other traits in him, too, must have developed with his years; he had been expelled, for instance, for certain gallantries, not criminal in themselves, but sufficiently demoralising at a public school; and, despite his clothes, I could have sworn those dark, uscrupulous eyes, and that sardonic, insolent, and yet attractive manner, had done due damage in Geelong.

For there was a fascination in the man, incommunicable on paper, and my despair as I write. He was a strong, selfish character, one with whom the will and the way were synonymous terms; yet there was that in him for which it is harder to find a name, which attracted while it repelled, which enforced admiration in its own despite, and strangled criticism at its birth. At school he had been immensely popular and a bad influence: at once a bugbear and an idol from the respective points of view of masters and boys. My own view was still that of the boy. I could not help it; nor could I sleep for thinking of our singular rencontre and interview. I undressed, but shirked my pillow. I smoked my pipe, but it did me no good. Finally, I threw up my window, and as I did so, heard a sound that interested, and another that thrilled me. The first was a whistle blowing in the distance; the second, an answering whistle, which made me jump, for it came from beneath the very window at which I stood.

I leaned out. A white helmet and a pair of white legs flashed under a lamp and were gone. My window was no impossible height from the ground, but I did not stay to measure it. With the whistles still in my ears I lowered myself from the sill, dropped into a flower-bed, and gave chase to the helmet and the legs, myself barefooted and in pyjamas.

I saw my policeman vanish round a corner. I was after him like a deer, and even as I ran the position amused me. Chasing the police! He could not hear my naked feet; I gained on him splendidly, and had my hand on his shoulder before he knew me to exist. His face, as he stopped and turned it, feeling for his pistol, I shall remember all my life.

'All right,' I cried. 'I'm not the man you're after. Hurry up! I'm coming along to see the fun.'

He swore in my teeth and rushed on. I stuck to him like a leech; he tried with vague threats to shake me off, but it was not to be done. All this time the first whistle was blowing through the night; we had reached the outskirts of the town, and were nearing the

sound; when suddenly, on turning a corner, we came upon another drill-trousered, pith-helmeted gentleman in the gateway of an empty house.

'That's about enough of us,' said he, pocketing his whistle. 'I've got a man already on the lawn at the back. The house is empty, and he's in it like a rat in a trap. But who's this you've brought along with you, mate?'

'A volunteer,' said I. 'Come, you won't refuse to let me lend a hand if I get the chance? Who is it you're after?'

'You'll get your brains blown out,' replied the constable who had given the alarm, and on whose sleeves I saw a sergeant's stripes. 'You'd best go home, though I won't say but what we want all the men we can get. The town's asleep—as usual. Can you face powder?'

'I'll see,' said I, laughing, for I scarcely suspected he was in earnest. 'Who is it you are after? Somebody very dangerous?'

'The Inter-colonial bank-robber,' replied the sergeant grimly. 'What do you say now?'

I said nothing at all. I know not what I had expected; but it was not this; and for the moment my own density concerned me as much as my fears.

'Oh, that's all right,' said the sergeant, with an intolerable sneer. 'You cut away and send along a grown man when you see one!'

My reply need not be recorded; suffice it that a moment later one of the men, who both carried firearms, had handed me his truncheon; and I was on my way to join the third constable on the lawn behind the house, while those two effected an entrance in front.

## LEFT-HANDEDNESS.

By R. A. Lundie, M.D.

The very name of *left-handed* carries with it a suggestion of disparagement—may one not say, almost of contempt? And it is so not in our own speech only, but in tongues in all quarters of the world, among peoples of all degrees of civilisation and savagery. It is no mere accident of our own language that the same word serves both as the opposite of *left* and as the opposite of *wrong*. A similar association of the left hand with inferiority, not merely physical awkwardness, but ill-luck, stupidity, and even moral delinquency, is found in many languages. Two of those from which ours has formed its vocabulary have supplied us in this way with uncomplimentary epithets which have in our common use of them quite lost their original meaning; we use the French *gauche* to describe ungainly actions or clumsy speeches, but without the strong insinuation of moral obliquity which we have attached to the Latin *sinister*.

Among a generally right-handed race, it is not difficult to see the reason of this. Any one who has watched a cricket-match in which a left-handed batsman was taking part, knows what trouble he causes to his opponents; how the fielders have to change either their positions or their functions every time he faces the bowler; and how odd he appears at the wrong, that is, the unusual, side of the wicket. Nay, just look at the reflection in a mirror (which of course makes right appear left and left right) of a right-handed person using pen, needle, or knife, or doing any action habitually performed by the right hand. How peculiar it appears! Can we not sympathise with the popular view, crystallised in language, which takes the left hand as the type of awkwardness, perversity, even of insincerity and bad faith? Let a right-handed person be obliged by an accident to use his left hand for a time for all purposes, and he will be inclined the more to think that the left hand is well called sinister, so slow and helpless will he find it in doing his bidding, so unreliable and deceptive. Yet it is but a superficial view, very unjust, even in the purely physical aspect, to those who are really left-handed.

In all communities left-handed individuals seem to occur, in somewhat varying proportions. Among ourselves, about one in fifty is said to be left-handed. There is no doubt, from frequent experience, that the peculiarity is hereditary; so that we could not be much surprised if a race were met with in which left-handedness was the rule and not the exception. Yet the reversal of so general a law as that of prevalent right-handedness would need to be established by very conclusive evidence; and, though statements have been made as to a preponderance of left-handed individuals in various parts of the world, none of them are supported by such careful and prolonged observation of facts as would be necessary for their unhesitating acceptance.

One of the prevailing ideas about right-handedness is that it is merely a matter of training, and that left-handed individuals have become so either from want of care on the part of nurses and parents, or from imitation of some older person. In many children, the preference for one hand is shown from a very early age, before the child has learned to handle anything but the very simplest toys, and therefore before training can have caused a preference at all. More than this, the experience of left-handed persons is on record in whom the peculiarity has been early noticed and combated, but without the slightest effect. In the case of one child, both whose parents were left-handed, we are told: 'His mother, accordingly, watched his early manifestations of the same tendency, and employed every available means to counteract it. His left hand was bound up or tied behind him; and this was persevered in until it was feared that the left arm had been permanently injured. Yet all proved vain. The boy resumed the use of the left hand as soon as the restraint was removed.'

It must not be supposed that all persons, whether right or left handed, have so strong

an instinctive preference for one hand as this. There are many degrees and shades of right and left handedness in adult life. A large number of persons seem to have had no strong natural bias either way, and accordingly fall in with the prevailing usage in all, or nearly all respects, and these seem to become right-handed by training and imitation. In some of them, a trace remains of their original indifference in the shape of a preference for the left hand in some actions: it is not uncommon to meet with people right-handed in all other respects, who yet use two-handed implements, such as an axe or a cricket-bat, with the left-hand next the 'business end,' after the manner usual with the left-handed. There is no doubt that among those who have a strong instinctive preference for one hand, the right-handed are in a large majority. The proportion they bear to those right-handed by training only is, and will probably remain, quite uncertain.

The lower limbs are much less closely controlled by the will than the upper; in walking and running, which are by far their most frequent and important uses, their movements are to a very large extent instinctive and automatic, and are, moreover, much more symmetrical than the movements of the upper limbs. Nevertheless, one foot is generally used in preference to the other in such movements as digging (hence sometimes called the *spade foot*), in hopping, in making a leap, &c. But there is a much less uniform preference for one side than in the case of the hand; and it by no means follows that a man is either right or left footed because he is right-handed.

Where there is a choice of two directions of growth or movement in plants or animals, without apparent advantage either way, a preference is almost always shown for one over the other, with occasional exceptions which prove that the rule is not a necessary one. Even among the heavenly bodies, the movements of the planets and their moons follow a similar law; all go in the same direction as the earth and its moon except the moons of Uranus, which revolve round their primary the opposite way. Each species of spiral shell and twining plant has its own favourite direction of making its turns, though there are in each occasional exceptions. It seems but another instance of a similar law that man should use one hand rather than the other as the chosen instrument of his will. Why that hand should be the right is a question that has been much discussed, and on which many different theories have been advanced.

It is well known that, though our external configuration is so nearly symmetrical, the arrangement of the internal organs is very different. The heart lies obliquely in the chest, and more to the left side than the right; the liver, by far the heaviest of the internal organs, is on the right side; the two lungs are differently shaped; and, moreover, the blood-vessels supplying the two sides, especially in the upper regions of the body, are differently disposed. It is natural that these irregularities of arrangement should have been thought, in some way or other, to supply the explanation.

Much ingenuity has been expended in forming theories which connect the use of the right hand with the disposition of the viscera, and the consequent situation of the centre of gravity a little to the right of the centre of the body. But there is a very simple method of putting not merely the theories, but the fact to the proof. Individuals are occasionally met with in whom there is *transposition* of the viscera—that is, in whom the heart inclines to the right side, and the liver lies on the left; in fact, the internal organs are placed as they would be in the reflection of an ordinary person in a mirror. If the unsymmetrical disposition of the internal organs is the cause of right-handedness in most people, all such individuals ought to be left-handed. Occasionally they have been found to be so; but by no means generally: the co-existence of the conditions seems to be merely a coincidence.

Similarly with regard to the arrangement of the blood-vessels supplying the brain and the upper limbs, it is not found that reversal of the usual arrangement is associated with left-handedness, as must be the case were the unsymmetrical arrangement the cause of right-handedness.

There is, however, one extremely curious and interesting instance of want of symmetry in the bodily functions, which is not merely analogous to right-handedness, but closely linked with it. The nervous machinery normally connected with speech is situated *on one side of the brain only*. So intimate is the relation of this subject to right-handedness that we must consider it in some detail.

It is well known that each side of the brain is connected with the movements and sensations mainly on the opposite side of the body; the *right* brain moves the *left* arm and leg, and *vice versâ*. Now, cases are not infrequent in which, with or without 'a shock,' or at least some degree of obvious loss of muscular power on the right side of the body, the faculty of recalling and reproducing spoken words is totally or almost totally lost. Such loss of speech is technically called *aphasia*. It was first shown some thirty-five years ago, by a French physician, that this particular symptom is associated with damage to a limited and very definite part of the brain-substance *on the left side*, which has since been known, in honour of its discoverer, as *Broca's convolution*. When the power of speech has thus been lost, it is possible, if the mental faculties are not otherwise damaged, to acquire it again, by just such a course of training and practice as the child passes through in learning to speak at first, even where Broca's convolution has been so damaged as to be quite incapable of performing its functions. In such a case, the portion of the brain on the right side corresponding to Broca's convolution is capable of taking up its work; but only by being educated to do so, just as the damaged portion of the brain had been originally. If after this the power of speech is lost again, by damage to the right

side similar to that which had impaired the left, there is no hope of its being restored a second time.

It is thus clear that there are two organs or portions of the brain capable of controlling speech; and that under ordinary circumstances only one of them is trained to do so, the other lying fallow. All the education is given to one favoured side, and all the work is done by it; but the neglected one, if called by necessity to undertake the work, can be trained to do it, and to do it, apparently, as satisfactorily as the other.

There are other parts of the brain, or *centres*, similarly devoted to other functions connected with language; one related to the interpretation of spoken words, which might be called a word-hearing centre; one to the interpretation of the written symbols which represent words, or reading-centre; and one to the production of these written symbols, or writing centre. The functions of all these centres are very closely connected and interdependent; and cases are not common in which any one of them is affected alone. Even Broca's convolution is but rarely damaged without injury to other parts; the other speech-centres still more rarely. Yet there is sufficient evidence to show that they exist, each in a definite position in the brain, and that all are situated on the same side of the brain in each individual.

Here, then, is a singularly complete analogy to the preferential use of the right hand: there are two sets of organs, either of which may be used for speech, one on each side of the brain, but only those upon one side are trained; only they have the education carried out which makes them effective. Yet if the educated centres are so damaged as to lose their functions, the others can be trained to take their place. So we have two hands, either of which may be trained for the performance of delicate movements; yet in most of us only one of them has been so trained; the other remains comparatively awkward and inactive, unless accident compels it to try to take the place of the educated hand.

A striking analogy; but it is more than an analogy. We have said that the active speech-centre is that on the left side; and this is the case in the great majority of individuals. But occasionally it is found that the right, and not the left side of the brain has been educated as regards speech. When this is the case, it is always found that the individual has been *left-handed*. Whatever then is the cause of right-handedness, it is closely associated with left-brainedness, if we may use the expression, not only for the comparatively coarse movements of the hand, but for the fine adjustments of windpipe, tongue, lips, &c., which produce articulate speech, and the far finer machinery within the brain itself which registers our stores of words.

If then, as we have tried to show, right-handedness is in many cases not merely the result of training; is not caused by the unsymmetrical arrangement of the organs or blood-vessels in the trunk; but is closely associated with the assumption of important functions by that side of the brain connected with the right hand, it seems reasonable to believe that the preference for the right hand is due to a superiority of the left half of the brain over the right. Several observers state that, on careful weighing of the two halves of the brain, the left is found in a considerable majority of cases a little heavier than the right. This might, of course, be an effect rather than a cause of the greater use of the left brain; and some who have investigated the point have not found such a general excess of weight on the left side. It has also been asserted by some authorities and denied by others that the left brain develops a little earlier than the right in the majority of cases. Meantime, these points must be regarded as not definitely settled. But there seems sufficient reason to seek for the cause of the preference of one hand rather in the part of the brain which regulates its movements than in the hand itself, or any other of the organs of the body.

In persons who grow up left-handed, we have seen that there is good reason to believe that the left-handedness, and therefore the right-brainedness, is antecedent to any training. It is no doubt the same with the left-brainedness of strongly right-handed people. There are many besides these who have no strong natural bias either way; how is it that they become left-brained? That they are so as regards speech in adult life there is no reason to doubt. As has been stated, it is only in those who have been decidedly left-handed that right-brain damage leads to loss of speech. The only reasonable explanation of the facts seems to be that those who have no strong tendency to prevalence of either side become left-brained because they are trained to become right-handed. If this is the case, the preference for the right hand has an unexpected and far-reaching influence upon the training of the brain-centres.

It would be interesting in this connection to know at what precise age the preference for one hand asserts itself. But few accurate observations seem to have been made upon this point. In one case, however, it is recorded that a distinct preference for the right hand became noticeable as early as the seventh month: a long time, as time must be reckoned in an infant's life, before the development of intelligent speech. So far as this goes, it confirms the view expressed above.

Very many of those who are strongly left-handed have found their peculiarity a very decided advantage to them in life. Of course they are at a disadvantage in trying to use implements which are constructed for right-handed use, such, for instance, as scythes and golf-clubs, and require to have special ones made for their own use to allow them to compete on equal terms with the majority. But by learning to write, and to perform other delicate movements with the right hand, they acquire, without impairing the natural aptitude of the left, much more dexterity with the right than the right-handed ever attain to with their left hand, and thus in many cases reach a degree of ambidexterity which renders them, instead of 'gauche,' peculiarly clever and skilful in their manipulations. It is among those

originally left-handed that men would be found like David's companions, who 'could use both the right hand and the left in slinging stones and in shooting arrows from the bow.'

When a child displays a decided preference for the use of the left hand, it is, as we have seen, useless to make forcible efforts to suppress it. By all means let the right hand be trained in writing, in using knife and spoon at table, and in as many actions usually right-handed as can be easily superintended. But the use of the left on other occasions should not be prevented; this will only diminish its training and its aptitude without greatly increasing the dexterity of the right.

There seems to be no good reason why right-handed people should not attain some of the ambidexterity which is usually the privilege only of the left-handed. A little trouble expended in practising with the left hand, as well as the right, throwing, drawing, and other common movements requiring skill, would be rewarded by a much increased usefulness of that generally neglected member. If there is a natural preference for the right hand, it is probable that no amount of practice would make the left equally expert in actions that have once been well acquired by the right. But the experience of the left-handed seems to show that it is well worth while for the right-handed to give more attention to their despised left hands than they usually do.

Nay, more; if we are right in believing that right-handedness in some cases precedes and determines the use of the left brain for the interpretation and reproduction of speech, both spoken and written, may not a greater use of the left hand lead to a better development of the right brain? Certainly, as one writer says in discussing this point, 'there is no proof that a man becomes any wiser by being able to use both hands alike.' But it is quite conceivable that an education of the two hands in different directions might enable the brain to do more work, or to do it more easily.

Let us consider for a moment those speech-relations of the brain which we know to be unilateral. The early use of the right hand has, we believe, led to our storing in our left brains all the memories of our mother-tongue; and the other languages we acquire are registered on the same side. But we have seen that the other side can be educated, even in adult life, when the need arises, to acquire these speech-functions. Would it not be a distinct advantage if the unused side could be made to discharge this office in acquiring a foreign tongue? It seems to the writer that it might be worth while to try whether this could not be done. Let the left hand be used for all actions habitually performed by the right while learning French, say: let the book be held, the pages turned, the words written with the left hand, and let the right be allowed to be as nearly as possible inactive. It is at least possible that such a method, carefully carried out, would lead to the acquisition of the language by the unused right brain-centres; and if this were so, the capacity of the brain for languages would be doubled. We may imagine some future generation keeping their left brains for the Teutonic languages, and storing the Romance languages on the right side. If one of them has his left speech-centres damaged, he will still retain some languages in which he can communicate his ideas to others.

## THE VILLAGE SHOP.

I VERY much fear that the village shop is a doomed institution—doomed to death from inanition. The large grocers of the towns now send their delivery carts along every highway and byway of the country side. Not the remotest village or hamlet is left unsolicited. The country girls will no longer regulate their requirements by the small and unfashionable stock of ribbons and finery which the village shopkeeper can afford to display. With the growth of ideas and information comes necessarily a leaving behind and forsaking of the old things which satisfied the needs of a less exacting generation. We are making great strides year by year; sweeping away prejudice and ignorance, and marching forward—or so we think—towards an era of general happiness and perfection. But for all that, some of us pause now and again and remember with 'a feeling of sadness and longing' many of the old picturesque details of life, country life especially, which belonged to the old order. 'Leisure is gone!' sorrowfully exclaims George Eliot, in *Adam Bede;* and we, forty years later, have too much cause to echo her sigh. Leisure, the old, easy-going leisure of country life, is indeed gone from most places; and where it still lingers, its life is ebbing fast. It is a very, very little island, this England of ours, and the powerful, far-reaching machinery of the school board has left few corners untampered with.

The country shops that are still flourishing and prosperous are no longer picturesque. They are owned by enterprising men of some capital, who have put in new shop-fronts with plate-glass. They buy their goods direct from London and Liverpool and Glasgow, and sell at co-operative prices; they keep an assistant and take apprentices. In short, they are 'getting on.'

But in the more remote country districts, where the roads are perhaps hilly and not over-good, and where the nearest railway station is some miles away, the village shop, 'old style,' may still be found. It is almost invariably presided over by a woman, who is well able to satisfy the demands of customers upon her time without much neglect of her household duties. Often she is a widow or a spinster; generally her manners and education are a little above those of the labourers' and cottage-farmers' wives. If she is married, her husband is seldom a farm-hand, but follows one of the more independent occupations of the country. He will most likely be the carrier, or the tailor; or he may farm some few acres for himself. He is perhaps a basket-maker, in which case he probably rents a neighbouring 'withy-bed.' Or he may be a carpenter or wheelwright, or the blacksmith.

The old-fashioned country shop does not pretend to include drapery among its stores. Pins and needles it keeps, and a few reels of cotton and threads; but for anything else the villagers must go or send into town. The shopkeeper is licensed, as the legend above the doorway informs us, to sell 'tea, coffee, snuff, and tobacco;' and to these she adds the most staple articles of a grocer's stock-in-trade. Sweets of course she sells, and such miscellaneous commodities as may be easily and profitably retailed by the 'penn'orth.' Bottles of ink and gum, penholders and slate-pencils, tintacks and hair-oil; these are her stock.

Most of her supplies, with the exception of the odds and ends of haberdashery, are drawn from the large grocers of the neighbouring towns. These supply her at prices about midway between cost and retail, and she adds as much extra profit as her customers seem inclined to pay; generally her price is about twenty or twenty-five per cent. above town value—not exorbitant, when one considers the cost of the seven or eight miles carriage by road, the credit given, and the infinitesimal quantities in which her stores are disposed of. For it is rarely that the best of her customers give her a monopoly of their patronage. At Christmas-time and Easter, and on Fair days, a visit will be paid to town, and a large parcel brought home from the grocer's—probably the 'Stores,' or a 'Present-shop,' where teapots, glass and china ornaments, and various articles of questionable quality and utility are bestowed on customers.

Now and then the village shop is visited by a 'traveller' from a distance. Not of course from wholesale houses of first-class standing. These would neither condescend to make up the small quantities needed by our shop, nor risk offending their customers among the town grocers by poaching on their preserves.

The men who 'tout' country shops are often sent out by third and fourth-rate houses, who will make up the small and assorted—very much assorted—'parcels' ordered.

It may be safely asserted that the village shopkeeper would do very much better to adhere to the grocer of the neighbouring town than yield to the blandishments of the 'commercial.' Even if 'house' and traveller alike are thoroughly honourable—as is generally the case—she is sure to buy what she is not likely to sell, and a great deal too much of what she *can* sell. The traveller gets a commission on his sales, and he is not likely to shut up his order-book while he sees a chance of doing further business; human nature is human nature, and he has his living to make. More than this, unscrupulous firms, represented by equally unscrupulous travellers, will not hesitate to send more goods—'here a little, there a little'—than were ever ordered. The grocer in the neighbouring town, on the contrary, understands her needs as no one else can. He will neither induce her to lumber her shelves with unsaleable stock, nor will he unduly press her for payment when over-long credit—the result of a hard winter, or much illness in the village—has drained her till to low-water mark. He knows her to be honest and hard-working, and probably thinks that, at the worst—in the event of her death—the stock and furniture will pretty nearly meet her debts. She has dealt with him and with his father before him for twenty years and more, and, sentiment and kind feeling aside, old customers must be cherished, old trade connections not lightly sundered. So, though the account in the grocer's ledger may show a heavy balance against her, the old lady is received with friendly courtesy on her periodical visits to town. Even if a hint as to payment is felt to be needed, it is given gently, and the pill is gilded with cake and biscuits and a glass of wine in the private office or parlour.

But we have discoursed too long of the village shop and its mistress before exhibiting our view. Passing up the broad village street, with the church and its sunny sloping graveyard on one side, it is some time before we distinguish the shop. All the cottages, or nearly all, stand back from the road, their lower windows half hidden from view by the old and well-grown currant and gooseberry bushes, lilacs, and yews. Some are half-timbered and thatched, others are of warm red brick, with tiled, wide-eaved roofs; not the staring red brick of the town 'villa residence,' but the mellow tint which makes such a perfect harmony with its setting of English fields and trees. It is over the door of one of these latter that we read the notice 'Post-office,' the usual adjunct of the village shop. As we go up the path, we see the window on the right of the door exhibits a varied assortment of attractions, principally show-cards; two or three open boxes of sweets, peppermints and hokey-pokey; some penny bottles of ink, sauce, and hair-oil; a peg-top or two, and some marbles. This display is entirely shut off from any but mounted passers-by, by a large clump of lupins growing a yard from the window. But this is of little importance; every one in the neighbourhood knows the shop and what is likely to be obtainable in it; and the only customers who ever pause before entering to inspect the window are children, who, when presented with a halfpenny as a reward for, or incentive to, especially meritorious behaviour, may be seen standing on tip-toe for a prolonged survey, unable to make up their minds between the known virtues of peppermints and the untried qualities of the 'latest thing' in sweet-stuffs, brought from the town last market-day.

The door is closed, so we knock with our stick and wait. Over the front of the house spreads a carefully trained pear-tree, on which a promising crop is already formed. There is a corresponding bed of lupins under the left-hand window; the topmost petals of each blue spine are now fully out, and a close inspection shows that the lower ones are beginning to fade. Pity that this beautiful plant is being banished to make way for the favourites of modern taste. At intervals on either side of the path to the gate are peonies in full flower standing between gooseberry bushes, the branches of which already bend with their burden of fruit. The greater part of the ground is occupied with potatoes, early

and late; some with the 'haulm' already high and bushy, some only just showing above the soil.

We have time for these observations, for no one has answered our knock. But the afternoon sun is blazing full upon us, so, finding the door only latched, we step inside, into a tiny entry about three feet square. On the left an open door shows us the kitchen or living-room of the house. No one is there, and we stand for a moment and admire the clean, red, quarried floor and open grate, where a kettle is beginning to sing a gentle intimation of tea. The high dresser is of dark oak and garnished with willow-pattern crockery. A high-backed oak settle screens the grate from any draught from window or door, and on the other side of the fire an upright arm-chair with a loose cushion on the seat proclaims the evening position of the mistress. But at present it is occupied by a handsome tabby cat, who sleeps on, unconscious of our presence.

On the right of the entry, a half-door leads into the shop, and opening this, we set in motion a bell, whose jangling is followed after a few minutes by footsteps in the garden, and the mistress of the place appears. We ask for a glass of ginger-beer and a biscuit, both of which a glance round assures us are procurable, and while she is reaching a biscuit tin from a shelf and searching for the bottle opener, we can pursue our observations.

She is a tall elderly woman of scrupulously 'wholesome' appearance. Her gray hair is drawn smoothly back from a forehead whose breadth and comparative freedom from wrinkles, together with the placid expression of her gray eyes, gives an air of repose to her face, and takes much of the harshness from her somewhat thin lips and strong square jaw. Her neat black dress fits her rather angular frame not ungracefully, and is only relieved by a small gray shawl or 'cross-over,' which covers her shoulders, and is drawn across her breast. Her voice is even and quiet, and not without refinement of tone. Our remarks about the weather are courteously replied to, and our admiration of her garden flowers and crops give evident pleasure.

The biscuits are crisp and not 'cupboardy,' and the ginger-beer, taken from a case on the floor, is cool and refreshing. The quarried floor gives to the shop the cool damp atmosphere of a dairy, delightful for the chance caller on a hot summer day, but not wholly unconnected with rheumatism and chills in autumn and winter. As the mistress moves about, putting things in order and glancing now and then into the garden and street, we notice the absence of all dust or dirt, and the methodical arrangements of the small stock. Canisters are bright, though the gilt and lettering on them is worn and faded. The pair of scales is set square on one end of the counter, the pans shining, the weights in a neat pile, one tiny quarter-ounce keeping the scales from balancing. At the other end is a section of an American cheese, looking creamy and appetising. The half-empty flour bag stands near us, the mouth rolled neatly down all round to facilitate the insertion of the scoop. All tells of method and order in the shop, as the pleasant kitchen tells of a neat housewife.

The click of the garden gate heralds an approaching customer, and we look on while a fresh-faced child is served with tea, sugar, soap, and a 'ha'porth' of salt, which latter article is sawn off a block fetched from the kitchen, where it is stored for greater dryness. As the little girl places her purchases in a basket, and saying, 'Mother'll pay Saturday, Mrs Pearce,' is about to depart, Mrs Pearce quietly takes two or three sweets from a box in the window and puts them into her hand. The child is almost too much occupied with furtive glances at us to do more than smile her thanks; for this is a lonely village, and a stranger in it is matter for much conjecture and gossip at doorways and over dividing garden-fences.

We finish our ginger-beer, wish Mrs Pearce good-afternoon, and take our departure, wondering much, as we pursue our devious ramble, if such an establishment as the one we have just left can possibly 'pay its way.' Well, probably it would not satisfy the needs of an enterprising assistant, anxious to launch himself into business, and take unto himself a wife. He would require more scope for his 'pushing' enterprise. But it is sufficient for the wants of this lonely, middle-aged woman. Its demands on her time are not exacting; she has ample time to keep her house in order, cultivate her garden—with the occasional help of a friendly neighbour in 'digging over.' Her habits are frugal and her expenses small. Her few hens and her garden yield a large proportion of her food. There is probably a pig in a 'cot' somewhere in the tiny croft or orchard in the rear. The profits of the concern will at all events pay her rent and something over, even in these days of keen competition and delivery carts. If she has been long established there, she has a nice little sum laid by from the older palmy days of village trading, and consoles herself with the conviction that the present trade, small as it is, will 'last her time.' Her wish is more than echoed by many. We know that 'the old order changeth, giving place to new,' but the new is as yet unmellowed by the softening touch of time; and the thought of the cool stone-floor and sunny quiet of Mrs Pearce's shop finally vanishing before the grocer's pair-horse van, is not acceptable.

## A TURPENTINE FARM IN GEORGIA.

Although we have heard much about the Far West, perhaps the wildest life in the States may be seen in the vast pine forests of Georgia. Here and there, dotted in amongst the great expanse of trees, are the turpentine farms and the sawmills. At the latter, where the machinery turns to the tune of the fast-flowing river, life is comparatively civilised; but amongst the turpentine farms, life is of the wildest. There is certainly no solitary shepherding or cattle-driving to do, but the loneliness in the wilderness of trees is perhaps even greater than on the rolling prairies. Trees, trees everywhere, on upland and low-

land, whichever way we look. The melancholy sough of the wind through the branches, and the rich terebene smell of the pines, follow us everywhere, whilst at the foot of the trees the red ants build their cities of dead pine spicules. Only yellow pine on the uplands and rosemary pine beneath, until the monotony makes us feel that the whole universe must consist of nothing but pine-trees.

When a prospector makes up his mind to start a turpentine farm, according to the *Naval Stores Review*, he first of all selects a patch of forest that has not been worked, and either buys the land or leases it from the state. Then he has a clearing made, and proceeds to erect his still and to get quarters ready for his workmen. The housing accommodation consists of a number of two-roomed cottages built of rough timber and roofed with boards or shingles. The prospector's great endeavour is to place his headquarters so that they are near the railway or the river on the one hand, and conveniently situated for bringing the raw material to the still, on the other. When all is ready, the adventurer's real trouble begins with the selection of his woodmen or overseers. After these are selected they are sent out all over the state to engage workmen. Labour is scarce in Georgia, and it usually happens that the overseers have to scour two or three of the neighbouring states before they can secure a sufficient number of competent labourers. As may be imagined, much responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the overseers, for upon their good judgment in securing industrious steady men the whole success of the venture depends. When the labourers have been engaged, the dangerous task of burning the grass and rubbish commences. As a preliminary, the grass and everything combustible is cleared away carefully from the roots of every tree, and a large patch is cleared round the edges of the prospector's section, so as to prevent the fire from spreading to the rest of the forest. As soon as sufficient clearance has been made, the grass is fired and allowed to burn itself out. In spite of all precautions, the forest catches fire sometimes; a large proportion of the trees are destroyed, as well as the settlement itself, perhaps; and the prospector has to seek pastures new as a broken man. The fire, if it does not get out of hand, clears the ground of rubbish, so that cartage is easier, and the forest is rendered tolerably safe from accidental fires in the future—a vital consideration. The next thing to do is to run 'drifts,' as they are called, through the forest. This operation consists in removing strips of bark from the trees in long parallel lines running right through the section of forest, and the trees are now ready for boxing. This is the most important proceeding of all. The hands, mostly negroes, are divided into squads, and over each is set a white superintendent and a tallyman, also white as a rule. Each man is provided with a boxing axe, and all work regularly along the drift. The 'box' is an incision in the tree about twelve inches wide, by seven inches deep and three inches high. If the men are not watched carefully, they will cut the boxes too wide or too deep, and if this is done, the trees are destroyed very rapidly. The box is levelled to prevent the 'gum,' which begins to run as soon as the box is cut, from overflowing. The contents are removed every day by dippers, and conveyed in buckets to barrels, which are taken on wagons to the still when full. As soon as the wound in the tree heals, it has to be opened again by cutting away the bark above the box and making a fresh streak. The whole process is very destructive to the trees, which are killed in a few years by the boxing process. Before many years are passed, the pine forests will be ruined if the present system is allowed to go on. Fortunately, an earthenware pan has been invented, which fits close against the tree, and takes the place of the box as a receptacle for the gum; this should diminish the evil to some extent. Already, a law has been passed by the state to limit the cutting of boxes to the winter months, and so minimise the evil.

The crude gum consists principally of a mixture of resin and turpentine, which are separated by distillation. It is a simple process, although requiring care and experience. The gum is boiled in a large iron 'kettle' or still, water being added from time to time; the spirits of turpentine pass over with the steam, and are condensed in a worm surrounded with cold water, the turpentine being skimmed off the top of the condensed water with a ladle. The resin is left behind in the still, and is run out into barrels at intervals. The lightest coloured resin is obtained from the virgin boxes, and fetches the highest price; the lowest quality is that scraped from the boxes when they are allowed to run dry in October. The process of hacking and chipping the tree continues up to this period, the boxes being extended until they are twelve or even fifteen feet high. Each labourer is given a definite number of trees to chip, and generally manages to do the whole of his work by the end of Wednesday, spending the rest of the week in idleness. The white woodman or inspector looks after six or eight of these sections, going his rounds on horseback.

Although large sums of money are made at turpentine farming, the adventurer is in a constant state of anxiety. There is always the terrible danger of fire breaking out at any moment. With all the resin and turpentine about, the whole place becomes a sea of flames in a moment, should a fire once start. Besides this risk, there is continual trouble with the hands, who desert on the slightest pretext, and the farmer is ruined more frequently by the desertion of his labourers than by fire. In the case of the white overseers, the work of riding round in the forest day after day, bossing black labourers, without any refining influences, is dreary and demoralising. In the Far West things are not nearly so bad, for on the

prairies a man may be lonely, and the cowboy society may be of a very low order; but there is not the eternal weariness of the pine forest, and there is no nigger-driving.

## HUNTING WILD HORSES IN NEW ZEALAND.

By E. M. Kirwan.

In the centre of the north island of New Zealand there are large areas of poor volcanic country of no value to the agriculturist, and of small use to the squatter. Here are to be found herds of wild horses, the progeny of animals which have escaped from stations and homesteads. A favourite amusement of the local selectors, who are occasionally joined by visitors, is to arrange hunts, when the sport afforded is generally of the most exciting description. The essentials for success are utter fearlessness in the saddle, a quick eye, and the possession of considerable bodily strength, combined with a medium weight. Given these, and the rest—a general knowledge of the country and handiness with the lasso—may be readily acquired. As regards the latter, one has only to try the experiment to explode the hoary tradition that years of apprenticeship are required to make a man expert in the use of the green hide lasso. I know a young farmer, who is now on a visit to England, who became tolerably proficient after two days' practice, and his is by no means a solitary instance. The rope employed is generally between thirty and forty feet long, and the throw is given from a distance of some twenty feet. Mexican saddles are but rarely used, the New Zealanders preferring to depend upon the strength of the arm to pull up the flying animal with a jerk round the neck, which chokes it almost into insensibility, and brings it with a thud to the earth. The first time of going out to hunt wild horses must ever remain a red-letter day in the novice's life. A party may consist of two or three or four, but it seldom exceeds the latter number. There are sometimes a couple of ladies; and although their want of muscular strength and their unwillingness to practise make them poor hands with the lasso, still their light weight and magnificent horsemanship not unfrequently render their aid of no small value. It goes almost without saying that all must be well mounted, and the fact that the work is so rough on horses and 'uses' them up so soon, is the chief reason of the pastime not being more followed than it is.

On nearing where the wild horses are known to be, some eminence is ascended from where a good view of the surrounding scrubby and sparsely timbered country may be obtained. As a rule, the herds number from ten to twelve, made up of mares and one stallion. No stallion will allow another stallion into his herd, and stubborn fights frequently occur between horses owing to this. The beaten males, after being expelled, join herds exclusively of stallions. On any herd being sighted by the hunters, a good idea can generally be formed by the experienced man as to which route the animals will take in their way to the rugged hills, for which they invariably make when disturbed. A scheme is mapped out to cut them off if possible, and the party scatters, each to take up his allotted position. Of course while doing this, every advantage is taken of the natural inequalities of the ground so as to escape observation. When the alarm is given, however, all need for caution is at an end, and each hunter puts his steed to full gallop. The stallion, the head of the herd, boldly comes out to meet him, and endeavours to distract attention from the rest. In some rare instances he is lassoed and captured at once, but he generally manages to rejoin his wives, which by this time have trooped into single file with his favourite mare in the lead. Should the herd be turned and get into difficulties, the stallion takes up his position in the van, and the great object is to cut him off from the rest. Should this be accomplished, both he and the mares become confused, and the lassoers often manage to take two or three per man. Instances have been known where horses have been thrown to the ground by the hunter giving a violent jerk to the animal's tail when it was making an abrupt turn. When his quarry is brought down, either by this method or the use of the lasso, the rider jumps from his steed, whips a 'blinder' (a handkerchief is used when there is nothing else procurable) over the prostrate horse's eyes, and straps up one of its fore-legs securely. If this is properly done, the animal may safely be left 'until called for,' for no horse thus secured can stray far. Should a man be so unlucky as to capture a branded horse, or a foal running with a branded mare, he cannot keep it; but all others become the property of the hunter, and after they undergo a rough-and-ready process of breaking-in, are sold at prices ranging from twenty-five shillings to fifteen pounds each. The latter figure is, however, seldom reached, unless in the case of exceptionally fine stallions. Great numbers of these wild horses die from starvation in the winter time, but still the herds show no signs of diminution.

## CONFESSION.

For all these things I ask your pardon, dear—
That I, being fond and true,
Have sometimes in my fondness doubted you,
With brief distrust, with sudden biting fear;
For all these things I ask your pardon, dear.

Because I love you more than tongue can say,
I feared lest I might be
Bankrupt of love that flowed so full and free;
I feared to lose you, dear, some dismal day—
Because I love you more than tongue can say.

But now I stake my life upon your troth,
And trust you as my soul.
Of all a heart's fond faith I give the whole
To your most tender keeping—nothing loth,
Since love and life are one, to give you both.

Arthur L. Salmon.

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## A PLEA FOR A SIMPLER LIFE.

'Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it,' exclaimed Macbeth in the teeth of the doctor called in to cure Lady Macbeth's unspeakable mental troubles. A well-known physician used to tell his patients that if they had not learned at forty what was best for their stomachs, he could not help them. This is quite of a piece with the sayings that a man is either a fool or a physician at forty, and that many people dig their own graves all too soon with their teeth. That philosopher upon things in general, Professor Blackie, uttered his plea late in life for simplicity all round. He considered there was too much of everything nowadays—far too much eating and drinking, preaching, writing, and speaking. 'My friend, you eat too much; my friend, you drink too much,' was a saying often on the lips of the late Sir Andrew Clark, who thought that the worst disease was the outcome of this constant and uninterrupted violation of health. Here is an old Edinburgh physician in wonderful agreement with all this, who has spent part of the evening of a busy life in telling the world that it eats and drinks far too much, that but little or no medicine is sometimes best, and that the true vocation of the physician is to help nature to help herself. The few simple rules which guided his own personal conduct, and his practice as a physician, were chiefly that in sickness neither medicine, nor alcoholic stimulant, nor food is necessary, as a general rule, but are often injurious. That the sick are best left to nature's remedies; rest to the stomach, rest and warmth to the whole system, by being sent to bed, with pure air and good water. To all who are curious as to this method of treatment we refer them to the *Plea for a Simpler Life*, by George Keith, M.D., F.R.C.P.E. (A. and C. Black). In this little book he has set down in detail what he considers many of the errors of both patients and doctors as to diet and general treatment. What he preaches he has practised on himself and some of his patients, with the happiest results, although in the process he earned the nickname of the 'Starvation Doctor' from those who disagreed with him. But to all critics he quotes the motto of the Keiths, Earls Marischal of Scotland: 'They have said: what say they? let them say.'

The author is the son of the late Dr Keith of St Cyrus, Kincardineshire, author of a once popular work on prophecy and of other religious books. Of his seven sons, four were doctors, the only one surviving being the author of the *Plea*. His more famous brother, Dr Thomas Keith, with whom he was twenty years in partnership, had a European reputation as a successful operator in cases of ovariotomy. He settled in London in 1888, and died only last October. Full of talent, courage, and genius, he ranks as one of the greatest amongst those who have formed the Edinburgh Medical School. His brother, whose work we are now briefly to discuss, may be said to ride a hobby; but the world leans so much towards self-indulgence, there will be little difficulty in keeping the balance level in the case of the many or the few who adopt his advice and treatment.

There is a wonderful agreement between the sentiments of Dr Keith as to doctors and medicine and those of Samuel Smiles in his first book, *Physical Education*, which was favourably noticed in this *Journal* on its appearance in 1838. An article on 'Use and Abuse of Medicine,' by a physician, which appeared in this *Journal* also, on May 5, 1849, might have been written either by Dr Smiles, or the author of the volume under consideration. The future author of *Self-help* had just passed as a surgeon, was practising in his native Haddington, and his book is a wonderfully acute and sensible production for a youth just turned his twenty-second year. He girds at the absurdity of the regulations which made it the interest of the greater part of the medical men in England to fill their patients with drugs, whether they actually required them or not, in order to obtain

anything like a fair remuneration for their advice and attendance. It would prove more useful and profitable to the public, he tells us, 'that the most effectual way to insure health is to adopt the natural means to preserve it—such as by pure air, exercise, and healthy supply of food—instead of wantonly neglecting these means, and afterwards resorting to physic, that instead of alleviating, often infixes the mischief more deeply in the constitution.' He believes that such a discovery would render physicians, who were then comparatively useless in *curing* disease, of great importance to the public weal, as *Preservators* of the health of the community. This is pretty strong for a young medical man, and although the world has changed somewhat since this was written, yet the hawker in Manchester who the other day, feeling unwell, swallowed twenty pills on Saturday and eight on Sunday, and who was dead on Monday, certainly needed this advice. It was clear that Dr Smiles was much more in his element as railway secretary, or writing the lives of self-made men. He was but a voice crying in the wilderness, the echo of which has been more than taken up by Dr Keith.

We are all deeply interested in our own health, but it takes effort and self-denial to follow good advice. 'What is the use of good advice,' said Thackeray once, when asked if he had ever received the best medical advice, 'if you don't follow it. They tell me not to drink, and I *do* drink. They tell me not to smoke, and I *do* smoke. They tell me not to *eat*, and I *do* eat. In short, I do everything that I am desired *not* to do; and therefore, what am I to expect.' Whether he expected it or not, the great novelist had a sudden and comparatively early death. Thomas Carlyle had his stomach ruined, at least so he thought, in all his student lodgings; and when told to stop smoking, he said his medical adviser might as well have whispered this advice into the ear of the nearest jackass. Listen to Dr Keith, who has outlived all his contemporaries who chose a short life, and he is afraid not entirely a merry one. 'If when in good health we took only the food necessary for our comfort and for our work, and no more, instead of working the stomach to the utmost, and helping it when it flags by dainties, as well as by drugs and stimulants, we would have much more pleasure from our meals, and a much longer continuance of strength and health. We would also escape many of the ills that life is said to be heir to; or, should some disease perchance come upon us, if we could eliminate from the old system of cure a large amount of the depletion, and from the new a still larger amount of the feeding and physicking, we would come nearer to nature's mode of preventing and curing diseases; we would find that *prevention* would be far the larger element of the two, and that the need for the other would be well-nigh extinguished.' This comes very near Dr Smiles's Preservator of Health. Dr Keith might have added something upon the importance of good cookery, which is by no means so well understood, at least in the homes of the poor, as it ought to be. Good cookery, as we all know, is also a powerful Preservator of Health.

In reviewing the experience of a lifetime, Dr Keith recalls the time when bleeding, vomiting, purging, and sweating were the order of the day, which was followed by the reaction towards the 'setting up of the system,' the use of stimulating and tonic medicines, and plenty of good food and drink. His practice has been directed against what he considers the fallacies of this style of treatment. He tells us that his own father, an athletic man of over six feet in height, was mismanaged by the doctors—certainly his brother, Dr Thomas Keith, was so, when a student; and he himself suffered so horribly from doses of calomel given to him when a weakly child, that he vowed, if he should ever become a doctor, he would never give a child a dose of it. And he never did. Dr Keith, in a glimpse of personal experience, relates how he dropped taking aperients at thirty-five. Up to this time he confesses to grave errors in diet, and sufferings from occasional bilious attacks which lasted for two or three days, as well as frequent chills. When he had almost decided to leave the trying climate of Edinburgh for a warmer one, an old friend, a Hungarian physician settled in Manchester, asked him, before so deciding, to try what effect giving up butcher-meat would have upon him; to reduce his tea and coffee by one-half, and to take only a little light claret to dinner, if he found that suited him. This doctor considered red-meat diet too irritating for his friend's excitable nerves. He took this advice, and was able to continue work for fifteen years longer; and when he did retire, it was not his stomach which failed him. In his fifteen years of retirement he confesses to excellent health.

It is not our place to discuss here Dr Keith's statement that the present system of medical teaching and practice is wrong, and that it is still on the down-grade. He indicates what most people will admit, that medicine is by no means a fixed science, and that the means nowadays used to cure a large part of the diseases commonly met with, are often those which, when improperly used, are the main causes of these same diseases. It is the improper use of food, drugs, and stimulants he here condemns. It must not be understood that he condemns all drugs; he knows their value and when to use them, but he disputes the aphorism of Hippocrates, 'Better a doubtful remedy than none.' For full-fed people, he considers the best tonic is a little wholesome abstinence, and he mentions with approbation what he heard Professor Syme say, that after fish and soup he had dined. For long he has looked upon alcoholic stimulants as like a whip or spur to a horse; their effect is transient, and attended with a decided loss of power. Hot water, on the other hand, he considers one of the most genuine stimulants we have. In cases of disease, when the organs are not in a healthy condition, there is also a great loss of power in digesting food, and it is done in an imperfect manner. Food taken at this time is more hurtful than beneficial. Obey the dictates of nature rather, and abstain when nature has stopped the appetite. In the human body nature has provided a store of food already

digested, which requires absorption, and which may often be relied upon to tide the patient over until appetite returns. Dyspepsia and other troubles, he points out, have been a perfect mine of wealth to the doctor and the chemist. Dr Tenneson of Paris, an authority on skin diseases, is in accord with him as to food: 'Many people, because they have a good appetite, think they have a good stomach, and manufacture daily in their overloaded digestive tracts toxic substances, which, after they are absorbed, excite abnormal effects, both on the skin and all the other organs of the body.' The recommendation is to restrict the quantity, particularly at the mid-day meal. He also recommends less food, or none at all, when one is worried. Dr Keith once asked Sir Erskine May how he kept his health during anxious work and long parliamentary hours. He replied that his practice was, while Parliament was sitting, to take a chop in the middle of the day and only a cup of tea at night. We fancy he is wrong, however, in crediting Thomas Alva Edison with consideration for his workmen's stomachs, when he shut them in until a certain piece of work was completed.

Those who are curious as to Dr Keith's treatment of influenza cases, cancer, dyspepsia, apoplexy, &c., may be safely referred to this volume, which, being the ripe experience of a lifetime, is calculated to make the reader pause and consider, and certainly can do no human being any harm, but may be the means of doing a very great deal of good.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

PROLOGUE (*continued*).

'NEPHEWS,' he said, laying the bag on the table and keeping both hands upon it, 'you come every night to the Red Lion in hopes of finding out something about my property. It is your inheritance—why shouldn't you come? Sometimes you think it is much—then your spirits rise. Sometimes you think it is little—then your spirits sink. When I begin to talk you prick up your ears. But you never hear anything. Then you go home and you wonder how long the old man will last—eh? and how much money he has got—eh? and what he will do with it—eh? Well, now, you shall have your curiosity satisfied.'

'Sir,' said one of the nephews, 'our spirits may well sink at the thought of your falling into poverty.'

'And,' said the other, 'they may be expected to rise at the thought of your prosperity.'

'I have told you many stories of travel and of profit. Sometimes you believe—in which case you show signs of satisfaction. Sometimes you look glum when you think that you are wasting your evenings.'

'Oh, sir,' said one of the nephews. 'Sure, one cannot waste one's time in such good and improving company as yourself.'

'We come,' said the other, 'for instruction. Your talk is more instructive than any book of travel.'

'The time has now arrived'—the old man paid no attention to these fond assurances—'to tell you what I have, and to show you what you will have. I am now grown old, so old that I must expect before many years are over'—he was already, as you have seen, ninety-four—'to die,' he sighed heavily; 'and to give my substance to those who come after. Look you! I bear no manner of affection to you; when a man gets to ninety he cares no longer about anything but himself. That is the beauty and excellence of being old. Then a man has everything for himself—no sharing, no giving. I shall give you nothing—not even if you are bankrupt. But I mean not to defraud my heirs. You shall see, therefore, all I have got. Many a rich merchant living in his great house would be glad to change places with you when I am gone. Many a merchant? All the merchants of London town.'

He took up the bag—it was a long narrow bag of brown canvas, about two feet long, and shaped like a purse of the period.

I know not what they expected, but at the sight of the treasure which he poured out upon the table, these two respectable boat-builders gasped: they looked on with amazement unspeakable, with open mouths, with staring eyes, with flaming cheeks, with quivering hands and trembling knees. They could not look at each other; they dared not speak. It was like the opening of the gates of Paradise, with a full view of the interior arrangements.

They had never dreamed of such a sight. Five hundred pounds all in gold would have seemed to these worthy tradesmen a treasure; five thousand pounds great wealth; ten thousand pounds an inexhaustible sum. For this old man poured out upon the table a pile, not of guineas, but of precious stones. Why then, his stories about the treasures of the Great Mogul must be true. There were diamonds, emeralds, rubies, pearls, all the stones which he described, hundreds of them, thousands of them; there were precious stones, large, splendid, worth immense sums, with smaller ones, with strings of pearls, enough to fill quart pots. And now they understood what was meant by all those stones over which they had grown as incredulous as Didymus.

The old man bent over his heap and ran his fingers into it, and caught a handful and dropped it back again. 'See my beauties!' he cried. 'Look at the colours; the sunshine in them, and the green and the red. Saw you ever the like? Oh! if a man could but live long enough to work through this heap! Why, 'tis seventy years since I first came home, with this bag in my hand for all my fortune, and there's no difference in it yet. It grows no less: I sometimes think it grows bigger. No man, live as long as he could wish, would work through this heap.'

'May we humbly ask, sir,' said one of them,

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taking heart, 'how much money is represented by this bag of jewels?'

'I know not. Take this stone; it's a ruby. Look at it, weigh it; I sold one like it three months ago for fifty pounds. There are hundreds bigger. Well'—he began to put the stones back into the bag—'I have shown it to you because the time will come—not yet, I hope—it must come, I suppose'—he spoke as if there was still a chance of an exception being made in his favour—'when I must give the bag to you two and go away. I shall have to go aboard a strange ship and join a strange company, as bo's'n, maybe, or able seaman, or cook, who knows? and sail away in strange waters on a new cruise, where there are no charts.'

'Not for many years,' murmured one of the nephews.

'Not if our prayers, our daily prayers, can keep you here!' added the other.

'Thank ye,' said John Burnikel, tying up his bag.

'I trust, sir,' said one of the nephews, 'that you keep this precious treasure in a safe place. A whisper, a suspicion, would fly through Wapping like wild-fire, and you would be robbed and murdered.'

'Devil a whisper will there be,' said John. 'You won't start a whisper, that's certain. And I won't. And as for the place where I keep it, no one will see me put it there, and no one would think of looking there. And now, nephews, good-night. Say nothing—but, of course, you will not—and be as patient as you can. I believe you will have to wait a dozen years or so before you get the bag.'

They stepped out into the street and heard him, to their satisfaction, bolting and barring the door behind them.

'Cousin,' said one, 'this has been a wonderful evening. Who could have believed it? We are now rich men—oh!—rich beyond our dreams! We can leave Wapping, and court the society of the Great.'

'Unless his bag is stolen; which may happen. I tremble only to think of keeping such a treasure in such a mean little cottage among all these rogues and villains! It ought to be in a strong room such as merchants use.'

'I think—I fear—we shall not have to wait long. Methinks the old man's voice is breaking. He seemed feebler to-night than I remember to have seen him. Ninety-four is a great, a very great age.'

'Ah! He may not have many weeks—many days—to live. It is a happiness, cousin, to reflect that an uncle who entertains a disposition of so much justice towards his nephews must soon be resting in Abraham's bosom.'

This anxiety proved prophetic. Exactly a week afterwards John Burnikel did not appear at the tavern at six o'clock, nor at half-past six. The nephews hurried round to Broad Street. The door was open; there was no one in the front room: in the room behind they found their uncle lying on his bed, his face drawn as with pain, and with the gray look which often falls upon those who are about to die.

'Ah,' he said, 'I thought you wouldn't be long. Come in, boys. Shut the door and come in. I've had a kind of fit; my legs don't seem right. Get me a drink: the barrel of beer is in the other room. I shall be better to-morrow—much better.' He drank a copious draught of beer which refreshed him. He tried to sit up, but could not. It was a day in August when it gets dusk about eight. At nightfall they found the tinder-box and got a light, and sat down one on each side of the bed.

So they sat all night till three in the morning without saying a word to each other. The old man seemed sleeping. At daybreak he began to murmur, rambling in his speech.

'The man's mad. He won't know; he won't find out. He will die mad. No one will know—no one will know. Boys'—he opened his eyes—'you both know where the bag is hidden away. I think this is the end. Well, I've left you rich—half as rich, each of you, as myself.' He closed his eyes. Presently one of the watchers bent over him.

'Cousin,' he said, 'the breath has gone out of the body. Our uncle is no more. Nothing remains but to weep for our uncle.'

'Let us find the bag and divide the property,' said the other, 'before we call in the neighbours.'

'It is our sorrowful duty to do so, as his heirs, and quickly, before the thing gets wind.'

It was the custom to construct at the head of the great wooden bed of the period a secret box, drawer, or repository. Everybody knew the secret place at the head of the bed. It was an open secret, yet it was commonly used in every house for the concealment, as in a place of perfect safety, of the silver and the valuables.

They searched in this receptacle. The bag was not there.

'It is in this room, because he brought it out of this room. Let us look again.'

Again they searched every corner and cranny of the secret hiding-place. It was not there. There might be some other hiding-place in the bed. It could only be at the head. They tapped and hammered. In vain. Was it on the head of the bed? They climbed up and looked. No. It was not there. Could it be in the mattress? In the feather-bed? In the bolster? Under the bolster? Under the mattress? They lifted the dead man on to the floor, and they examined these places and other constituent portions of the bed. In vain. They lifted their great-uncle back again to the bed, and gazed at each other with anxious eyes.

'It must be in this room,' they reflected. 'He brought it from this room. He took it back.'

They looked round. There was a three-legged stool leaning against the wall because one of its legs was broken off. There was a sea-chest in the corner, a big heavy box with a lock, and bound strongly with iron. Ah! The sea-chest. They dragged it out, and threw open the lid. Within was a curious collection of miscellaneous property: a big silver watch, a knife, a dirk, an ugly Malay creese, an old pistol, a bo's'n's whistle, a mariner's compass, a bundle of charts, a few trifles in carved wood from India, two or three broken figures from India, a dead flying-fish, together with a bundle

of decayed or decaying clothes which filled up the bottom of the chest. They pulled everything out with eager haste, each man looking jealously at the other for fear he should secretly convey the bag into his own pockets. Everything lay on the floor, and the bag was not in the chest. It was divided into two compartments, a larger and a smaller. They held it up to the light. No, there was nothing in the chest. They looked again about the room. There was a cupboard in the wall. Both discovered it at the same moment and rushed at it. They threw open the door. It was a spacious cupboard. But there was nothing in it at all. Old John Burnikel had never used that cupboard.

'Let us lift the hearthstone,' said one of them. 'Everybody knows that the hearthstone was often the family bank where money was stowed away for safety when there was no secret hiding-place at the head of the bed. And the family continued to put faith in the hearthstone long after it was perfectly well known to those persons who break in and steal.'

They did lift the hearthstone. Nothing was under it. The earth had never been disturbed since the stone was laid.

Their faces were now haggard. Could the bag be stolen?

They then prised up the boards of the floor: they tore down the wainscoting: they searched the little backyard for signs of recent disturbance: they remembered that there were two rooms up-stairs; they were empty and unfurnished, but they tore up the boards: they searched in the roof: they searched the chimneys. Heavens! There was no sign of the bag anywhere. Where was it? Where was it? All that day they searched. The next day—which was indecent in haste—they buried the old man, neither of them attending the funeral for fear of the bag being found in their absence. And then they began again. They wrecked the house: they reduced it to its bare walls of brick: they pulled the bed to pieces: they left, as they thought, nothing unturned. But the bag was not in the house.

Then they began to think that while the old man lay unconscious, the door open, the bag might have been stolen. But it must have been hidden away, and nobody knew that it was there or had thought of it——

Then another suspicion entered the heads of both at the same moment. One of them, when it had taken shape with the firm outline of certainty, put it into words.

'His last words, George—his dying words—were: "You know where I've put the bag," and he looked at you—at you. What did he look at you for? Because you know where he put the bag.'

'He looked at you, Robert—not at me. Why? Because he had told you where it was. You wormed his secret out of him.'

'And now you try to turn it off on me. You've taken the bag: you've got it somewhere; you think to take it all for yourself.'

'This impudence passes everything. Do you think I am simple not to see through this villainy? 'Tis you—you—you—who have taken the bag.'

It is sad to relate that these recriminations became more and more bitter; that the two boat-builders of Wapping, churchwardens, jurymen, most respectable and responsible persons, partners and cousins, did in the agony of their disappointment call each other rogue, thief, villain; that they proceeded, being beyond and beside of themselves with bitterness, to shake their fists at each other; that they next—it was a fighting age—fell upon and mauled each other; that they only desisted when exhaustion, not satisfaction, compelled them to separate; and that they parted with threats, curses, and promises of Newgate Gaol and the Condemned Cell.

In a word, the bag could not be found; the agonies endured by those two disappointed men were terrible. To have these treasures just shown to them, dangled before them, and then withdrawn! Heard one ever the like? To conclude, they dissolved partnership. One of them left Wapping altogether, to enjoy, at a distance, the other said, his ill-gotten wealth; the other remained, to conceal, the first said, the fact of his stolen property. And as for the remaining goods of John Burnikel—the table, the bed, and the household gear—they were conveyed to the remaining boat-builder's house, and after one more final search the old man's cottage in Broad Street was abandoned.

But the cousins were wrong. Neither of them had the bag, and it remained undiscovered. You shall see how, in the course of this history, it came to be discovered.

## BATH BRICK.

THERE are few households in England where that homely commodity, Bath brick, is not a necessary inmate. But there are, we imagine, quite as few housekeepers who, even if familiar with its outward appearance in the storeroom, and more than vaguely aware of its indispensability, have ever bestowed a thought on either its origin or its manufacture.

The Bath brick is not, it must be confessed, *per se*, an interesting object, and, on examination, it is not easy to see how it could be made more prepossessing to the eye. This oblong, calcareous substance, of pallid hue and rasping touch, certainly bears no romantic aspect, and even if, penetrating as it does into all quarters of the globe, its handling may recall associations with its uses in a mother-country, it would be a fanciful imagination indeed that would connect it with waving trees, running water, or smiling landscape; would credit it with exile from a home of beauty; or assert that, like the poet, the Bath brick is born, not made.

Yet this, allowing for manipulating and shaping and for a final baptism of fire, is very literally the truth. So few of our readers are likely to have felt the most elementary interest in Bath bricks at all, that they are not very likely to have heard, or to remember when heard, that there is only one site in England, and—so far as the exact component parts are

concerned—only one in the world, which can be the centre of its industry. Because in only one river, and within only a certain distance from the town through which that river flows, can be 'gathered,' as it is technically called, the material of which the genuine Bath brick is formed.

That river is the Parrett, and the town Bridgwater, and those who, like the present writer, are familiar with the locality of the industry, and the simple, out-of-door methods of conducting it, would be obliged to admit that it is not without its romantic environment. The river Parrett, it is true, flows somewhat sluggishly through its narrow banks, and is, to all seeming, as turbid and mud-invaded as the 'inward eye' of the historian can picture it when its sullen waters bore the wicker canoes of the British settlers whose clusters of wattle and daub dwellings afforded them shelter on its marshy shores. Even though set in a surrounding of flat country where water meadows are intersected with dykes and bordered by pollard willows in true Dutch fashion, the town itself barely marks the horizon, and would seem to be originally planned only to be overlooked.

But Bridgwater is a busy centre of many industries, has a largely attended weekly market, and is the shopping town for many miles of a rich agricultural district. Moreover, in spite of its air of concerning itself only with the present, it can lay claim to historic interest in the past, and still cherishes traditions of its sieges, from the days of Alfred to those of Cromwell, and of its one memorable battle, when Monmouth was defeated on the plains of Sedgemoor. It is the birthplace of Admiral Blake, and but a few miles distant from the Quantock Hills beloved of Wordsworth and Coleridge during their sojourn at Alfoxton and Nether Stowey. But if we would see where the Bath brick has, literally, its home and haunt, we must resist all other claims on our attention and turn our steps to the river-side.

You need only follow the towing-path which leads on either side of the river, for a few hundred yards, and you cannot fail to be struck with the masses of mud, technically yclept 'slime,' which lie heaped against the embankment of the river, resembling to the untutored eye nothing so much as the gatherings of a scavenger's shovel on the side of a causeway.

The component parts of Bath brick form indeed, in spite of their watery habitat, the greatest possible contrast to the description of the commodity as a 'valuable aid to cleanliness.' Yet this gray adhesive mass is the only material used in the manufacture, and undergoes but little change, and no purification, before fulfilling its object.

The 'slime' itself is deposited by each tide as it comes up, but only within an area of about a mile and a half on either side of the centre of production. The forces of nature are its only agencies, the action of the salt water where it meets the fresh, giving the slime its peculiar and useful properties. Above and below its particular habitat, the deposit reverts to either mud pure and simple, or to a fine sand which, although it has no binding properties, is largely used for moulding and building purposes.

The machinery for converting this curious product of nature into its saleable form, is, too, of the simplest description, and requires few hands, if the vast output to the civilised world is taken into consideration. The yards where it is made and stored are not many in number, and though varying in size and extent, do not give one the idea of being thronged with workers, while the whole process can be seen in a short space of time.

Let us come down to the yards, which are most of them abutting on the river's edge, to save time in transport. Here we can examine the first process of all, which is to collect the deposit as it gathers, in receptacles specially built for the purpose along the river's banks. These receptacles are called 'slime batches,' and consist of long pits from thirty to forty yards in extent, bricked and boarded, and so shaped as to present a perfectly squared off and even surface, with no angles or slope from which the outgoing tide would carry back in its course much of what it had so lately deposited. On these artificially raised batches the slime lodges just at the high-water level, at the turn of the tide, and the trench will fill up in about two months. In winter the accumulation is less, the freshets disturbing the water, and preventing the sediment settling.

Just above the river's bank, piled to a height of eight or nine feet, in mounds from forty to fifty feet long, the clay, taken from the batches, lies irregularly heaped. The digging out of this clay can be done in the winter months, and gives employment to a number of men when the actual brickmaking is at a standstill. As the spring days lengthen, and the yards can again be thrown open to their full complement of workers, it is the business of the 'temperer,' as he is called, to fill his barrow from these heaps, to supply the pug-mills, which we shall presently see in action. The temperer requires a supply of water for the sufficient moistening of the clay, a mattock for loosening it, and a shovel for digging it out. We cannot do better than follow him as he wheels his load to the mill, and see the whole process through. As you near his destination the air is already thick with motes of dust, and a general atmosphere of gritty particles invades the eyes, nose, and mouth at one and the same moment. Even before you reach the drying sheds, wherein are housed some thousands of bricks, piled symmetrically and according to an undeviating plan for excluding rain while freely admitting air, you are sensible of a general flavour—a blend, as the wine-merchants would say—of brick dust, fresh mortar, and the shakings of house-flannel in rather asphyxiating conjunction.

You can look in at the huge kilns whose fires burn red and sullen behind their gratings, and turning a corner, find yourself in the very centre of the industry. In a small cleared space is the pug-mill, a machine of such simple construction as to vary little from the familiar lines of the domestic coffee-mill. A horse, mercifully hooded and blinded, is harnessed to the single shaft, and paces, hour after hour, his dreary round, seeming hardly more conscious

of the number of his revolutions round the beaten track, than the mill itself of its progress round its own axis. Two or three barefooted lads are actively engaged in bringing shovels full of clay to the side of the mill, into which they press it, to be forced out after a few revolutions in kneaded masses of a dough-like consistency. These, as fast as they emerge, are roughly formed into large balls by the 'off strikers,' whose duty it is to keep the 'moulder' or brickmaker supplied with material, and who lose no time in loading the trollys in which they bear the clay to the sheds close at hand which house the moulders.

These sheds are merely small huts constructed of bricks and boards, as a shelter from sun and rain for the workman who stands within at a table on which he shapes the bricks, and who looks up incuriously at your entrance, without a moment's cessation in his rapid manipulations. His appliances also are few in number. On one side of him stands a box of powdered slime, and a pan of water is within his reach, as not only must the boards be dusted freely to prevent the clay from adhering, but the various instruments in use require moistening from time to time, to make them run more freely over it. His motions are so rapid, that it is almost impossible to follow the several processes by which he catches up the clay, slaps it into a four-sided frame, smooths it off at the top with a thin piece of wood called a striker, turns it down on the stamp which impresses the name of the firm, and, by means of a second and larger board, slips the newly made brick to join a lengthening row at his side. Until your eye gets accustomed to the rotation of his movements, the pile beside him, for which the 'bearer off' has just arrived with his barrow, seems replenished by a sleight-of-hand trick, and you are no longer surprised to hear that a good workman can turn out 400 bricks in an hour, and about 20,000 in a week.

There are but two more processes to be gone through now; the first being the stacking of the bricks in long rows or hacks, about five or six bricks high, under a slanting cover of tiles, to be dried by the sun and the wind, unless it is late in the season, and the bricks require more effectual protection, and must be placed in the drying-houses before mentioned, where they can be left for months if needful, before being taken to the kilns to be burned. And it is this process, the final and completing one, which appears to be the most important of all; for great care has to be taken in the burning, and only an experienced 'kiln setter' can tell the precise height and duration of temperature required. The action of the fire must thoroughly reach all sides of the bricks, so that the setting of a kiln is an art in itself. Moreover, all bricks spoiled in the burning must be regarded as bricks spoiled altogether, for they cannot, as before the process, be thrown back on the slime heaps to be re-made. As a kiln holds from 120,000 to 150,000 bricks, this final operation is naturally attended with some anxiety, until the four days required for its completion have expired, and the kiln need only be left to cool on its contents. These are then carried to the storing-houses, where they are given into the charge of women, who rub each brick over on a stone before stacking them ready for use.

Very little is known of how or when the properties of the slime were discovered, or even as to the origin of the name, Bath brick. It is said that the bricks came before the public at a date contemporaneous with Bath buns, whenever that may be, and were named after them with the design of equalling them in popularity. Another conjecture is that the bricks resemble, when baked, the Bath stone of the district; while the veterans of the yards, if pressed for information on the subject, assert that Bath was the surname of the discoverer of the uses to which the product of the Bridgwater tides could be put.

This last hypothesis, though wanting corroboration, appears perhaps to have the most reason on its side, and it would seem only just that the honour of the name should rest with an initiator so gifted with close and skilful observation as he who could differentiate the deposit of the Parrett from that of any other river.

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## AFTER THE FACT.*

### CHAPTER II.

THE third constable nearly shot me through the head at sight. The twinkle of his pistol caught my eye; I threw up my arms and declared myself a friend—not, as I believe, one second too soon. Never have I seen a man more pitiably excited than this brave fellow on the back lawn. Brave he was beyond all question; but cool he was not, and I have reason to believe the conjunction is rarer in real life than elsewhere. The man on the lawn stood over six feet in his boots, and every inch of him was shaking like a jelly. Yet if our quarry had chosen that moment to make a dash for it on this side, I should have been sorry for him; my constable was suffering from nothing more discreditable than over-eagerness for the fray.

Would that I could say as much myself. Already I entirely regretted my absurd proceeding, and longed with all my heart to escape. But it was out of the question. I had put my hand most officiously to the plough, but there it must stay; and as it was too late to reconsider my position, so there was now no sense in investigating the hare-brained impulse upon which I had acted. Yet I turned it over in my mind there, with my naked feet in the cold dew, and could only suppose I had been actuated by an innate desire of mine to 'see fun' wherever fun was to be seen. One thing is certain, if I reckoned at all, it was without the bank-robber, for my old schoolfellow had put him quite out of my head. . . . And here they had him in that house! We saw their lanterns moving from room to room on the ground-floor; and I should be sorry to say

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which of us shivered most (from what different causes), the third constable or myself.

How long we waited I cannot tell; but in a little the lanterns ceased to flit behind the panes. The men had evidently gone up-stairs, and in the darkness we heard a sound as terrifying to me as it was evidently welcome to my companion. 'At last!' said he, and crept up to the back door, open-armed. We had heard the stealthy drawing of bolts; but we were destined, one of us to disappointment, the other to inexpressible relief. The door opened, and it was the sergeant upon whom his subordinate would have pounced. He stood there, beckoning without a word; and so led us to a locked room next the kitchen. His mate had gone round the front way to watch the window; we were to burst in the door and carry the room by storm; and in it, declared the sergeant, we should find our man.

We did not; and again I breathed. The room was not only empty; the window was fastened on the inside; and an accumulation of the loose fittings of the house, evidently for sale to the incoming tenant, seemed to explain the locked door. At least I said so, and the explanation was received better than it deserved. We now proceeded, all four of us (abandoning system in our unsuccess), to search the cellar; but our man was not there, and I began to tell myself he was not in the house at all. Thus, as my companions lost their heads and rushed to the attics as one man, I found mine and elected to remain below. The room we had broken into was the one I chose to wait in; for I had explored no other, and wherever else he might be, the robber was not here. Judge then of my feelings when I heard him moving under my feet. Horror glued me where I stood, unable to call out, unable to move; my eyes fast as my feet to the floor, watching a board that moved in the dim light of a candle-end found and lit by one of the constables at our first inspection. The board moved upward; a grimy face appeared through the aperture; it was that of my old school-fellow, Deedes *major*.

'For God's sake, Beetle, help me out of this!' he whispered.

'Deedes!' I could only murmur; and again, 'Deedes!'

'Yes, yes,' said he impatiently. 'Think of the old school—and tell me where they are! Are they gone?'

'Only up-stairs. What on earth's at the bottom of this, Deedes?' I asked him sternly.

'A mistake—a beastly mistake,' said he. 'They gave chase to me shortly after I left you. I got in here, but the one chap daren't follow me alone, and I ripped up this floor and got under while he was whistling away outside. I spotted a loose board by treading on it, and that bit of luck's just saved my bacon.'

'Has it? I'm not so sure,' said I, walking to the door and listening. 'What do they want you for?'

'Would you believe it? For sticking up the bank—when I was out at my lunch! Did you ever hear such rot?'

'I don't know; if you're an innocent man, why not behave like one? Why hide—they're coming down!' I broke off, hearing them. 'Stop where you are! You can never get out in time!'

His face in the candle-light gleamed very pale between the blotches of dust and dirt; but I fancied it brightened at my involuntary solicitude.

'You will help me?' he whispered eagerly. 'For the sake of the good old school,' he wheedled, playing still upon the soft spot I had discovered to him earlier in the night. It was a soft spot still. I remembered him in the eleven; then overcame the memory, and saw him for what he was now.

'Hush!' said I from the door. 'I want to listen.'

'Where are they now?'

'Looking on the next landing.'

'Then now's my time!'

'Not it,' said I, putting my back against the door.

He rose waist-high through the floor, his dark eyes blazing, his right hand thrust within his coat; and I knew what was in the hand I could not see.

'Shoot away!' I jeered. 'You haven't done murder yet. You daren't do it now!'

'I dare do anything,' he growled. 'But you—you'll never go and give a chap away, Beetle?'

'You'll give yourself away if you don't get under that this instant. They're coming down. Stop where you are, and I'll see you again; try to get out of it, and I promise you you're a gone coon!'

He disappeared without a word, and I ran out to salute my comrades in the hall.

'Well,' cried I, 'what luck?'

'None at all,' replied the sergeant angrily. 'I could have sworn it was this house, but I suppose we must try the next. How we've missed him is more than I can fathom!'

A slaty sky denoted imminent dawn as we emerged from the house; the chill of dawn was in the air, and there was I in nothing but pyjamas. One of the constables remarked upon my condition, and the sergeant (good man) made me a pathetic speech of thanks, and recommended me to my clothes. If they needed further assistance they could get it next door, but he was afraid his man had made a longer flight than that. And indeed when I returned to the spot, in my clothes, an hour later, there was no sign of the police in the road; and I was enabled to slip into the empty house unobserved.

I got in through an open window, broken near the hasp, by which the fugitive himself had first effected an entry. In the early morning light the place looked different and very dirty; and as I entered the room with the burst door, I thought it also very still. I tore up the loose boards, and uttered an exclamation which resounded horribly in the desolation. Deedes was gone. I poked my head below the level of the floor, but there was no sign of him underneath. As I raised it again, however, there was a soft step on the threshold, and he stood there in his socks, smiling, with a revolver in his hand.

For one instant I doubted his intention; the next, the weapon dropped into his pocket, and his smile broadened as though he had read my fear.

'No, no, Beetle,' said he; 'it's not for you. I couldn't be sure it *was* you, that was all. So you're as good as your word! I hardly expected you so soon—if at all!'

'Do you remember my word?' said I meaningly, for his coolness irritated me beyond measure. His very face and hands he had contrived to cleanse at some of the taps. He might have been in bed all night and neglected nothing but his chin and his hair. And this was the man of whom a whole colony would talk this morning, for whom a whole colony would hunt all day.

'Your word?' he said. 'You promised to help me.'

'On terms.'

'Half-profits?' said he. 'Well, I'm agreeable to that. Then you haven't forgotten our conversation last night?'

'At least I'm glad,' I replied, 'to see you make no more bones about your guilt. Where's the money? I want it all.'

'You're greedy, Beetle!'

'Confound you!' I cried. 'Do you think I want to compromise myself by being found here with you? For two pins I'll leave you to get out of this as best you can. You know me. I want that twenty thousand pounds. I want it to pay back into the bank. Then I'll do what I can, but not until.'

I saw his dark eyes blazing as they had blazed in the candle-light. He was between me and the door, and I knew that for any gain to him I never should have left that room alive. At least I believed so then; I believe so now; but at that moment his manner changed, he gave in to me, and yet maintained a coolness and a courage in his peril which more than fascinated me. They made me his slave. I could have screened him all day for the pure æsthetic joy of contemplating those fearless, dare-devil eyes, and hearing that cynical voice of unaffected ease. But the money I insisted on having.

'That's all very well,' said he; 'but I haven't got it here. I planted it.'

'Tell me where.'

'I can't; I could never make it plain; it's not an obvious place at all. Still I accept your terms. Bring me a change of clothes to-night—I daren't face daylight—and I give you my word you shall have the stuff to take back to the bank. I've made a bungle of it; thought of it for weeks, and bungled it after all! It was that Barwon business tempted me. I wasn't ready, but couldn't resist the big haul. All I want now is to get out of it with a whole skin. And by Jove! I see the way! You go to old I'Anson with the money, and get him to say he'll see me. Then I'll tell him it was all a practical joke—done for a bet—anything you like—and if the thing don't altogether blow over, well, I'll get off lighter than I deserve. The old chap will stand by me at all events; he's got his reasons.'

I refrained from asking what they were. I fancied I knew, and hoped I did not. But Deedes demanded more than a silent consent to his plans.

'Look here: are you on, Beetle, or are you not?'

'Can I trust you?'

'I give you my word upon it; till yesterday it was the word of an honest man.'

'You want a rig-out as different as possible from what you have on?'

'Yes, and some whiskers or something, if you can possibly get hold of any. Your friends are great on theatricals. Ask to look at their props!'

'You'll pay back every penny, and plead a practical joke?'

'Yes, I promise it. Man, it's to my own interest. I see no other way out of it, Beetle. I'm fairly cornered; only help me to pay back before I'm caught, and at least I'll get off light.'

'Very well,' said I. 'On those conditions I will help you. Where were you when I came in?'

'In the cellar; it's safer and also more comfortable than under the floor.'

'Then I advise you to go back there, for I'm off. If I'm found here we shall be run in together!'

He detained me, however, a moment more. It was to put a letter in my hands, a stout missive addressed in pencil to myself.

'You see I've been busy while you were gone,' he said, in a tone quite shy for him. 'Read that after your breakfast. It may make you think less ill of me. And, for the love of Heaven, deliver the enclosures!'

I undertook to do so; my interest, however, was as yet confined to the outer envelope, a clean piece of stationery, never used before.

'Upon my word,' said I, 'you have come prepared! No doubt you have provisions too?'

He produced a packet and a flask. 'Sandwiches and whisky,' said he, 'in case of need!'

I looked hard at him; it may have been my imagination, but for once I thought he changed colour.

'Deedes,' said I, 'you're a cold-blooded, calculating villain; but I must say I can't help admiring you!'

'And trusting me about to-night?' he added, with some little anxiety.

'I wouldn't trust you a bit,' I replied, 'if it weren't to your own interest to do everything you've said you'll do. Luckily, it is. There's a hue and cry for you in this town. Every hole and corner will be watched *but* the bank. You can't hope to get away; and by far your wisest plan is the one you've hit upon, to return the money and throw yourself on your manager's mercy.'

'It is,' he answered, with his foot upon the cellar stairs; 'and you bet old I'Anson won't make it harder than necessary for *me*. It's a clever idea. I should never have thought of it but for you. Old man, I'm grateful; it's more than I deserve!'

And I left him with my hand aching from a grip as warm as that of any honest man; and what was stranger yet, the incredible impression of a catch in my villain's voice. Here, however, I felt I must be mistaken, but my

thoughts were speedily distracted from the anomaly. I had a milkman to dodge as I made my escape from the garden of the empty house. And half-way down the road I met none other than the poor discomfited sergeant of the night.

'Been having another look at the house,' said I, with the frankness that disarms suspicion.

'See anything fresh?'

'Nothing.'

'You wouldn't. I don't believe the beggar was in the house two minutes. Still I thought I'd like to have a squint myself by daylight; and there'll be little damages to repair where we come in. So long, mister; you done your best; it wasn't *your* fault.'

He was gone. I looked after him with my heart in my mouth. I watched him to the gate. Would he come forth alone—or ever? I saw the last of the sergeant; and then—I fled.

## ON COMING TO LONDON.

By Nicol Watson.

Perhaps there are not in the language another four words of such significance as these: He came to London. No matter of whom said, poet or peasant, merchant or mechanic, they record a step always momentous and not seldom fateful. To recall it brings back the dreams of youth, and the glamour of setting out in life. Wherever the human barque may at last have cast anchor in that wondrous ocean of London, and whatever may have been the adventures of the voyage, matters not. At the call of memory, back again comes the young elation of that day when, with all our bunting aloft, we shot forth in quest of fortune or fame on its waters.

The story-book of our childhood records that when Dick Whittington found himself homeless on his first night in London, he sat down in the streets and cried. Never believe it: the thing is not credible. What he did do was to walk on through her mysterious highways, where every house seemed a palace, and every shop a cave of wealth, building up hopes for the morrow. Boys like Dick do not cry in such circumstances.

It is said also that he was hungry. He may have been without food for a time, but assuredly he was not conscious of it; there were other things than bread to feed upon just then. We are told further that it was the bells of Bow Church that rang out 'Turn again;' but neither is that to be believed. The refrain he heard was the melodious chime of his own brave young heart, to which Bow Bells but lent an opportune accompaniment and confirmation.

A man who had travelled much, seeing many lands and varied peoples, confessed that he had never felt the delight of satisfied curiosity in such fullness as on the day when he first walked into London, a mere youth, and stood amidst the crowd and shops of Regent Street. A born wanderer by nature, and possessed of the means to gratify his desires, his fancy had fixed on Cashmere, out of many places full of wonder and romance, as a land where he should find truest enjoyment. To foster this idea he avoided all books that affected to treat of Cashmere, and refused to believe that anybody had ever been there. In his imagination he saw it as a region of flowery valleys, soft-watered meads, peaceful vistas, and perpetual sunshine. He duly reached Cashmere, and he has long since returned, a thing he once thought might never happen. Of Cashmere he speaks reasonably and with calm appreciation; but ask him to tell again of how he first came to London, and in answering, his voice takes a tone of enthusiasm and mystery. He refuses to sully the recollection by analysis, or dim it by any later disenchantment. He was young then, and it was London.

Shakespeare 'came to London,' entered, in fact, into eternal fame through its gates. Why he came, or precisely when, is largely a matter of conjecture. Over this, as over so much of his life, lies a veil that he himself never chose to lift. That he was poor is certain, and highly probable that he was quite unfriended. Whether he had any consciousness or persuasion of his almost miraculous gifts we can only guess. The impulse that led him there cannot have been altogether due to chance or whim; but that he could have foreseen the splendid result is altogether impossible. Like many a less-gifted mortal, he sustained the struggle of hope and fear. The first folio of his plays sells to-day for a large sum of money; but let us imagine a romance, worth twenty islands of treasure. Suppose some one, wrenching away a shaky panel in an old house in Warwickshire, came upon a concealed cupboard, wherein lay, thick with the dust of three hundred years, a roll of manuscript, curled and yellow with age. And suppose that, on unfolding it, he found it bore the title 'The Life of me, William Shakespeare.' Here surely would be a record of unparalleled interest, and chiefly the chapter which should tell of how he came to London. Think of what that step was to him, consider the power of his mind, imagine it at the age of fifty, looking back with calm unruffled insight on its own history as a drama, and then reflect what he, Shakespeare, could say about that youthful entry into London, and how depict it. A king's ransom could not buy the chapter, and a temple would be a poor place to house it.

A notable arrival in London was Doctor Johnson. He brought with him a sturdy, well-ordered mind, and no unrealisable dreams. No fever of living or romance of achievement was allowed to embitter him in his first struggles. He set himself resolutely for a long fight. The particulars of these early days are lost to us. Boswell tells us little, and what the Doctor did not confide to him he probably did not mean to be known. It is not difficult to imagine, however, in their most salient features, his first years in London. In a fine passage Boswell tells us that Johnson's sense of superiority over his fellows was not assumed from vanity, but was the result of the natural and constant effort of those extraordinary powers of mind of which he could not but be conscious by comparison. Johnson, says his immortal biographer, did not strut or stand on tiptoe; he only did not stoop. Erect and clear-minded, he lodged at a stay-

maker's, and dined at a tavern off a cut from the joint and bread, which, including a regular penny for the waiter, cost him eightpence per day. His pride was not of the fretful sort that spends itself in laments over the neglect of genius; it was an honest working pride. He knew it was only from the few he had to look for acknowledgment, and there was but one way to gain it—labour and worthiness. Boswell, using the common simile, speaks of him launching on the ocean of London; and if London is an ocean, the men are ships, amongst which towered Johnson's richly freighted galleon, at whose mast-head flew a lord-high-admiral's flag of rectitude and religion. She held on an even course, turning aside for no enchanted isles or bays of luxurious rest. Johnson's coming to London was amply justified. He never again forsook her; he loved her streets, was jealous of her honour, evidenced in his behaviour her dignity and might, dying at last in her embrace, a true Londoner, and a great citizen, to whom fields were fields, and men—souls.

A different and a sadder type of those who come to London was Chatterton, the young poet, who, at the age of barely eighteen years, in bitter disappointment and defeat took his own life, and was buried in a nameless grave. Stripped of all questions of literary morality, his short career is perhaps the most woful in London's history. He entered her gates with but a few pounds in money, but with such a plenitude of wealth in his teeming brain as no other poet ever brought. His rapidity and skill in production were alike marvellous, and he could write with equal force on opposite sides of a question, boasting of the fact. At first it seemed as if he was to succeed. In return for political articles Lord Mayor Beckford extended to him some countenance, although as yet no payment; but in a week or two the death of Beckford extinguished his hopes in that direction. Chatterton's letters to his mother at this time were full of a boastful confidence. Never fear, was their proud purport; I have the ability, and must in the end prevail. His prolific brain turned out essays, operas, songs, anything and everything, but for such a miserable return of cash that he was forced to live on bread alone, which he bought stale that it might last the longer. This is the tragedy: on the one side a proud, self-conscious youth of miraculous gifts; on the other, vast, frowning, unresponsive London, —London, with its avenues of wealth, its pinnacles of fame, its crowns of achievement. It was these that drew him away from Bristol and the mother for whom he retained so pure an affection. Here in London they seemed more distant, more difficult of attainment than when he but dreamed of them afar off at home. The fane that glittered so bravely at a distance was lost to the sight of him who stood at its base. And so in that little dark attic-room near by the turmoil of Holborn, weak from want, but stern in his pride, confessing defeat to no one but himself, the youthful poet swallows the little dose of arsenic, and passes away into silence. He came to London, and the sole gift he earned was a pauper's coffin. The great city neither heeded nor knew, and through her gates next day passed the due quota of new adventurers for fortune or fame.

With much hesitation and reluctance Carlyle came to London. His motive and reasons may be found set forth with ample fullness in his Letters and Reminiscences. Over all these lies the persistent determination not to be of London; to be in it, but not part of it. The effect is picturesque and full of fine moral contrasts, but London was greater than he. True, she wanted him, but he must come to her, not she to him. The prophetic strains sent forth from the seclusion of Craigenputtock fell faintly on a small audience; issuing from London they struck the ear of the universe. Nowhere have the sentiments of the comer to London been set forth with such accuracy and insight as in many passages scattered over Carlyle's letters. In seeking merely to describe the house near the New River in Upper Clerkenwell, where he visited Irving, he depicts the very atmosphere and character of the neighbourhood. An hour in Kensington Gardens gives rise to a subtle picture of the place. He saw London with the poet's eye, looking beneath the obvious, and realising the wondrous life and movement for ever in action. He called London a modern Babylon, a turgid stream of ignoble life, and many other hard names. That was the protest of a proud mind, which held itself aloof. But still she drew him. He came, remained, and was of her. With lavish liberality she has laid Chelsea at his feet as an offering to his memory for all time. Ecclefechan possesses his mortal remains, but these she does not grudge, who holds the record of fifty years of his immortal activity.

Notwithstanding the daily post, and ever-increasing facilities of communication, the human stream still sets towards London. Her gates are thronged as before by new-comers with the same old hopes. Wherever there is an ambition, thither it tends, for sometimes London rewards with a regal hand. She is a world in herself. She holds forth temptations and teaches temperance; she confers fame and imposes humility; bestows wealth and enjoins charity. She has Ariel-like messages for such as can wield spells; monitions that the hills cannot give; lessons that the purling brook is innocent of; and one stone of her pavements can tell more than all the pebbles in the forest of Arden or elsewhere.

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## THE HERMIT.

By C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne.

### I.

When ladies go alligator-hunting, they should clearly understand that people whom they find, and associate with most freely, in an Alabaman bayou, should not always be bowed to in Piccadilly. This sounds simple; an axiom, in fact; but because Miss Wilcoxn did such an uncalled for bowing, things happened which put two most respectable families in a condition of open fury, and I earned dislike as the Origin of Evil. As a matter of accuracy my yacht-mate was far more guilty than I. He had gone a-fishing one day in his shirt, and had spent

eight hours sandwiched in between wind and water, and had naturally returned with his legs bitten red raw by the sun. He developed a temper in consequence, that would have made him shunned in the Pit, and I was driven into a deed of temporary separation.

But first, as I am standing here on my defence, let it be clearly understood that I found Atcheson before I knew Miss Wilcoxn was yachting with the Van Sciaks in Mobile Bay, before, in fact, I knew that the lady was in America at all. I had seen her last in a West Kensington drawing-room, and (if the complete truth be told) had slipped her from my thoughts with a perfunctory hand-shake. One meets so many people.

Moreover, Atcheson was introduced by the *Parcae*. Being ignorant of the man's existence, I naturally did not seek for him specially. He lived two days deep in swampy country which is not yet charted in the United States maps.

Our yacht was then in the Bayou of Bon Secours (which opens off Mobile Bay), and the Man with the Sunburnt Legs said with many adjectives, that movement for him was out of the question. He remarked that he would stay on the sloop and fish for gaff tops'ls (as they call the cat-fish), and cavallos, and sheep-heads, and sharks, and whatever else he could get; and said that polite conversation was a strain to him. He stated that our crew (of one negro) would make a suitable butt for his future remarks, and put forward the suggestion that I should take myself off. 'Go and hunt alligators up the lagoons, and live like a savage in the swamps, and eat crackers and trout, and catch fever if there's any throwing about,' said the Man with the Sunburnt Legs; 'that'll be about your form.' So I pitied the nigger and went off—in pale pink pyjamas, and the ten-foot yawl-boat.

The sail to the head of the bayou was simple. Then there were two miles to be punted to the long narrow sliver of lagoon which lies inside the sand-dunes of the Mexican Gulf. The cypresses, and the black pines, and the magnolias arched above the cut, and fronds of palmetto which grew on chumps of soil, slashed at one like knives. The atmosphere was a hot moist stew, and there was a smell about it half-way between rotten eggs and the Harrogate pump-room. Also there were flies in all abundance, which fancied themselves masterless dogs, and bit accordingly.

The subsequent sail down the lagoon, under a brazen torrent of sunshine, came as one of the seven pleasures of life. There was a great wall of trees on the landward side, rearing itself from the water's lip in a hedge of under-growth. To southward, from over the rambling line of dunes, with their fringes of scrub-grass and palmetto, came the dim bellow of the surf as it creamed and crumbled on the white Gulf sand. And down the silver ripples of the lagoon there blew an air, faintly salt, which chilled the wet cotton against one's spine, and pushed the yawl-boat on with the twinkle of fountains under her stem.

The lagoon bayed to an end, and there opened out another channel to be punted through, a narrow winding canal of twirls and branches through quaking marsh land, a waterway rustling with fish, and ablaze with yellow lilies. Cardinal birds peered at one from the bushes, and purple herons thrust out curious beaks from the grass-clumps. It was all very peaceable, and extremely hot.

Then there came a lake with islands, a lake of water called by courtesy fresh, which was lemon-yellow to look through, and black to look upon. It swarmed with fish, which took the hook, and were supped upon for their sins; and because there was no whisky in the yawl-boat for dilution, it served as a beverage in all its sulphurous nastiness. Then the sun dipped behind the forests at the back, and night followed like the shutting down of a box. One mounted a bull's-eye lantern on the hat-band, which would shine down a rifle's sights, and put out again in the boat, paddling stealthily. It is not always easy to distinguish between a firefly and the gleam from an alligator's eye, and shots are apt to be wasted and the neighbourhood scared. But on that night fortune held, and the lead went home six several times. Then the dead were made more safely dead with the axe, and their slayer laid him down to sleep on the boat's floor with his head beside the centre-board trunk.

So passed my first night away from the sloop. The morning was occupied in the process of skinning, and then once more on towards the east. There were more lakes and more canals all full of their own new wonders; and ever away in the distance on the starboard hand was the noise of the surf as it broke where the logs from the Gulf rivers bristle in the milky sand. In late afternoon I came to a lagoon with a wooded island in it, and amongst the trees of the island, when they grew distinct from one another, I saw a man.

I bore down to him under sail (for there was a spanking breeze coming in from the sea), and when we were within hailing distance, the boat grounded.

'Do you want to land here?' he shouted.

'I don't mind if I do.'

'Then shove off again, and drop down to the tail of the island and luff up sharp where you see a barked tree on the beach. There's no deep water till you come to there.'

I did as he told me, put the boat's nose on a small beach of pebbles, and waited, smoking. I waited half an hour maybe, and then he strolled up very leisurely with his thumbs in the waistbelt of his trousers. I can't say he seemed over pleased to see me. He asked with point what I had come for.

I told him, and then said, 'By the way, you're a 'Varsity man, aren't you?'

'Yes, Oxford: the House. You are, too, I've a notion?'

'From over the way: Pembroke.'

'Well, if you've nothing better on, leave your boat and come up to my place. Sorry I didn't tumble to you at first, but then you don't look over respectable just now. Are you much down on your luck?'

'Oh, I'm not hunting alligators professionally. I'm here for amusement.'

I concluded he was there because he had got into trouble with the Law of the Land elsewhere, but I did not suggest this, because it is

considered rude to touch upon family matters uninvited. But after a minute he broached the topic himself. 'I'm here for amusement myself,' he said. 'I'm here permanently.'

By this time we had got into a bit of a clearing inside the wall of trees—a patch of sorghum, another of sweet potatoes, another of corn with stalks that stood ten feet high, and a goodly planting of green tobacco plants, with a shambling palmetto shuck at the back.

'Faith,' I said, 'you've queer notions of a pleasure-resort.'

'I'm a man,' he said, 'with an imagination. Consequently I make a most comfortable hermit. Come in and take a hammock. Where's our eight on the river?'

I told him, and we went on hard at boating shop till the sun went out. It was wonderful what a lot of men we knew in common when we began to talk things over, and it turned out that we had rowed against one another at Henley for two events. 'Of course,' he broke out at once; 'you are the Macdonald who swam down from Marsh lock to Henley bridge in your clothes the last night of the races because you said you hadn't been allowed a decent dip all through the training.' And 'By Jove!' I said, 'you are Atcheson of the Leander who steered their Stewards' four from bow, and ran five feet of her through the side of an oak dinghy.' Whereat we both laughed, and knew one another extremely well. After this I asked him if he ever ate.

'Why, yes,' he said, 'I'd forgotten. What'll you have? There's some boiled fish, and sweet spuds and molasses. The fish is on the floor in the far corner there, and the rest is mixed ready in the saucepan. There are no plates. Help yourself.'

'Candles?' I suggested.

'Haven't such a thing; or lamp. Can't you feed in the dark? There will be a moon above the tree-tops directly, if you want light.'

'I say, am I to ladle up this stuff with my fingers?'

Atcheson laughed. 'I'm not going to lend you mine,' he said. 'Why, what a luxurious sybarite you must be. Climb back, Macdonald, down the centuries, and enjoy yourself as Primitive Man. Feast and be filled, and then come to your hammock again and talk intellectually. There's a tin down there somewhere with water in it, or coffee, I forget which. Drink when you're dry.'

I began to have a strong idea that the man was mad; but I stopped my hunger on his victuals for all that; and then relit my pipe and went on with the talk.

From the other side of the clearing came the noises of the night—the chatter of katydids and the rustle of jarflies, the love-song of tree crickets and toads, the deep reed notes of frogs in their patches of marsh; and through all mingled the heavy diapason of the surf, from across the dunes, and the forest, and the black waters of the lake, mellowed by its passage through the purple night. I am the most practical and unpoetical creature in the world, as a general thing, but the influence of it was too heavy for me. I started on to chat again about the boats, and about women, and yachts, and books, and the other interests of the outer world; but the things fell flat, and presently the talk died out of us altogether. We lay there, hung in silence, and sensuously drinking in what the night gave up. We must have spent hours without throwing down a word.

Then Atcheson spoke. 'That is my usual concert,' he said. 'One gets to like it.'

I did not answer at once. I could not, although his words came clearly enough to my ears. A sort of mesmeric doze pinned me down.

When I managed to rouse, I felt angry with myself for weakness, and spoke with a sneer. 'You must find it mighty monotonous,' I said.

'A mistake, an utter mistake. It is full of infinite variety: it never repeats itself; and I know, because I have listened to it now for three years, in calm, in cyclone, in every kind of night which God will give. It is His orchestra, but until the taste has grown, one does not know this.'

Another pause. Then, 'Are you going to write about this Walden Pond of yours?' I asked.

'I am no Thoreau with a pen. Besides, I am selfish, and if I could set this down I would not. One man in ten thousand might understand, some wild fellow, who had lived in the air, with the things that grow in the air away from the pestilence of cities, and he would never lift a book; but the others would either yawn or deride, and I take it this is no matter to be profaned. And yet there is nothing new in it all: only the old things changed. I have rambled over the world, and seen and tried most pleasures: the sounds here give it all back to me again, only here it is idealised.'

'I hardly understand.'

'Listen to the Gulf surf rumbling on those beaches.'

'It is like the roar of the Prater, or the Strand, or the Rambla, or Broadway, as it comes to an upper window.'

'You can hear that: I can make out more, because my ear is trained. I can hear the voices and what they say—the tales of love, and hope, and hate; the merry laugh, the curses, the wild and bitter laugh; and in the tree-tops yonder I can see these people who move and live, and follow them as they pass along, with their skirts rustling, and their shoulders jostling one another. The place is full of life to me and full of company, and I can revel in it all without being mixed in the dirt and the pains and the squalor. And it is very beautiful also. What picture did you ever see like that?'

He waved a hand to where the red moon and a patch of purple sky hung framed in a black arch of the pines. In the foreground the lake lay twinkling beyond a great fan of palms. On the flank was spread a thick magnolia tree, full of scented blossom, and splashed with cones of coral pink.

I looked, and hung on my gaze; and once more the silence grew between us.

The spell of the place was closing down again and pinning me. I roused myself with an effort, and swore for relief. 'Atcheson,' I said, 'I believe you are either the devil, or

Circe with a changed sex. Be merciful and speak no more, and let me sleep. If I listen on I shall forget the place from whence I am come, and stay here, and become as one of the swine.'

'I am sorry,' Atcheson said, 'and because I do not want converts or companions I will say no more. Therefore sleep you.'

II.

The miasma of the lotus was in my veins, and I knew it and feared. I woke sullen and suspicious with the first lift of day, and got down to my boat. Atcheson came after and cried a pleasant *auf wiedersehen*, and I answered with a scowl and threw out the sculls. I was very angry with myself, and still more frightened. I had been in that kind of temptation before, and knew what it was afterwards to wish that I had fallen. Consequently I made up my mind to get back to the yacht without a halt, and so put in a day of savage toil; and because the sun above burned like a kettle of molten brass, and the air baked, the material pains of the body gave me other matters to think about. And when I made out the sloop's riding-light dancing on her forestay, I knew there was another antidote close at hand. The Man with the Sunburnt Legs was a very carnal and practical sort of person.

He received me affably. He fed me first with sumptuousness, referred to the decrease of his own affliction, and then told me that we and the oysterman no longer had the bayou to ourselves.

'The Van Sciaks have come in with their schooner,' he said; 'and they've a girl on board who says she knows you—a Miss Wilcoxn.'

'Ah,' I said, 'I know her well enough. We used to see a goodish deal of one another once.'

'If you mean that you were spoons on the lady,' said the Man with the Sunburnt Legs, 'I guess you'd better forget that. She's engaged to a Yankee man from Massachusetts now, a person with culture and dollars—heaps of dollars—about ten million of 'em, so I believe. And being *anno aetatis suae* twenty-eight, she knows what is a soft thing, and is not likely to chuck it up. Take off those rags and put on something respectable, and we'll make the nigger scull us across. She said I was to bring you when you turned up.'

'Not now. At present I am going to turn in to sleep. Probably I shall die in the course of the night. It will save me the trouble and pain of kicking myself if I do.'

'Did you,' said the Man with the Sunburnt Legs, 'in the course of your wanderings find a place where they sold corn whisky? Oh, you're snoring already, are you? Surely it's drunk you are, my son, because otherwise you've come back very dotty. What rot to go and live like a hermit all by your lonesome.'

III.

Miss Wilcoxn was a young woman with a great notion of having her own way. Had I known her less, I should have tried to avoid speaking on a matter which I preferred to keep silence upon. Being acquainted as we were, I did not bring out any futile stubbornness.

She wanted to know what there was to be seen in the lagoons and lakes, and I told her, with one reservation; but my tale did not quite hold water, and she twigged that there was something left out, and demanded to hear what it was. Whereupon I shrugged my shoulders helplessly, and told her about Atcheson, chapter, commas, and verse, merely lying in the solitary instance of a personal name.

'You say that he is a Christ Church man?' she demanded, when I had finished.

'Did I say so?'

'You did; and you mentioned also that he rowed against you at Henley for the Stewards' and the Ladies' Plate. That fixes him. If you'd done me the compliment to remember, I was down there on a houseboat that year. And so, of course, his name isn't Foote at all?'

'Perhaps it's got changed,' I admitted weakly. 'Men's names do, you know, when they climb down the scale as he's done.'

'Hum,' she said, and pulled down a chart of the Northern Gulf Coast from its cleat in the cabin roof. 'Now show exactly where this hermit lives.'

'The chart's all wrong. The place in there isn't surveyed.'

'Precisely. But you've been there, and you know the lay of it. Don't be shy. Your powers, my dear Mac, in that direction are notorious. Here's a pencil. Fill it in accurately, and tell me the landmarks from the Gulf side.'

'If you go up there, and see this fellow, and sleep even one night in those swamps, you'll catch fever and die. Also, the mosquitoes and the sandflies will eat most of you before death comes. Don't be a fool. What more do you want to know about the man? Stay here, and I will tell you.'

'My excellent Mac, I have pumped you dry. For the rest I must see him myself. And I shall not die of fever, because I shall get this yacht to take me round to the outside, and go from there, and so not have to spend a night ashore at all. Nor will the insects of the swamps devour me, because I own a wide-brimmed hat, and a large and most excellent veil.'

'Well,' said I, 'if you will do this thing, at all events you shall do it decently. There's a small creek on beyond, up which we will incite the Van Sciaks to take the yacht. I'll bring our sloop. We will go with the pretence of alligator-hunting.'

'You are an excellent person, Mac. You always see your own tastes arn't trampled on.'

'My dear Mary, the alligator-shooting is a piece of deception for which I blush. It is entirely on your behalf that I take up any more of it. You ought to be extremely grateful; not sarcastic. Go now and wheedle the Van Sciaks, and I'll go and get my own boat under weigh.'

In an hour's time the two yachts were standing out board and board over the shallow bar which guards the entrance to Bayou Bon

Secours. There was a romping breeze from the nor'ard, and we span at eight knots past the low shore, where only the tree-stems show above the water. Then we slipped out through the channel between Dauphin Island and Fort Morgan, and lifted to the swing of the outer sea, running east along the Gulf Coast. Night had fallen before we made the creek, and we tacked in over the bar by blazing moonlight, with centre-boards up, and the breeze eddying light and fitful through the trees. That night we took the rifles and the bull's-eye lanterns, and shot a dozen alligators by way of giving ourselves countenance.

Of course, Miss Wilcoxn did go to see Atcheson. I took her to the island myself, through an intolerable maze of lakes and waterways, and told the Van Sciaks that we hoped to slay alligators by daylight, which is probably the baldest excuse a grown man with a pretty invention ever made. But I will give the girl credit for one thing—she didn't stay talking to the fellow for more than ten minutes. What she said to him I don't know, because my instructions were to stay by the boat and see if it didn't drift away. But when she came back, and we rowed off, she found cause to comment that Atcheson was a curious handful.

'I told you that before,' I said. 'Now you've learnt it for yourself, I trust you're satisfied?'

'I am entirely, Mac. I hope you are too?'

'I don't know about that. But I do know I'm extremely hot.'

'Well then, hurry and get back, and I'll fix you up a mint-julep. We've ice on board, and all the other necessaries, and Mr Van Sciak has shown me how to use a swizzle-stick. He said it might come in useful, as I had thoughts of settling in America, don't you know?'

'So I've been given to understand. As you have not had my congratulations before, please accept them now in all fullness. I suppose I'm scratched from the running now?'

'Com-pletely, my dear boy. And it doesn't surprise you in the least, or disappoint you either. We'd have quarrelled like cat and dog. We've no tastes in common. For instance, except for perhaps once, I loathe alligator-hunting.'

And so we went back, and I was rewarded not with one julep only, but several.

The Van Sciaks wanted to go to Mississippi Sound next day, and as the other man and I were bound for Pensacola, in Florida, the yachts separated, and I did not see Miss Wilcoxn again for some time. But I heard of some of her doings, which, to say the least of them, seemed eccentric. Also, which was worse, they were unworldly. Young men with culture and ten million dollars are not to be picked up every day; nor should they be thrown lightly aside.

But when I got back to town, and, to my vast astonishment saw Atcheson there, then a light began to dawn upon me. He was marching down Pall Mall as large as life, and very resplendent. He had on a frock-coat down to his heels, the last gift of the gods in the way of hat and tie, and a new reaped chin, which stood out refreshingly white against the rest of his countenance. He shook me by the hand and said I was a great man. Then we went into a club and talked for several hours without a stop, and he explained to me how a hermit cannot hermitise unless he has a disease vulgarly known as the 'hump.'

'It's enjoyable enough whilst you have that,' said Atcheson, 'but when the hump goes, the bottom's knocked out of the hermit business altogether. What a filthy, squalid brute I must have been all that time.'

'But you liked it well enough.'

'I believe I did, in my morbid way. But it's over and done with now, thank Heaven! and "I'm going to marry Yum-Yum, Yum-Yum, your anger pray tarry"—— Oh, bother, I've forgotten the words. Jove! I shall have a lot to pick up again.'

'That's a fact,' I said. 'Ordinary sanity amongst other things. And so you're going to marry Mary Wilcoxn, after all?'

'It's a sure thing. Of course, her people were mad, because I'm not very well off, don't you know; and the other Johnnie's people are mad, too, at his being cut out. But you're the person they can't get over. It's you they are wild at principally. They will persist in it that you're at the bottom of the whole thing. Isn't it delightfully funny?'

I didn't think it funny at all. I make quite sufficient enemies off my own bat for personal consumption. And, besides, as I have said, if the other fool hadn't got his legs sunburned, I shouldn't have gone off *solus* in the yawl-boat, and meddled with Atcheson at all.

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## 'OUR UNINVITED GUESTS.'

We live in one of the western counties of Ireland, and last winter our house was invaded by unexpected guests. These were two robins! When first they came, they explored every nook and corner in the house, and were seemingly satisfied, and made themselves familiar with everybody, remaining indoors at night, but flying off every morning. It was amusing to see them dart at their reflection in the mirrors; but they soon learned they were attacking an imaginary foe. After some time, we observed them carrying in their beaks withered leaves, moss, and other dry substances; and accident disclosed that nest-building operations were being busily conducted. The place selected was a book-shelf near a window in the drawing-room. The nest when discovered was nearly finished, and much ingenuity had been expended on its construction. The books—a library edition of Dickens—did not occupy the entire space on the shelf; so the birds laid the foundation on the shelf at the back of the books, and filled up the unoccupied space next the wall with the building materials to the height of the books, and then formed the nest over the ends

of the volumes. However, this nest was left unfinished, and the birds went to the Library: they displayed an evident love for literature! Here they began two nests, both in book-cases in different parts of the room. Neither of these sites pleased the builders, for eventually they resumed work on the first nest in the drawing-room, and soon completed it. If one ventured near the nest during the progress of building, the birds would fly out and, with a shrill chirp, peck the hand or head of the intruder; but unless they went near the nest, the robins did not otherwise notice the occupants of the room.

Spring was now advancing, and the birds seldom stayed indoors. When the hen began laying, she came in through our bedroom window—which we kept open at night—between five and six every morning, flew down the staircase into the room below, and, having laid her egg, went off till next morning. This continued for four mornings, and then she began hatching on five eggs, on the 14th of April, and the young birds were out of the shells on the 28th. The eggs were all fertile; so we had five young robins. The mother sat on the youthful brood for about eight days; she then left the nest, and spent the nights out of doors with her mate, returning to the house between four and five A.M. to feed the young ones. On the 10th of May the young birds abandoned the nest, and did not return even at night, but perched here and there on different articles in the room. We kept them in the house at much inconvenience till the 13th of May; then opening all windows and doors, we induced them to take wing. One or two wished to stay, but we gave them no encouragement.

From the day the young birds were hatched, they were fed by the old ones. The flies and spiders had a bad time of it, as they formed the principal article of diet. Occasionally, a feast of worms or caterpillars was provided. It is amazing with what precision a robin will dart at the flies on a ceiling, capturing them all. We had no reason to suppose the robins intended leaving their nest when they did, except that the night previous to their flitting, one of the young lay on the verge of the nest, as if crowded out. The birds lay in the nest, three underneath and two atop. The parents guarded the nest jealously, and attacked any one who ventured near it. It is asserted that birds will forsake their nest if it is handled; but we found this to be untrue.

It is difficult to understand the care and watchfulness exercised by the old birds during the day, when they abandoned their home during the night. Although the eggs were laid on different days, the birds came out of the shells on the same day, even the same hour. The robins always attended us at meals, hopping about the table, and pecking at everything. They were specially fond of butter. They sometimes alighted on my knee and looked about from this vantage-ground quite unconcernedly. While the hen was sitting, her mate kept her supplied with food, though the hen often left the eggs for a considerable time, returning with her plumage wet, as if she had been taking a dip. On these occasions she did not resume her place on the eggs till she spent some time in preening herself.

Even while feeding the young ones out of doors, the pair were preparing for another family, and, as before, began building nests in different parts of the house. Eventually, the new nests were neglected, and the hen laid an egg in the old nest on the 25th of May. An egg which had been previously laid, and found on the kitchen table, we placed in the nest. On the 29th of May the fourth egg was laid; and on the 10th of June we observed one of the old birds on the edge of the nest with a caterpillar wriggling in its beak. Looking in, we saw that the second brood for the season was in possession. On the 22d of June the young left the nest, perching about the room as before. The hen did not sit so long on the second as on the first brood, and yet both broods left the nest at the expiration of the same number of days. The courage of the parent birds is remarkable, especially that of the mother; nothing but death alone could abate her love and passion. We tested her bravery several times, but found her courage dauntless.

We have taken pains to note the particulars we have submitted in this paper; and if a lover of the feathered tribes has gained any information from our account of the habits of our uninvited but welcome guests, we shall feel amply repaid for any inconvenience we may have encountered to give our robin friends house-room. May we add one other remark? Although frequently on the west coast of Ireland both in winter and summer, we have never seen a robin near the sea.

## A MISER'S TREASURE.

The miser lay on his dying bed,
And no voice by him made moan;
No prayer was said, and no tears were shed—
He died as he lived, alone;
And his trembling fingers, damp and cold,
Drew the iron band away
From the guarded casket, stained and old,
Where his hoarded treasures lay.

But his death-dimmed eyes in the fading light
Looked not on the rubies rare,
Nor the deep-sea pearls, nor the diamonds bright
That an empress well might wear;
And the gold that he erstwhile loved so much,
That he perilled his soul to gain,
Was brushed aside with a careless touch,
And a glance of cold disdain.

And when strangers looked on the dead in awe,
In his close-clasped icy hands
Not Golconda's flashing gems they saw,
Nor the gold of Afric's sands;
And no jewels fair beyond compare
'Tween the fingers stiff shone through,
But a golden tress of a woman's hair
In a ribbon of faded blue.

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## OBEAH.

If Mr Casaubon had lived to complete his *magnum opus*, 'A Key to All Mythologies,' one can imagine that a most interesting volume might have been given to the world on the subject of Obeah. Yet it would probably have been too elaborately learned for 'the general;' and it is because we imagine that the word conveys but a very vague meaning to the majority of readers, that we think a little discussion of the subject will be appreciated.

All readers of books of African travel, especially those relating to the West Coast, and of books about the West Indies, are more or less familiar with the word.

The word Obeah itself is applied generally to the system, but properly it means one who practises Obi. Thus, to speak of an Obeah man, or an Obeah woman, is to a certain extent tautological, yet custom has sanctioned it. Obi, in plain English, is sorcery or witchcraft, and it is an outgrowth of fetichism; but curiously, although we hear much about fetichism from African travellers, it is mostly from the West Indian negroes that we gather our knowledge of Obi. And then it is no longer the case, as it was in the time of Bryan Edwards, that only those born in Africa practise it. There must be few, if any, of the negroes now living in the West Indies who were born in Africa, and yet the practice is probably as rife as ever, although more secret. Superstition dies hard in all races, but it appears never to die at all among the black races, however they may become Christianised. Be this as it may, Obi was once so prevalent in Jamaica, and was so much associated with mysterious deaths by poison among the negroes, that a law had to be passed for its suppression. But it was not suppressed—it was only concealed.

Obeah, as far as can be gathered, seems a word used only in the West Indies, although Obi, from which it is derived, is in use on the West Coast of Africa to denote witchcraft.

Of the form Obi takes among the modern Dahomean, one learns a good deal from Captain Ellis, in his book about *The Land of Fetich*. Thus, when a Dahomean falls ill, he fancies the departed spirit of one of his ancestors wishes to see him below, and is undermining his health in order to hasten the interview. So the sick man consults a fetichman, and begs or buys his influence with the unquiet spirit, so as to defer the visit. The fetichman takes all the cowries he can get, and prophesies according to what he conceives the state of the patient to be. If he thinks the sick man will recover, he professes to have obtained by his charms permission to postpone the interview indefinitely; if the case is doubtful, he procrastinates; if the man seems certain to die, he professes to have exhausted his powers without succeeding in conciliating the unquiet spirit. The future habitation of the Dahomean soul, it should be explained, is supposed to be in a gloomy region under the earth, and very like the world *minus* its beauty and pleasures.

On the Slave Coast there is a peculiarly extensive development of Obi in the form of professional poisoners. All over the West Coast, indeed, the practice of getting rid of enemies by poison, with the aid of the fetichman, is common, but in some places it is a separate profession. The poisoners are necromancers (in the West Indies they would be called Obeah men), who compound spells by which they propose to attain their ends. They actually use, however, more material and more deadly means, for they are intimately acquainted with all the properties of many vegetable poisons quite unknown to the European pharmacopœia. Many persons fall victims to their fatal knowledge, and medical men have been unable to recognise the symptoms as those of any known poisons. They are equally well acquainted with the antidotes for their deadly drugs; and when a native has cause to believe that he has been poisoned, his only chance is to send for one of those gifted Obeah men to

charm away the effects. Thus it is not uncommon for one of the fraternity to take one bribe to charm a man's death, and another bribe from the victim to charm him alive again.

In Sierra Leone this species of Obi is called witchcraft by law, and is strictly forbidden, and heavily punished when discovered. Yet even in Sierra Leone, which has been so long under English influence, we learn from Mr Lethbridge Banbury's book about the colony, that the old superstitions and customs still cling to the natives. They steal away beyond the arm of authority to make sacrifices to fetich, and to institute trials by ordeal of both fire and poison.

The medicine man is still a power at 'the White Man's Grave,' and Obi flourishes in spite of the law. To be a witch, we are told—the name is applied to both sexes—one must have either taken human life or be credited with some supernatural power. A successful medicine man must possess quick powers of penetration, decision, and a knowledge of subtle vegetable poisons, such as those above referred to. He is thus able to both kill and cure with what seems to the uninitiated to be the same material. These men are consulted even by the educated natives, and the trust and belief in them are unbounded.

Such is West African Obeah. And now let us see how very like the Obeah man of the West Indies is to the fetich man, or medicine man, or professional poisoner of his own race in West Africa. One can scarcely take up any book about the West Indies without finding some reference to Obeah. Has not even Mr Froude written: 'Behind the immorality, behind the religiosity, there lies, active and alive, the horrible revival of the West African superstition—the serpent-worship, and the child-sacrifice, and the cannibalism. There is no room to doubt it.' Those who want to know something of the child-sacrifice and cannibalism can consult Sir Spenser St John's chapter on Vaudoux-worship in his work on Hayti; but in the present article we are dealing only with the milder forms of Obeah.

The following is an instance of what Mr Hesketh J. Bell saw with his own eyes in the British colony of Grenada, one of the Windward Islands.

A planter had in his grounds a fine lot of two thousand plantains, but could never get a bunch of the fruit for the table. The 'wretched niggers' of the neighbourhood always walked off with it as quickly as it ripened. As neither watchmen nor spring-guns had any effect in checking the depredations, he determined to have the garden 'dressed' by an Obeah man.

Accordingly, one day he was by appointment waited on by a wizened old African, attended by a small black boy carrying a large covered basket. Mokombo, on being told what was wanted, promised: 'Me go set strong Obeah for dem, and dey nebber go tief your plantain again.' Instructed to go to work, Mokombo took up his basket and went down among the trees, which were planted in long rows in a large field. The plantain is much the same as the banana—the fruit growing in enormous bunches out of a soft fleshy trunk, the leaves on which spread out like those of a palm.

This is what the Obeah man proceeded to do. Out of his basket he took a number of large and small medicine-bottles filled with some mysterious liquid; then taking up a position in front of a plantain, he tied one of the bottles on to a branch of the fruit, muttering the while an incantation in some African lingo, completing the spell by frequent genuflexions and waving of the arms. He went through all the rows in the same fashion. When he had used up his stock of bottles, he took from his basket a small black wooden coffin. This he placed, with a good deal of ceremony, in the branches of a cocoa-tree, and on the top of the coffin he put a saucer containing a little water with a hen's egg floating in it. He then walked right round the field, muttering his incantation and waving his arms, after which he came to the planter and declared that the Obeah was complete—not another bunch of plantains would be stolen. Receiving his fee, he departed, saying: 'Me let go plenty cribo, Massa, and now if any one da go and tief dem plantains, he must go swell up and bust!'

Criboes are large black serpents, very common in the island, but quite harmless. The planters, indeed, rather protect them, as they wage war on the rats. These criboes, however, are supposed to become deadly under the influence of the Obeah man, and the negroes believe that when he 'dresses' a garden or field, he sets free in it a swarm of ferocious criboes, who will assuredly destroy any one who goes into the place for the purpose of stealing. They know well enough that there is no venomous snake in the island, yet the African dread and veneration of the serpent is ineradicable.

On the particular occasion referred to, the bottles were examined after Mokombo's departure, and found to contain nothing but sea-water, coloured with a little laundry blue, with a dead cockroach floating on the top. Some of them had also a few rusty nails, or a bit of red flannel. But there might be any sort of rubbish in the mystic bottles, for no negro would dare to touch them. Nor would he go near the trees on which they were hung, to steal, unless he was prepared to 'swell up and bust.'

It is hardly credible, but charms of this sort are believed in and practised among the negroes who are reputedly converted, and who regularly attend the services in the English churches and chapels. All the teaching of Christian ministers and schoolmasters for fifty years has not been able to destroy the dark superstitions brought over with the cargoes of slaves from the African coast, during the previous two centuries.

It is true that the educated negroes do profess to be ashamed of Obeah (or Wanga, as it is sometimes called), but not the less do they cling tenaciously in secret to the mysteries which their fathers and mothers taught them to dread and venerate. Any man who has a reputation for working Obeah is regarded with the greatest fear, and treated with the utmost deference.

The difficulty in contending with these superstitions is felt alike by Roman Catholic and Protestant teachers. Grenada was a French colony until about a hundred years ago, and there are still many French Catholic priests there. One of them told Mr Bell that the deep-rooted belief of the people in the power of Obeah and witchcraft met him at every turn. He had tried everything to combat the baneful influence, and to make the negroes ashamed of their ignorance and credulity, but, he had sorrowfully to confess, with very little effect. He had even tried the Japanese method of punishing a whole street for the misdeeds of one resident in it, if he found one dabbling in Obeah—but all to no purpose.

This priest described the contents of the hut of an Obeah man which he had examined. The man had died, and none of the people would enter the house, so the priest went himself. He found the dirty little place littered with Obeah utensils. There were vials containing some unholy liquor, ready to be exchanged for their weight in silver; rags, feathers, bones of cats, parrots' beaks, dogs' teeth, broken bottles, grave dirt, rum, and egg-shells. Under the bed was found a large earthen jar containing an immense number of round balls of earth or clay of various dimensions, and whitened on the outside. Some of these contained hair and rags; others, skulls of cats, stuck round with human or dogs' teeth and beads. In a tin canister was found the sorcerer's most valuable treasure, seven bones from a rattlesnake's tail, valued at five dollars each, for amulets or charms. There was also a yard of hangman's cord, intended to be retailed to the negroes by the inch as a preservative against bad luck. In another old tin was found his hoard—bundles of bank-notes and a number of gold pieces, amounting altogether to such a considerable sum as to prove that the trade of the Obeah man is an exceedingly lucrative one. The money was handed over to the Government, and the rubbishy contents of the hut publicly burned.

Some of the Obeah men possess a reputation for finding out robberies, and these are among the most successful of the class. No doubt they are greatly helped by a good memory, skill in cross-examination, and intimate knowledge of all the tricks and devices of their African brothers. Others of them are professional finders of buried treasure, and no doubt buried treasure has frequently been found in islands which were so often assailed by the buccaneers in the days of old; but whether there is much now left to reward the professional treasure-seeker may well be doubted.

Before the emancipation of the slaves, Obeah was rampant in all the West Indian colonies, and laws and regulations had to be expressly framed to deal with it. In those days there were few large estates which had not one Obeah man at least among the slaves, while some had two or three. These were the oldest and most crafty of the blacks, whose hoary heads and harsh aspect, together with skill in the manipulation of vegetable drugs and poisons, easily imposed on the weak and credulous. An Obeah man in those days would be distinguished by wearing the hair long, or by some other peculiarity of habit or costume.

We have it on the authority of a planter, that even now a negro will not hesitate to give an Obeah man four or five dollars for a love-spell, although he would grudge half a dollar for a bottle of medicine to relieve some painful malady. The incantations usually take place at midnight, and every precaution is taken to conceal the ceremonies from the whites.

We learn further from Mr Bell that the darker and more dangerous side of Obeah is that under cover of which poison is used to a fearful extent. The dangerous and often fatal effects of many a magic draught are set down by the negroes to magic, and not to the simple effects of the poisonous herbs which grow in every pasture, and with the properties of which every Obeah man is thoroughly conversant. Deaths are reported at the registrar's as the result of 'beely bad cold, Sah,' which may as often as not be due to Obeah. At all events the laws relating to declarations of death and inquest are so defective, that the planters are satisfied that many deaths do occur through poisoning which are set down to some simple malady.

Such, then, is Obeah as it exists, and is supposed to exist, in our own colonies. It has a far stronger hold, however, in Hayti, where the awful orgies of Vaudoux-worship are practised.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER I.—MONEY OR POLITICS.

'Yes, Sir George,' said the lawyer, looking mighty serious. 'We have at length ascertained how you stand. Your father conducted—misconducted—his affairs without consulting us—and we knew nothing of what was going on—nothing at all.'

I inclined my head. I had already heard certain things which had led me to expect something unpleasant. What had happened was this: My father, the second baronet and son of the well-known judge and lawyer, had died five weeks or so before this interview. He died at the age of fifty-two, having led a perfectly quiet and apparently harmless life. Harmless! You shall see. I was twenty-five, and after the usual run of Eton and Cambridge, I had my chambers in Piccadilly and my club, and led the life customary among young men of fortune; of course, I knew nothing, I had learned nothing, and I could do nothing, except work a little with a lathe. I was not bookish, or artistic, or scientific, or musical, or literary, or anything. Therefore the intelligence that I was about to receive proved even more delightful to me than it would have been to a man who could do things, write things, and sell things.

'I have here everything ready for you. Before you look at these papers, Sir George, be prepared for a very—a most painful surprise.'

'Tell me all—at once.'

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'Then, Sir George—it is a most distressing communication to make—but you are young, which is the only consolation—young and strong—and, I doubt not, a philosopher'——

'I am especially and above all things a philosopher. But pray get on.'

'Your grandfather, the judge, with his magnificent, his unequalled practice, rolled up what we call in the profession a colossal fortune. It was over a quarter of a million, which your father, then forty years of age, inherited. When he died a few weeks ago, at the age of fifty-two, he had managed by Stock Exchange gambling, to get through the whole of it—with his country house and his town house. Ah! Sir George, why — why did not the judge entail the whole? It maddens me to think of it! He lost all—everything.' The lawyer rubbed it in with resolution. 'You have no longer any fortune left: you have no house: my young friend, you have nothing but a few scraps and crumbs left of that splendid fortune that seemed to be yours two months ago.'

'Lost the whole of the fortune? In ten years? He could not.'

'Your father, in ten years, lost the whole of his fortune. You have got left, practically, nothing.'

'Thank you. I have got nothing. I shall realise it presently. It makes one feel chilly. I have got nothing.' I put my fingers in my waistcoat pocket. 'Here are some coins. They are mine, I suppose? There are two or three hundred pounds standing to my account at the bank; are they mine, too?'

'Yes. And to speak of crumbs and scraps, I think I may save a little something for you out of the wreck. But it will be a mere trifle. I estimate it at the most as three thousand pounds.'

'Oh! I have three thousand pounds. You are quite sure you have done your very worst?'

'I can do nothing worse than this for you.'

I got up and stood over the empty fireplace. 'I suppose,' I said slowly, 'that it is very bad. I am not a person of imagination, you know, and I cannot feel, all at once, how sad it is. A thing like this cannot be appreciated all at once. It takes time—it has to get into the system.'

'Nonsense. Take the thing seriously; consider what can be done with three thousand pounds. It is quite enough, with prudence, to keep you while you are qualifying for a profession and start you afterwards: law, medicine, the church—which will you have? Or you might start a horse or cattle farm—there is an opening they tell me, and the rent of land in some places is very low. Or you might buy a partnership in a house of business—three thousand pounds would go a long way in many houses. There are a hundred ways in which a prudent man might invest that sum of money. I assure you, Sir George, that there are thousands of young fellows, as well educated as yourself, who, if they had three thousand pounds to begin with, would feel that all the wealth of Lombard Street was well within their reach. And they'd manage to get a good slice of it, too.'

'Very likely. I don't feel that way at all myself. I am quite certain that whatever I did, I should get none of the wealth of Lombard Street.'

'Well—well, but permit me, you haven't yet got the true feeling of your poverty. You don't quite understand yet what money means—the difference it makes. Money, my friend, is the only thing—the only thing—that makes life tolerable. Without it there can be no happiness, no independence, no authority, no self-respect. Get money somehow.' The old man spoke with sincerity and conviction. Of course he was quite right.

'Well,' I said, 'I will think it over. At this moment you cannot expect me to have any coherent ideas on the subject. I really do think, however, that there is no one in the world less able to make money than myself.'

'Wait—be patient—and consider what things mean. Heavens! If we could only make young men understand.'

'Yes.' I took up my hat. 'If you have really done your worst'——

'Don't go just yet, Sir George. I have one or two things still to say.' The solicitor, whose face generally had more of keenness than of benevolence in it, leaned back and assumed an unwonted expression, with more benevolence in it than keenness. 'Let us return to what you might do: you are young, you are well-bred, you are good-looking, you have pleasant manners, you are'——

He lifted his eyebrows into a note of interrogation.

'Clever?' I replied. 'No. Nor bookish. Nor scientific. Nor inclined to any of the professions. And ignorant to the last degree.'

'Dear! Dear! What a thousand pities this misfortune did not happen twenty years ago! Then you would have been trained to something. Whereas now'—— He considered a little. 'Let us think of a few other things. Journalism?'

'I told you, I am not clever.'

'Pity. Journalism requires no capital and no training. I would not recommend the stage.'

'I cannot act.'

'There is one thing we have forgotten, Sir George. You are a young man of good family; you have, therefore, family influence. You must set that to work for you. People think that everything nowadays goes by competitive examination. Ho! ho! The world is kept in the dark entirely for the sake of young men like you. There are quantities of lucky people—commissioners, secretaries, people about the Court, people everywhere—who get in by family influence, and get on by family influence. There are colonial appointments, some of them very good indeed, if you don't mind going

abroad. Or you might begin as a private secretary to a rising man. Why, there was a private secretary once who became a peer. The best thing you can do is to go to your own people.'

'Unfortunately, it is no use. I haven't got any people. My mother was the daughter of a simple country clergyman. The judge's father was a West End builder—originally an East End boat-builder. I remember that because there is a romance in the family about an old sailor and a bag of diamonds.'

'But you do possess your title. And believe me, Sir George, if you are careful you may find that it is a very valuable possession indeed. By means of your title you may once more join the wealthy classes. Thousands of women, rich women, daughters of wealthy men, would give anything for a title. Find out where these women are—in York, in Bath, in Birmingham, in Liverpool, in Manchester, here in London. Get introductions, and you will find your path smoother for you.'

'Marry money?' I shuddered.

'Do not misunderstand me. You are not expected to marry an old woman or an ugly woman. There are as many nice girls and pretty girls who have money as there are old women. Marry money, young man. Marry money. It is the easiest thing in the world for you to do. And I am quite sure, quite the most pleasant. As for love, it is all imagination. And, besides, why shouldn't you love a rich girl as well as a poor girl?'

'No. Not to be thought of.'

'Well, if you won't marry money, there is the city. A baronet's name looks well on a board of directors. You would find it quite easy to get put on the Direction somewhere or other. The qualification is not a great deal. What do you think of that?'

'Why, as I know nothing whatever of business, it would be a kind of fraud on the shareholders.'

'Sir George, I fear I cannot help you. There are only a certain number of ways of making money. Choose. If you will have none of them, then we come back to the easiest way—marry money—and if you refuse that'—he spread his hands, meaning, 'then you must starve.'

I walked away thoughtfully. It was with a very heavy heart that I mounted to my chambers—Plantagenet Mansions, eighth floor, about half-way up.

'Marry money, marry money,' said the solicitor. The words kept ringing in my ears like the tolling of a bell.

For, you see, in order to marry money I had no occasion to go to New York, or to Bath, or Manchester, or Birmingham. The money was actually waiting for me with the marriage. I had only to reach out my hand and take it, and with the money the owner of it. And not an old woman at all; nor an ugly woman; nor a woman maimed or halt in mind or in body; a woman, eminently desirable, beautiful, wealthy, well born, and of sweet disposition.

'Marry money, marry money,' said the man of large experience and of many years.

I turned mechanically into the room called my study. It was really my workroom. It was fitted with a lathe and with a bench. On the wall were hundreds of tools, bright and glittering. There was a shelf of books, technical books about carpentering, wood-carving, cabinet-making, fretwork, ironwork, and the like; there were 'blocks' ready for use; there were boxes and other things finished and unfinished, chased, rounded, polished. The lathe represented my one talent.

I looked at the machine thoughtfully. 'If I could only make money out of you. And now, I am very much afraid I shall have to sell you for what you will fetch—tools and block and all. Pity! Pity!' I laid a loving hand upon the bright and delicate machinery. I wish it had sighed, or groaned, or done anything by way of sympathetic response. But it did not. Even in romance machinery is not responsive.

'Marry money,' whispered the voice.

I saw letters lying on the table, and tore open the first, the one whose handwriting I knew. It was a woman's. 'Dear George,' I read. 'I was anxious to learn the result of your talk with the lawyers and what you have really lost. Come and see me as soon as you get back. Yours, Frances.'

'Marry money, marry money,' said the solicitor.

I opened a drawer and took out a dainty case of red velvet bound with gold. It contained a single photograph. It was the portrait of a girl, and showed a very striking face, the face of a queen or a princess; her name was surely Imperia; certainly a *grande dame de par le monde*—a most regal face, the brow and cheek ample, the eyes large and steady, the features clear and regular, the lips firm, the chin rounded. Everything about this woman large, including her mind; a woman whom the common herd would fear, though they might reverence her. It would require either a brave man or a presumptuous man to make love to her.

'There is no woman like Frances,' I thought. 'And yet'——

When one has been brought up from childhood side by side with a girl, seeing her every day, a girl a little older than one's self, and a great deal cleverer, the affection which one feels for that girl partakes of the brotherly emotion. Therefore I said, 'and yet'——

'Marry money, marry money,' this importunate solicitor continued.

I put on my hat and went to call upon Frances.

Lady Frances, daughter of the famous Earl of Clovelly, once, twice, three times Premier, and of the even more illustrious Countess, the last of our great political ladies, was also the young widow of that distinguished statesman, old Sir Chantrey Bohun, who died in harness as Secretary of State for India. She was a year older than myself, a difference which, when we were children together, and next door country neighbours, gave her a certain superiority over me. She married, for political reasons, at the age of eighteen; it was generally understood, when her husband died, that, after a decent interval of two or three years, she would marry a second time, and play over

again the rôle so admirably enacted by her mother.

She was sitting beside the window, into which poured a flood of vaporous sunshine from the west, for it was a day in early April when the sun sets about seven. The warm, soft light wrapped her as in a cloud, under which her face was soft and luminous. Truly, a most lovely woman, but to me not a woman who inspired love. These brotherly affections sometimes interfere with things that might have been.

'Sit down, George,' she said, kindly, 'and tell me exactly all about it.'

I told her in a few words.

'Oh George, nothing left? Why, it is impossible!'

'Unfortunately it is quite possible. I am a pauper, Frances, except for a few scraps and crumbs.'

'My poor George.' Frances held out both her hands. 'I am so sorry, very sorry. But people like us don't become absolute paupers. There is always a something left after the most terrible catastrophe. You spoke of scraps and crumbs?'

'The fragments that remain amount to about three thousand pounds, I understand. An income of ninety pounds a year. That is what I meant by the scraps and crumbs.'

'It does not seem much, does it? But then money is the most elastic thing in the world. My sovereigns are all sixpences. I know some people whose sixpences are all sovereigns. Of course you have not begun to make any plans for the future?'

'Not yet. You see it is only an hour or two since the truth was sprung upon me. I am trying to think it over. I shall sell my horses and furniture to begin with. I shall then move into a garret somewhere. Once in my garret, I shall begin to think away like another Darwin!'

'Sit down, George, in my chair.' It was the lowest, longest, and most luxurious chair in the room. Sitting or lying in it, one looked completely under the control of any one standing over the chair. Frances got up to make room for me. 'So, obedient boy. Now, let me talk.'

'I listen, Frances. I still have ears.'

'The first duty of poverty—call it rather responsibility—the lower kind call it the privilege of poverty—is to accept the—the—sympathy and friendly advice—and'——

'The sympathy and the advice, Frances, by all means.'

She became very grave. 'George, we have known each other so long that I can talk to you freely and openly. How long have we been friends?'

'About twenty-two years. Ever since we were able to run about.'

'That is a long time, is it not? And always friends.'

'Always friends. Always the best of friends.'

'And we have always talked to each other freely, have we not?'

'Quite freely and openly. You have been the greatest happiness of my life, Frances.'

'And you of mine. So that we owe each other a quantity of things—gratitude, friendship, even—even, if necessary, a little sacrifice of—not principle or self-respect—say, of pride.'

I knew very well what was coming. Anybody might have guessed.

'The greatest happiness of poverty—that which ought to make it the most coveted of all possessions—is that it constantly commands proof of the affection and interest felt towards one. That is a great thing, is it not?'

'Nay. Even when I was disgustingly rich I never doubted your interest.'

'The next thing about poverty is that it must make men work, and may develop all that is best in them. Some men never find themselves—their own power—their lives are ruined—because they are never forced to work. That has been, so far, your case.'

'No, Frances. I should have done no good if I had worked like the busy bee.'

'All my life, George, much as I regard you, I have been thinking how much better you might have been. Oh! I don't mind confessing. You have never done any work at all. You went to school and you idled away your time there; you went to Cambridge, and, of course, you idled away your time there. There has been no necessity. You have never worked because you must. Oh! I wonder that rich men ever achieve anything, seeing that no one teaches them the duty of work. I wish I had a school of rich boys. I would make them work harder than the poor boys. They should learn to work because they ought.'

'I am not clever, Frances. Work of the kind you mean is impossible for me. I was designed by nature for nothing better than a cabinet-maker. I believe I shall turn cabinet-maker, and so develop my higher nature and make you proud of me at last.'

'All the time, George, I have been growing up side by side with him—the incomplete or undeveloped George—the complete George, a nobler creature; working when you remain idle; filled with ambition while you are content with obscurity. He is such a splendid man, George—and so like you, only better looking.'

'That may very well be. If I were to find myself as you call it, I should find a very dull and plodding fellow, not half so pleasant as the incomplete other—the undeveloped fellow who had not found himself.'

'Not dull at all. You have never done even common justice to yourself. Few men have such good natural abilities as yourself.'

'Well, Frances, if it please you, and if it goes no farther—for this is not a thing to be bruited abroad—I will accept all the attributes of genius.'

'Then we come back to the question, what will you do with your poverty?'

'And again I reply, that I cannot yet for the life of me imagine. My lawyer has been advising me to go into the city as a Guinea Pig—that is, to lend my name to bogus companies at a guinea a sitting. It seems that if a man with a title will sell his name, people can be swindled with much greater ease. That does not look a promising line, does it?'

Frances shuddered. 'George, you are a gentleman.'

'Or I might use my small capital to qualify for a profession—there is my grandfather's line; but even allowing for those great abilities, with which you credit me, I really could not read law.'

'Anything else?'

'Oh yes. Some men, it appears, buy a partnership in the city; some become stock-brokers.'

'I don't think that would suit you.'

'And some go out to California fruit farming. And that, Frances, seems the most hopeful line so far.'

'Is that all that you can think of? Very well. Now let me suggest something for you. A much better line than any of these. You know what has always been my hope for you?'

'I know that you have sometimes dreamed of the impossible.'

'Yes—and—how—now that you will have no other distractions, now that you can begin and keep before you the goal—now, George, is the time for you to realise this dream of mine. Make yourself a career in politics.'

'My dear Frances, I could more easily make myself a career in mathematics.'

'Nonsense. You have the capacity; you want nothing but the will—the ambition. George, cannot I make you ambitious? Think—ask yourself—can there be anything nobler, more worthy of ambition, than to guide the destinies of a nation?—to make the history that will have to be written?'

'Put in that way it certainly sounds very well.'

'I have thought it all out. The thing is perfectly easy—for a man like yourself. You must belong to a party—our party: they will find you a borough; you will contest that borough; you will win. Once in the House you will work your way and command the recognition of your party, and so, by steps, find a place in the Cabinet. Why, my dear George, it is the experience of every day.'

I got out of the low and luxurious chair with some difficulty. One cannot be serious lying on one's back. And now I felt very serious. 'You see your statesman at the end of his career. You do not understand how he has worked his way upwards, by what a tortuous path he has climbed. Moreover, you only see the greatest man, the leader. Now, my child, the kind of statesman I think of is the ordinary person who becomes towards the end of his career a Cabinet Minister. That person does not strike me as a noble character at all; think of the coat he has had to turn; think of the tricks he has had to practise; all to get votes—all to get votes.'

'You exaggerate, George.'

'No, I do not. However, it matters nothing what I think. The House is quite out of the question. I cannot afford it.'

She blushed crimson, she dropped her eyes, she trembled. 'George,' she said, with hesitation and embarrassment, 'again, do not be proud. It is the privilege of friendship; it is your privilege to let me find that—the means—you must accept of me.'

This was the great temptation. All that I had to do at that moment—I knew it would come—I was waiting for it—I was prepared for it. All that was wanted was for me to talk. Of course I could not take the money she was offering. All that was wanted was to speak vaguely about ambition, to fall in with her hopes and dreams—one can always accept a dream or offer a dream—and the woman and her fortune and everything would be mine. Because I knew very well—a thousand indications had told me—that she loved that nobler and more complete George of her imagination—not myself at all. I had only to pretend to be that nobler person, as full of ambition, as resolute for distinction. As for being in love, why, if you are always from childhood in the company of a girl, the passion called love, if it is awakened at all, is weak and puny compared with that towards the mystery of the unknown and the strange. Still, there was the beautiful woman, my old friend, who only wanted to believe that I was strong and ambitious, and I only had to pretend. It was like the temptation of the Christian martyr—only a little pinch of incense—just one—and life and freedom, the enjoyment of the sunshine were granted to me.

I took her hand and raised it to my lips. 'Twas the refusal of the Christian martyr. 'Not that way, Frances,' I said. 'Any way but that. I am going out of the world—up or down, I know not which. But, up or down, it cannot be by any such help as that.'

## THE FILTRATION OF WATER.

### THE NEW THEORY.

In No. 917 of this *Journal*, published on July 23, 1881, an article appeared on 'The Artificial Filtration of Water.' It embodied a general statement of all that was known on the subject at that time, and it may be useful to give a very brief outline of what that knowledge amounted to.

There were, it was explained, two theories respecting the manner in which water, by passing through a bed of gravel or other well-known filtering materials, became purified from any foreign particles of matter contained in it. It was quite obvious that in part, at least, the water would be purified by the mere mechanical straining of the filter-bed, and there were respectable authorities who maintained that this mechanical straining was really all that the filtering material affected. In opposition to this theory, however, it was shown that if a known quantity of impurity were mingled with water and passed through an efficient filter, the amount of it that would afterwards be found in the filtering material would be materially less than that which had been put in. A considerable portion of it would be found actually to have disappeared.

It therefore came to be very generally believed that, in addition to the merely mechanical process of straining, there was a chemical process, the effect of which was to oxidise impurity. Every particle of sand or other material constituting the bed was, it was explained, surrounded by a thin film of air clinging

to it, and it was coming into contact with this air—and of course with the concentrated oxygen contained in the air—that the chemical destruction was brought about. The two processes taken together—the mechanical straining and the chemical oxidation—at the time of the publication of the article referred to, were supposed to constitute the whole philosophy of the purification of water by filtration.

This summing up of the matter, however, was not altogether free from difficulty. If that had been the whole of it, it is pretty obvious that, all other things being equal, the cleaner the filter-bed, the more thorough and efficient would have been the filtration. But as a matter of fact, the great water companies of London found that this was not the case, and that with a perfectly new bed of bright fresh sand and gravel they could not satisfactorily purify their water, while with beds that looked to be in so polluted a condition as to call forth the remonstrances of the Local Government Board experts, they could filter splendidly. Nobody could pretend to explain the curious paradox of a dirty filter-bed purifying water more thoroughly than a clean one; but there was the fact, and at least one of the eight London companies persisted in refusing to heed the remonstrances of the Government officials, and declined to renew their beds as desired.

Meanwhile, bacteriological science was slowly coming along with an explanation that seems now to be generally accepted as indisputable, and which seems likely to exert a very important influence indeed on matters of water-supply. It makes it quite clear why the clean sand could not and did not rid of all pollution the impure water passed through it, while the work of the dirty filter-beds proved most efficient and satisfactory.

Most people know something of the new microscopic world that has been unveiled to our gaze by the labours of the late M. Pasteur, Dr Koch, and others, and of the important part played in all matters of life, health, and disease, by microbes; and a few years ago it was suggested that the solution of the curious riddle presented in the phenomena of filtration might possibly be found in a biological direction. So extremely improbable did this appear to all but the very few who had been giving special attention to the subject, that when in January 1887, Mr. W. J. Dibdin, F.C.S., chemist to the London County Council, in a paper read before the Institute of Civil Engineers, suggested it, the suggestion was received with incredulous laughter. Mr Dibdin was obliged to admit that at that time 'knowledge on the subject is not yet sufficiently advanced to put the new theory to practical application, but he had been patiently following the researches of M. Pasteur, and had been working with Dr Dupré, with the purpose of determining the best mode of purifying the effluent water from the great London sewage-works, before discharging it into the river Thames, and he had already arrived at a very definite opinion on the matter.' 'I have not the slightest doubt,' he told the incredulous civil engineers, 'that the future treatment of sewage will be a combined chemical and biological one.' 'The lesson to be learned from the numerous experiments published by various authorities, both in this country and on the continent,' said Mr Dibdin, 'is that bacteria and other low forms of organic life are most potent in the destruction of all objectionable refuse. Modern experience shows that, when this subject is better understood and thoroughly worked out, in all probability the true way of purifying sewage will be first to separate the sludge, and then to turn into the neutral effluent a charge of the proper organisms, whatever that may be, specially cultivated for the purpose.'

That paper was read before the civil engineers at the beginning of 1887, and shortly after, the state authorities of Massachusetts commenced an exhaustive series of laboratory experiments and investigations with the view of testing these new ideas. The biological theory of filtration was fully established by them, and it only remained to determine whether that which had been demonstrated to be practicable in the laboratory could be made serviceable on a great scale such as the sewage-works of London presented. In order practically to settle this, the main drainage committee of the London County Council, in November 1892, ordered the construction of an experimental filter-bed of an acre in extent, previous experiments having determined that for their particular purpose the best material for the bed was coke breeze—powdered coke, that is—three feet in depth, with three inches of gravel on the top, just to keep it down.

Anything like a detailed account of the experiments carried out with this acre filter-bed cannot of course be given here, but the general conclusions arrived at may be briefly stated. It should be understood that it was not the sewage of London that was dealt with, but the foul effluent water from which the 'sludge' had been separated by mechanical settlement, assisted by chemical precipitation.

The first general conclusion arrived at was that the action of a filter is twofold: First, it separates mechanically all gross particles of suspended matter; secondly, it effects the oxidation of organic matters through the agency of living organisms. It will be seen that the theory of filtration set forth in our earlier article is shown, by the light of the latest science, to have been quite correct up to a certain point. That is to say, it was quite right in assuming that filtration was a process both mechanical and chemical—it strained part of the impurity from water, and it oxidised the rest. The new phase of the matter, and that which scientists did not understand when that article was written in 1881, is that the oxidation is affected by means of animalculæ. When water is heavily polluted with animal and vegetable matter, and the supply of free oxygen is insufficient, then animal life comes into action. If the impurity is very dense, and the quantity of oxygen very small, there are putrefactive organisms—organisms capable of living and thriving without air—that commence the work of clearance by breaking down the highly organised animal and vegetable matter into simpler forms. They thus prepare the food necessary for microbes

that can only live and thrive if they get an abundant supply of air, and it now appears to be established beyond question that our great secret of successfully filtering water heavily polluted with organic matter is to afford these purifying microbes just the conditions they require.

The aeration of water, by swirling along in swift streams or by tumbling over cascades, which formerly was supposed to eliminate impurity by the direct action of oxygen, is now proved to effect this result only indirectly, by affording an ample supply of oxygen to the microbes which are the real agents in the business.

As it has been shown, Dr Dupré, Mr Dibdin, and a few others who had been devoting special attention to the subject had some insight into this matter in 1887. But there was one point which at that time they did not fully apprehend. They quite expected that further experiment would show beyond all doubt that living things were concerned in the purification of water by filtration, but they do not seem to have apprehended the fact, that wherever there is impurity to be eliminated by filtration, that impurity itself contains the living organisms necessary for the process, and that what is required to be done is, not to provide and cultivate these infusoria, but to recognise the fact that they are freely present in impure water, and to afford them the conditions they require for healthy existence. This has been abundantly proved by Mr Dibdin's long and careful experiments at the northern outfall of the London main drainage system.

He has found that by taking a new filter of coke breeze and pouring into it the affluent water from the sewage in very gradually increased volume, he gradually increases the filtering power of his bed. At first, the purifying microbes in the bed are limited in number. But with an abundant, though not an excessive, supply of food they multiply amazingly—like the growth of yeast. As they become stronger in force, the supply of sewage impurity may be increased, and this may go on until the bed has attained its full 'biological efficiency,' that is to say, until the filter-bed has become one whole mass of teeming life, greedily devouring the organic matter poured in upon it. The great point in the successful management of a filter-bed seems to be skilfully to adjust the work to be done, to the voracity of the microbes in it. If the impurity which they are expected to dispose of seriously exceeds their powers, arrears accumulate until they get fairly choked and die for want of air. It seems to be an established fact that if these infusoria are to be kept in good appetite, each influx of sewage-water must be followed by a period of rest and fresh air. The filter must be emptied by drawing off its contents from below. This sucks the air down into the filtering material and restores the energies of the microbes. At the end of an hour or so the bed may be filled again, but it has been found expedient to give a rest and aeration of about four-and-twenty hours every seven or eight days. Mr Dibdin has thus by experiments on a large scale arrived at conclusions which in the main are those that the authorities of Massachusetts had reached by their laboratory experiments, and which, as has been shown, he forecasted nearly ten years ago. He explicitly affirms that the life of a coke breeze filter worked in the manner described is practically without a limit, and that the purification of water may be carried to any degree of perfection that may be desired.

## AFTER THE FACT.*

### CHAPTER III.

I CANNOT pretend to describe my feelings of the next few hours; nor would the result be very edifying even if I succeeded in any such attempt. I trembled for the criminal's security, I quaked for the sergeant's life, but most of all I quaked and trembled for my own skin and my own peace of mind. If the sergeant captured Deedes, my flagrant complicity must inevitably leak out, and I too should have to stand my trial as accessory after the fact. If, on the other hand, Deedes murdered the sergeant, and himself escaped, the guilt of blood would lie upon my soul for ever more. Thus I tossed between a material Scylla and a spiritual Charybdis, in the trough of my ignoble terrors. Every footstep in the gravel was that of some 'stern-faced man' come to lead me hence 'with gyves upon my wrists.' Every cry from the street proclaimed the sergeant's murder in the empty house.

It was impossible to conceal my condition from my friends. With that partial and misleading candour, therefore, at which I was becoming so vile an adept, I told them of my recognition of the man whose name was now in every mouth; of our midnight conversation in my room; of the police-whistle, and my subsequent adventures in the constables' company. There I stopped; and the tale gained me a kudos, and exposed me to a fusilade of questions, which were by no means the lightest punishments of that terrible day. Again and again I felt convinced I had betrayed the guilty knowledge that lay so heavy on my heart; and never more so than about eleven in the forenoon, when my host came among us perspiring from a walk.

'I've just been down to the police-station,' said he, 'but they haven't got him yet. The sergeant tells me'——

'Which sergeant?' I shouted.

'The man you were with last night. He has been speaking about you, Mr Bower—speaking very highly of your behaviour last night. Nor was he the only one; it's all over the town. —Girls, we have all woke up famous for having such a hero in our house!'

Famous! a hero! I thought of the antonyms which might justly replace those words any moment. And in a sudden, irresistible panic I fled the room; my flight being attributed (I

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afterwards discovered) to my 'charming English modesty, so wanting in young Australia.'

Meantime the young ladies of the house had been regaling me with a good many facts, and perhaps a little unintentional fiction, concerning the Geelong branch of Mr Deedes's colonial career. It was a record highly characteristic of the Deedes who had been so popular and so infamous at school. He had won every tournament at the tennis-courts; he danced better than any man in Geelong. He had proposed to a rich Melbourne widow, twice his age; had broken many hearts, including that of the blue-eyed daughter of the bank; and been seen at one dance, 'well, in a state which made it impossible for us to know him any more.' I had gathered from Deedes that my friends were none of his; now I was in possession of the cause; but the item affecting the Miss I'Anson whose face I had just seen the day before, and yet remembered vividly, was the item which focused my interest. I asked what sort of a girl she was. The account I received was not a little critical, yet reasonably charitable save on the part of one young lady who said nothing at all. She it was also who had said least against Deedes himself; and of this one I thought, when I had broken loose from the bevy and won to the farthest and most obscure corner of the kitchen-garden. Was she also in love with the attractive scamp? Could that Miss I'Anson with the eyes be in the same helpless case? Deedes had hinted at the manager's well-grounded goodwill towards himself. Could there be, not a secret but a private understanding between those two? He had given me a letter and spoken of enclosures, which I had undertaken to deliver. Could one of them contain words of love for those sweet-looking blue eyes? And if so, was I bound to keep my promise?

The letter itself I had quite forgotten in the stress of a later anxiety now happily removed. But I opened and read it among the gooseberries and the cabbages; and was myself so revolted, alike by the purport and the tone of this communication, that I have no intention of reproducing it here. It had, however, the merit of brevity; and this was the point. He had been an idiot about girls all his life. There were two at least in Geelong of whom he wished, whatever happened to *him*, to take a tender leave. He had written two notes, but left them undirected, because it was not fair that I should know their names. Would I put the three-cornered note on the ledge under the eaves, at the *back* of the pavilion at the tennis-courts, and midway between the ladies' and the gentlemen's entrances? I should probably be going there that afternoon (as a matter of fact I *was* going), and it would take no trouble, but only a little care, to do this when nobody was near. But he would be immensely grateful to me; and still more so if I would slip the square note into any of the books in a certain pew of the church nearest the Western Beach. He gave the number of the pew, and the exact bearings of the church, which was always open.

I pass over the thing that offended me: his taking it so coolly for granted, before it *was* granted, that I would help him in his abominable dilemma, and so connive in his felony. I had done so; but had I read this letter in his presence, I flattered myself I had shown him a stiffer back. As it was, however, these undirected *billets-doux* did undoubtedly recruit and renew my interest in the whole intrigue; and, promise or no promise, I should have carried out my villain's instructions to the letter. He had counted upon the inquisitive side of my character—shall I say of human nature?—and he had counted not in vain. It was a stroke of genius on his part to leave the notes unaddressed.

I looked at my watch. We were still on the right side of noon. Going indoors for my hat, I craved permission to run to my rooms and change into flannels before lunch; and I could not have hit upon a craftier pretext. It exempted me from escort, and thus cleared my path to the church, whither I proceeded without delay. The pew was easily found; I profaned a prayer-book with the square note, and crept out like the stealthy creature I was become. The church had been empty when I entered it. Coming out, however, I met a man in the porch. He was a huge, sandy-bearded, rolling walker, wearing a suit of blue serge and a straw-hat. As we passed, I saw his eye upon me; a moment later, this caused me to return upon my tracks, in order to see he did not meddle with Deedes's note. I was too late; I caught him sidling awkwardly from the pew, with the little square missive held quite openly between his fingers; and I awaited him in the porch with sensations upon which I should not care to dwell, beyond confessing that he appeared to me to grow six inches with every rolling stride.

'Pardon me, sir,' said I, 'but you've taken something that wasn't intended for you.'

'How do you know that?' said he.

'It was intended for a young lady!'

The big man looked down upon me through narrow eyes.

'Exactly,' said he. 'I am her father.'

And that was all; he passed in front of me without a threatening or an insolent word, whistling softly to himself as he slouched down the churchyard path. But I, as I followed, took offence from every cubit of his stature; and could have driven a knife into his broad blue back, with the villainous deliberation of Deedes himself.

Heaven knows how I behaved at lunch; instead of Deedes and the sergeant, the big man in the church was on my nerves. What would he do? Read the letter, of course; yet he had not opened it, to my knowledge, when I lost sight of him. Would he know whom the letter was from? If so (and know he must), my illicit dealings with the wanted man would be equally plain to him; and how would this stranger deal with me? Who was he, and did he know in the least who *I* was, or where to lay hands on me? Should I meet him at the courts? I began to tell myself I did not care either way; that it must all come to light sooner or later now, and therefore the sooner the better. But the man never came to the courts. As the afternoon wore on without sight or sign of him, a little confidence returned.

The evening was at hand, with my atonement as well as that of Deedes; and there was comfort in the thought that at the worst my false position would come to an end within the same twenty-four hours which had witnessed its assumption.

But the interim was itself charged with dramatic interests for me personally. In the first place there was the three-cornered note. Impelled by that strongest of all motives, curiosity, and thus undeterred by the fiasco of the first note, I put the second where I had been told to put it before I had been five minutes on the ground. Then I played a couple of setts, but my play was even worse than usual; for I had one eye all the time upon the gate, and it would follow each new arrival to the pavilion, and seek a blush on each fair face as it emerged. I saw nothing then to arouse my suspicions; but when, in less than an hour, I went myself for my coat, the three-cornered note was gone.

Suspicious as I was, and, for that day at least, every inch of me a spy, I could fasten my suspicion upon no one person. Every girl on the ground, so far as I could hear, was talking of Deedes with the shocked fascination of inquisitive innocence: it might have been any one of them. All looked at me as though they knew me for the red-handed accomplice that I was; and those to whom I was introduced tortured me unremittingly with their questions. Never I am sure was a man more visibly embarrassed; yet who upon that ground could plumb the actual depth of my discomfort? Only one young lady refrained from adding to it, and this was Miss Ethel I'Anson herself. The name of Deedes never passed between us. I fancied her relief as great as mine.

We were together some time, strolling about the ground, picking up balls, and sitting on seats we had occasionally to ourselves. Miss Ethel's eyes appealed to me more than ever. They were dreadfully sad, but there was cause enough for that. I only hoped—I only hoped the three-cornered note was not in her pocket. Yet she had arrived early, and changed her shoes, and never played one sett.

My part in our conversation was chiefly wilful nonsense. I had conceived a laudable ambition to make those blue eyes smile. I am ashamed to add that I rattled on until I had them full of tears. Even then I did not adopt the usual, I believe the well-bred course of ignoring what was no business of mine.

'You are in trouble,' said I bluntly. 'How is it at the bank?'

'My father has been summoned to Melbourne by the directors,' she answered in a low voice. 'My mother'——

'Your mother?' I repeated presently.

'Is ill in bed,' she sobbed. 'Oh, Mr Bower, it is a dreadful, dreadful trouble! You will wonder why I am here. I am here for the best. Think that, and nothing more.'

But I was not thinking of that at all; a dumb, blind rage had risen within me against the maker of all this grief; and if beforehand I was set upon my compact with Deedes, the tears of this sweet girl were the seal and signature of my determination. Their money for his freedom; entire restitution for my risk. On any other terms I would not only be no friend to him, but his bitter foe.

Thinking of little else meanwhile, and pleading my sleepless night as an excuse alike for continued silence and an early retreat to my lodging, I found him, shortly after nine o'clock, crouched in the cellar of the empty house, and evidently much altered by his long day in hiding. He said it had seemed like a week; and the few minutes, during which some fellow had been poking about the place, like a day. I told him that was the sergeant. The men had not been yet to mend the window. Deedes wished they had. Any risk, he said, would have been better than the interminable waiting and the ceaseless listening. But for one little friend he had found, he would have made a dash for it and chanced everything. And in the light of the candle I had brought with me, he showed me a brown mouse seated on the collar of his coat; but when I pushed the candle closer, the mouse fled with a scuttle and a squeak.

'Ah, you've frightened him,' said Deedes; 'however, he's done his part. It killed the afternoon, taming him; have you ever tamed anything, Beetle? I have, every kind of animal, including women; but, by Heaven, I never expected to see myself as tame as I am to-night! I'm unmanned. The thing was beyond me; my reach exceeded my grasp, as Browning says. I'm rusted with a vile repose. You could lift me out by the hair and give me to the nearest bobby!'

'Come,' I said, 'there's no need for that. Only show me where the money is, and do as you've resolved to do, and it won't be such a very bad business after all. I suppose you haven't weakened on what we said this morning?'

He laughed bitterly; it was his deep dejection that had turned away my wrath. 'Good heavens, no!' he cried, getting stiffly to his feet. 'Have you? Did you put those notes where I told you to? Did you get the whiskers?'

'I have done both,' said I, seeing no point in mentioning the contretemps in the church. 'Here are the whiskers; I bought them at a hairdresser's—for theatricals. And here's a clean duck suit and a helmet that I used to wear at sea. Don't look askance at them. I know they're conspicuous. For that very reason, they're going to nip suspicion in the bud!'

Deedes considered a moment, and then gave the most genuine laugh I had heard from him yet.

'By Jove, they're the very thing!' he cried, in a soft enthusiasm. 'Beetle, you're a brick!'

Five minutes later he rustled and radiated from his head to his ankles in snowy whites; blonde whiskers wept from either cheek; then with his penknife he hacked at his moustache until his mouth showed through and spoilt him; and with that we were ready to start. Our rendezvous was Western Beach; our only difficulty, an unseen exit from the house. We had luck, however, on our side. Not only did we break covert unobserved, but we met with

no undue scrutiny in the open; not a single constable saw or was seen of us; and we gained the beach, deeply grateful to our proper stars.

'Now,' said Deedes, 'you follow me along this pier.'

'Why?' said I, with ugly visions; and instinctively I stood in my tracks.

'Why? You see that topsail schooner away along on the left? Well, I haven't told you before, but that's where the swag is—aboard the schooner *Mollyhawk*—waiting for me!'

'I'm not coming,' said I stoutly. 'You're a desperate man, Deedes. I know you; none of your hanky-panky with me. You go and fetch it. I stay where I am.'

'But, my good fellow, it's too heavy for one to carry. There's hundreds and hundreds in gold!'

'Then bring your accomplice. I'm not frightened of you!' said I fiercely. 'I see a man within a hundred yards; he's coming this way; I shall have him by to see fair-play.'

'Oh, call him then!' cried Deedes, with an oath. 'No,' he added with another; 'I'll do it for you. Not to trust a fellow in a mess like this!'

It was a very low cry that he uttered, but the man came up in a moment. I was surprised that he had heard it at all. He proved to be a huge, sailorly creature, with a rolling gait. But not until he was up with us, and shaking hands with Deedes, did I recognise my burly antagonist of the church hard at hand.

'Help! help!' I cried, with sudden insight.

'My dear old chap, what nonsense!' said Deedes, throwing an arm round my neck. Something was pressed across my mouth—something moist and cool like a dog's nose—and held there while sense and strength ebbed out together. Then the masts and spars of ships flew to the stars in a soundless explosion; and I knew no more.

## THE OLDEST TRADE IN THE WORLD.

Ask a friend to name the oldest trade in the world, and it is almost certain that 'Gardening' will be the reply, prompted, no doubt, by a reminiscence of the Biblical story of the Garden of Eden. It will need little reflection, however, to make plain the fact that Adam could not, without tools, dress and keep the garden in which he is said to have been placed, and, therefore, the culture of the vegetable products of the soil must have been preceded by the manufacture of implements. These, in their rudest form, were flints broken by blows of other stones until a sharp edge was obtained; and thus we see it is not without warrant that the flint-knappers, who still linger among us, claim for their industry the distinction of possessing the greatest antiquity. The variety of implements with which the men who lived in the 'stone ages' furnished themselves is as surprising in its extent as is the high degree of perfection to which the flints were brought. They had at their command hatchets, adzes, chisels, gouges, scrapers, battle-axes, lances, spear-heads, arrow-heads, hammers, mauls, and many other implements of war and of peace, of the use of which we have, for the most part, but a vague idea.

From the earliest ages flint has been used as an agent in the production of fire, at first by percussion with iron pyrites, and subsequently with a piece of steel. The application of this principle to firearms raised flint-knapping, once again, to a position of high importance, and caused it to flourish in a manner foreign to it since the long-past days when metal implements began to be obtainable. This revived prosperity continued until what we may yet call the modern inventions of lucifer matches and percussion caps ousted the tinder-box and the old flint-lock from the haunts of civilisation.

But besides its fitness for the weapons and tools of primitive man, there is another very obvious use to which flint could be applied. It is an excellent building-stone, and as such it has been used, from time immemorial, wherever it has abounded. One of the most striking features of the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, for instance, is the extent to which flint has been employed in the erection of buildings of every description. Sometimes the nodules have been used without any preparation, but very frequently the flints have been more or less dressed before passing into the hands of the builder. The most highly wrought have a perfectly square face and tapering sides. When these are skilfully laid, it is almost impossible to insert even the point of a penknife between the outer edges of adjacent stones, and the work is practically indestructible. Some of the most beautiful specimens are to be seen at Norwich, in the tower of Cromer Church, and on the front of the Guildhall at Lynn. Modern work of this description is far inferior to that of olden times, and is but rarely undertaken, so that even this branch of the most ancient industry has now very little vitality.

The chief seat of flint-knapping in England is, and probably ever has been, the village of Brandon, about eighty-eight miles north of London, and on the boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk. As Aberdeen is 'the Granite City,' so Brandon may be called 'the Flint Village,' for except in its main street, where several of the houses have brick fronts, there is scarcely a building which is not composed of flints. As a rule, the stones are not squared or otherwise dressed, but are put in whole, or, if too large to be so used, are broken by a blow of a hammer. Bricks are used at the angles of such houses and round the windows. The cost of the flints in their native condition is merely nominal, and of those that have been roughly squared, a sufficient quantity to face a cottage can be bought for fifty shillings.

The flint beds are at a short distance from the village, and have been worked from the very earliest times. It is almost certain that both in the old and the new stone ages they supplied raw material for the chief implements then in use, and were, therefore, worked before the formation of the German Ocean, and when as yet Great Britain was a portion of the mainland. Some of the pits dug by Neolithic man were discovered by our Saxon forefathers

a thousand years ago, who, ignorant of the purpose of the excavations, called them Grime's Graves, a name which they still bear, and which is indicative of the inability of those early settlers to account for them. They exceed two hundred and fifty in number, and spread over some twenty acres now covered by a wood. They vary in size, the largest being forty feet across and twelve feet deep, and are mostly paved with stones, a feature which led to their being formerly regarded as underground dwellings.

No perfectly satisfactory explanation of the way in which flint originated has yet been given, but it is generally assumed that the siliceous matter was partly derived from the marine organisms of which traces are almost invariably present in the nodules, and that these organisms formed nuclei around which soluble silica accumulated. At Brandon the flint is found in three layers embedded in chalk which is met with about six feet below the surface of the soil. The stones from each layer have their own characteristics and bear distinctive names. Those first reached are called top-stones. They are of very irregular shape, are extremely knobby, and are the least valuable. The nodules in the middle bed are more regularly formed and are known as wall-stones. The best flints are obtained from the lowest bed and are called floor-stones. As a rule, they are flat masses from three to six inches in thickness, with evenly rounded sides. The layers are separated by chalk of varying thickness; and the lowest is found at a depth ranging from twenty-four to thirty-six feet.

Acres upon acres of the flint area are covered with the chalk and waste stone brought up from the countless pits that have been opened, shafts to reach the beds being sunk at a distance of fourteen or fifteen yards apart, and horizontal tunnels being driven in every possible direction through each layer. The heaps that have been formed of late years are staring white, while older accumulations have been wholly or partially clothed with herbage by kindly Nature.

A shaft is not an unbroken perpendicular opening, but the descent is made by a series of wide steps called stagings, about four and a half feet apart, and each at right angles to the one above. The soil and stones to be sent to the surface are thrown from staging to staging by the digger, a most laborious process. There may be a good reason for the non-employment of a windlass, or the wonted method may be simply due to the conservatism of the workers. The diggers do not co-operate, but each individual sinks his own shaft, excavates the tunnels, and raises the material. A fortnight is the time usually occupied in reaching the lowest bed, which is the first to be removed to permit of the soil taken from the upper beds being sent down the pit instead of up. It is customary to sink a shaft at the extremity of a tunnel formed from another pit, to secure the draught without which the digger's candle will not burn. The tunnels are just high enough to admit of a man using pick and shovel in them in a sitting position; and to add to the unpleasantness of working in such a confined space, there is water continually dropping from the roof of the cavity and trickling down the sides. Springs, however, are never encountered, and accidents are extremely rare, the chalk being far too solid to fall. At intervals, pillars are left to support the superincumbent soil, and the practice of casting into one tunnel the refuse drawn from another still further tends to prevent the subsidence of the ground. Into the subterranean passages which he forms, the digger crawls on hands and knees, looking, as he enters, like nothing so much as a gigantic rabbit popping into its burrow.

And what is the pecuniary reward for toil of this severe and unpleasant description? If a man meets with good luck—in other words, if the flints in the bed on which he is at work are not separated by overmuch chalk, he can get out a one-horse-load of stone in two days, and so may earn a pound a week. Barely a living wage, to use the pet phrase of the day, especially as nothing saleable is brought to the surface during the ten or twelve days spent in sinking the shaft. And then, again, it sometimes happens that when a shaft has been sunk in the hope of continuing the working of what has proved to be a particularly good spot, the layer 'gives out' after a few flints have been extracted from the new tunnel, and the labour of days has gone for nothing. But striking the richest portions of a bed will not put money into the pocket of the finder unless there is a demand for their produce, and that is by no means constant. During the year 1893, for instance, hardly a load was wanted.

The raw material which the diggers provide is worked upon by the knappers at their own homes, in little sheds or outhouses. Having seated himself upon a low stool, the knapper affixes his 'knee-piece,' a stout pad formed of layers of leather, and upon this he places a mass of flint which he dexterously breaks, or quarters as he would say, with a heavy flat-faced hammer, taking care to strike in a slanting direction, that the full force of the blow may not be felt by the supporting limb. When the mass has been thus divided into convenient-sized pieces—cubes of about six inches—he exchanges the hammer he has been using for one that is much lighter and whose head is pointed at either end. With this he strikes off flakes extending from end to end of the quarter, if he is going on to the manufacture of gun-flints; or gives the stone a pyramidal form, if he desires to prepare it in the best way for the builder, completing the squaring of its face with his knapping hammer, a tool which may be likened to a few inches of a narrow iron hoop centred on a proportionately light haft. It is with his knapping hammer, also, that he fashions gun-flints, arrow-heads, spear-heads, and similar small articles from the flakes. The flakes are held one by one upon a chisel-shaped iron driven into a huge block, and are there chipped into the desired form. During this operation the knapper guards his right hand from the flying chips by a leather shield through which the haft of the hammer is inserted, but his eyes are unprotected, and often suffer in consequence. It is not, however, the larger

particles that are greatly to be feared, but those that are most minute. These form a dust with which the air becomes heavily charged, and entering the respiratory organs, work sad mischief there, phthisis or inflammation of the lungs usually ending a knapper's days before he has reached the prime of life.

By working from six o'clock in the morning to ten at night, an average knapper can finish from three thousand to four thousand flints, if the flakes are prepared beforehand, and he is paid at the rate of fourteen pence a thousand. In the same long day an expert can produce from seven thousand to ten thousand flakes. Flint-knapping is one of the few industries in which it has not been possible to apply machinery. Indeed, the probability is that the manufacture is carried on now, in all essential particulars, as it was when the human race was in its infancy, and that the only important change has been the substitution of iron hammers for those of flint. It has even been surmised that some of the technical terms are survivals of the speech of the earliest workers.

The gun-flints, which constitute the chief production of the industry, are exported mainly to Africa, although there is also a demand for them in India, China, and parts of South America. Their use is not entirely unknown even within the bounds of Great Britain. In February of last year, according to a report which appeared at the time in the local newspapers, a labouring man, near Ely, killed fifteen wild ducks at one discharge of an old-fashioned gun with flint-and-steel lock. But there does not remain among us a sufficient number of sportsmen similarly armed to affect the trade at Brandon.

In the busiest times, three-quarters of a million are sent away in a week, a quantity which one might, at first, be inclined to regard as sufficient to fully supply all demands for a considerable period; but a flint fails to emit sparks when it has been struck a few times. Some need to be replaced when only ten shots have been fired by their aid, while, with others, the gun may be discharged a hundred times. Those that are of the deepest colour are the most highly esteemed, and as the ultimate purchasers regard with disfavour a flint of which even but a small portion is white, the desired hue is imparted by the obliging manufacturer.

As would naturally be expected, flint implements of ancient make are found in the neighbourhood of Brandon, but the inexperienced collector is much more likely to purchase a modern imitation than to secure the genuine article, and, indeed, the production of counterfeits for sale by dealers is a recognised branch of the industry.

Unless there speedily arises a demand for dressed flint other than that which now exists, the art of the flint-knapper will be forgotten. A local optimist looks forward to the time when flint will be found in the pivoting work in the machines of our factories; but its value for that, or for some other purpose, must soon be recognised if skilled workers are to be ready to hand to meet the new demand. There are now only some seven diggers at Brandon and about twenty knappers, and these latter are all that there are in England, with the exception of two who follow the trade at the Suffolk village of Icklingham. As the dusky inhabitants of the Dark Continent, and the barbaric tribes elsewhere, become civilised, they will lay aside their flint-muskets in favour of the latest needle-gun, and thus, according to the present prospect, the 'oldest trade in the world' is within measurable distance of extinction.

## WOURALI:

### A TALE OF BRITISH GUIANA.

'You fellows can believe it or not as you like,' said Mackay, 'but I tell you that for a day and a night I have known what it is to be dead.'

'Oh, come, Mac, that's too much. The Major has given us some pretty tall ones, but we can't quite swallow that.'

'Perhaps,' suggested the Major, 'Mackay refers to a state of alcoholic saturation. I have heard'——

'Shut up, Major!' interrupted Highfield. 'Don't be feeble.'

'Oh, all right,' said Mackay. 'Only you said it was my turn for a yarn; but of course if'——

'Fire away, Mac; never mind the Major; he's an unbelieving Jew when his own tales are bested. We'll believe you. Observe the childlike innocence of our countenances.'

'Very well then, you shall have the yarn.'

'It happened out in British Guiana. Phil Egerton and I had been knocking about that district in a yacht. Phil was a bit of a scientist; had dabbled in the ologies when he was at Oxford, and he found something to interest him in the shallow waters round the coast. The buckets of mud and slimy things he fished up weren't very exciting for me, so I put in a good deal of time hanging round the bars and billiard-rooms of Georgetown. Poker is a good game in the other hemisphere. You fellows don't rise to its possibilities here.'

'Take you on at half-a-sov. ante,' interrupted the Major.

'No thanks, Major. You've been there, I know. I bar you.'

'I don't think I could mention the place,' continued Mackay, 'that I've spent more than a month in without contriving to make a fool of myself over some girl. She was a barmaid this time, and, by Jove! she was pretty. We called her "The Queen," and I never knew her by any other name. What nationality she belonged to I can't tell you. I think she had a dash of most of them in her, but English, Spanish, and Indian were perhaps the most prominent—English in business, Spanish in love, but pure undiluted Indian in hate. It was a dangerous mixture, but you've no notion how fascinating. I wasn't by any means the only fellow who succumbed to her charms, but I believe I was the only one she cared a gin cocktail about. You'll admit that the position had its dangers. Of course I knew perfectly well that I was making an ass of myself, but I couldn't help it. The only thing for me to do was to bolt. If I stayed another

week I should marry her, and then there 'd be the deuce to pay.

'"Look here, Egerton," I said one night; "you've got to take me away from here. Leave those confounded weeds of yours and let's weigh anchor and be off."

'"What's the matter, Mac?" said Egerton. "Got the fidgets? I'm sorry, old man, but I've discovered a new species among these said weeds, and I want to work it up."

'"Well, Phil, my boy, if you won't leave, you'll have to be my best man, that's all."

'That frightened him a bit. I told him the whole story, and he saw there was no time to be lost if I was to be saved. Phil Egerton knew me pretty well in those days.

'"I'll tell you what we'll do, Mac," he said. "You know Wilson the sugar-planter. He tells me there is some capital shooting to be had in the interior; any amount of birds and a chance at a stray jaguar or two. He's going to have a month of it, and has asked me to join him. We can take the yacht's boat and go up the Demerara until we strike the woods. What do you say?"

'"Anything you like, so long as you get me out of this mess."

'We went in the morning and saw Wilson about it. He was delighted, and said he would start as soon as we could get ready.

'Of course any sensible man in my position would have had the common prudence to employ the intervening time in cleaning his guns and looking out various odds and ends for the expedition, but as I tell you, where women are concerned I'm not to be counted in the class of sensible men. I went to see "The Queen," and naturally she wormed the whole thing out of me.

'"Phil," I said, when I got back, "if we can't start to-morrow we needn't go at all. It would spoil the party if I took a wife with me."

'"We'll start to-night if you like, Mac. I'm ready; and if Wilson isn't, he can follow us. But what's the hurry? You haven't told her you're going, have you?"

'"Yes, I have, and that's why it won't do for me to stay here longer."

'"Well, Mac, of all the thundering idiots it has been my privilege to know, I do think you're about the biggest. Why on earth couldn't you vanish quietly and leave her to find out about it afterwards?"

'"I meant to, but when I started talking to her, out it all came."

'"What possessed you to go there at all to-day?"

'"Oh, come, Phil, be reasonable. You couldn't have kept away yourself, if you'd been in my place."

'"You had a scene, I suppose?"

'"Well, slightly. She accused me of wanting to get rid of her, trying to run away, in fact; and as it was perfectly true, I fancy I didn't show up very well in the argument that followed."

'"Oh, you great bearded infant; put your hat on and we'll go and see Wilson at once."

'We started next morning. I was feeling a bit hipped, of course, but the others were jolly enough. As I think I told you, Phil had a weakness for pottering about in scientific messes, and he found a kindred spirit in Wilson, whose hobby was birds. It was really to get some specimens that he had originally proposed this expedition.

'"By the way, Wilson," said Phil, "have you ever managed to get hold of any curare?"

'"Curare?" said Wilson. "I don't know it; what is it?"

'"Probably it has got some other name out here. We called it curare in Oxford—Indian arrow poison, you know."

'"Oh! you mean 'wourali.' No, I can't say I have, and I don't think I want to either. It isn't a very safe plaything."

'"Safe enough," said Phil, "so long as you haven't any cuts or scratches on your hands."

'"For heaven's sake, shut up that scientific shop!" I exclaimed. "We've come out here to enjoy ourselves, not to talk like a confounded British Association meeting."

'"Poor old Mac!" said Phil, "what shall we talk about? Will billiards do—or barmaids?"

'"Drop it, Phil," I said; "I don't want to be a bear, but your jargon isn't very interesting to a chap who hardly knows an ology from an ism. Let's have something to eat."

'We found a shady spot under some bushes to have our meal in. We were just lighting up afterwards, and I was holding the match to my pipe when something flashed out of the bushes and knocked the pipe out of my mouth.

'"What's that?" said Phil, starting up.

'"It's a dagger," I said. "Just see what's behind those bushes, you chaps, while I tie my handkerchief round this hand. I've got a bit of a scratch. If it's 'The Queen,' let her go. Thank goodness she missed my face."

'It *was* "The Queen." They caught sight of her among the bushes, but she got away all right. They didn't follow her far, but came back to see if I was much hurt.

'"It's nothing serious," I said; "only a scratch, but I think my nerves must be a bit upset. It has made me feel horribly tired. I'll go and lie down in the boat for a while, and let you fellows finish your smoke. I've got a bit of a head."

'"Mackay, you're crying," exclaimed Wilson, "and the sweat is simply pouring down your face. You're pretty badly hurt."

'"Crying!" shouted Phil. "Wilson, that dagger is poisoned!"

'"Poisoned? You don't mean"——

'"Yes, I do. It's 'wourali;' copious secretion of sweat and tears, headache, feeling of extreme lassitude—those are the exact symptoms. Off with that bandage, Mac."

'"Good heavens! he's done for," said Wilson.

'"Done for? Not a bit of it. Off with that bandage; I'm going to suck the wound!"

'I had just got energy enough left to protest against his doing this, but he insisted, and I was too feeble to prevent him.

'"Nonsense, man," he said; "I'm safe enough. The stuff isn't a poison taken internally, even if I do manage to swallow some."

'He put his lips to the wound, and then I closed my eyes and everything became blank.

'It must have been hours afterwards that I began slowly to regain, I can't say conscious-

ness, but an indefinite sensation of existence, and horrible weariness. It seemed to me that I was swimming on and on somewhere in a vague, purposeless way, and I was very, very tired. I call it swimming, but that isn't an exact description. I could feel my arms moving back and fore with a steady rhythmical motion, but the rest of my body was absolutely still. I was almost suffocating for want of air, but I didn't seem to have strength to gasp. How long that sensation lasted I can't say, but it must have been a very long time. I wouldn't voluntarily go through another hour of such unutterable and helpless misery for anything you could offer me. I tell you it has given me my theory of what future punishment may be like.

'As consciousness gradually returned, the feeling of infinite weariness became more and more unbearable. My arms were still swinging backwards and forwards like a couple of animated pump handles, and I was quite unable either to stop them or to move any other part of my body. Try and imagine the sensation; it was simply awful.

'When I did finally come to myself so far as to know what was going on, I did it pretty thoroughly. You know the theory that when a man loses the use of his eyes, his senses of touch and hearing become unusually acute? From my experience that day I can quite believe it. I had lost all power of motion, and my perceptive faculties became, to compensate, most uncomfortably keen. I felt as if I could almost see through my closed eyelids.

'Phil told me afterwards that the peculiarity of "wourali" poisoning is that if the dose is not very large, only the nerves of motion are paralysed, while those of sensation become abnormally sensitive. I knew everything that was going on round me, and I could hear every word they said, but I couldn't even wink to let them know I was alive.

'They had stuck a knife-handle between my teeth to keep my mouth open, and the weariness in my arms was caused by the fact that for nearly a day and a night Phil and Wilson had been taking it in turns to practice artificial respiration on me.

'"Egerton," I heard Wilson say, "do you think it's any good going on longer? He hasn't breathed now for nearly twenty hours. I believe he's dead."

'"We'll go on as long as we can stand!" said Phil, and I blessed him for it. "If we can only keep the artificial respiration going till the poison is eliminated, he will recover. For God's sake, keep it up as long as you can, Wilson."

'"If you think there is the slightest chance of saving him, I'll go on; but I don't think I can last out much longer."

'"He's still warm, Wilson, and I won't give up hope as long as that is so."

'That was a nice cheerful conversation to overhear, wasn't it? Listeners never hear good of themselves it is said, but I doubt whether the most persistent eavesdropper ever had the pleasure of hearing a man pronounce him dead, without being able to contradict the statement. If I hadn't begun to breathe spontaneously pretty soon after that, I should never have had the opportunity of contradicting it. Phil and Wilson couldn't have gone on much longer. How they kept it up for the length of time they did I have never been able to understand. The power of friendship is very much underrated.

'It must have been about two hours after Wilson had declared that I was dead, that Phil saw my eyelids begin to twitch.

'"At last, Wilson!" he cried. "Go and get some water from the river."

'They dashed the cold water over me, and it caused me to gasp slightly. It was enough; I had begun to breathe again. They carried me to the boat, and as soon as they saw the danger was over, they, both of them, sat down on the bottom boards and fell fast asleep. In a very few minutes after them, I was asleep too.

'Nearly fifteen hours after that, I woke, feeling rather weak and faint, but otherwise as right as a trivet. The other two were still asleep, and I didn't wake them.

'That is the story, and I don't think I was guilty of an exaggeration when I told you that for a day and a night I had known what death was. A man who remains for twenty-four hours without once drawing a breath may fairly claim to be dead, I think.'

## AFTER LONG MONTHS.

After long months we meet again
Among the nodding daffodils,
The light lies low along the plain,
And over all the purple hills;
The merry thrush sings out the day
With bursts of May-time madrigals,
And, from the freshly budded spray,
Through opening leaves, the chiff-chaff calls.

How different all when last we met
In dim fields dashed with Autumn rain,
And watched the last late swallow set
His wings towards the South again!
Long time we strove, with voices low,
And alien lips, light words to speak;
And was it rain that trembled so
From those long lashes down your cheek?

We parted, as the mists drew down,
The gray mists, gathering fold on fold,
And, through the dusk, the little town
Glimmered, far off, with sparks of gold.
We watched the lamps wake, one by one,
Gold stars beneath the starless sky,
And hand touched hand, and all was done
'Twixt hearts too full to say good-bye.

And now Spring stands, with sunny smile,
Over the dead months cold and gray;
I think we've dreamed a weary while
And wakened to the perfect day.
With Winter's snow and Autumn's rain
The days of lonely life are o'er;
Forget the parting and the pain
Since our two hearts have met once more.

S. Cornish Watkins.

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## SOCIAL CRIMES.

By Mrs Lynn Linton.

The Ten Commandments do not cover the whole ground of modern immorality. Of course they tabulate certain grave elemental crimes, the infraction of which brings society to hopeless ruin; but they do not touch on vices like betting, gambling, drinking, extravagance—which yet are disastrous and pernicious enough—and they do not so much as brush the skirts of those misdemeanours we have called social crimes; which misdemeanours, however, are many and grievous, and fertile in pain and annoyance to those who suffer therefrom.

In the matter of invitations now, what criminals some people are! They send you a friendly and informal invitation to dinner, worded so that you expect no one but the family as it is. You go in your tidiest home gown, but it is a home gown at the best, and you find an assemblage of eighteen, all pranked in festal array, whereby you are made to look like a dingy London sparrow among hummingbirds and parrakeets. Or contrariwise, you get a formal card presaging a 'stately spread,' and you find a shabby, little, irregular bunch of five, among whom one man is in his morning coat, and the ladies are all 'high up to the throat.' This discrepancy between the form and the thing—the implied promise and the practical fulfilment—is one of the social crimes for which the perpetrator should be somehow made responsible. It may not be so bad as theft or murder, but it is bad enough in all conscience, and looms very large in that list of social crimes of which all good conformists do well to take heed.

Side by side with this crime is that other—delay in answering invitations—which makes the life of an intending hostess a veritable burden to her, and adds so infinitely to her difficulties. In spite of the request, in the corner, for an early answer—in spite of the general knowledge that this early answer is essential to the peace of mind of the hostess and the success of the dinner—the unconscientious among the invited neglect this primal law of social morality, and keep back the answer for days—perhaps a week—for no good reason whatever. One of the most flagrant instances of this not uncommon social immorality was in the action of a certain lady, who neglected for a whole week to answer a dinner invitation. The intending hostess called; left a card with a pencilled query: 'Am I to have the pleasure of seeing you and Mr —— on the 18th?' The next morning came a curt and formal acceptance, without a word of apology for the delay. At seven o'clock on the day of the dinner—which was for eight—a note was brought regretting unavoidable absence, as Mr —— had a cold. Now here was crime upon crime—a Pelion upon Ossa of social misdemeanours, either of which ought to have been sufficient to insure ostracism up to a certain point. Another case, just as bad, was that of a young man who was engaged to dine with all due ceremony at a rather important private dinner. At the eleventh hour he sent an excuse. The day was fine; he had an offer of a moonlight row on the river; the temptation was too strong for his social virtue to resist. He threw over his hostess and the dinner, and chose Richmond and the moonlight instead. Needless to say he had his reward; and the doors of that special house were for ever after closed against him.

Another social crime is the intrusion of comparative strangers on your privacy, indifferent to the fact that you have a day when you are at home to your world of acquaintances not taking rank as friends. These comparative strangers have no right to call on you at all. They have neither asked leave nor been requested; but suddenly, for their own convenience and to while away an unoccupied hour, they make an incursion out of calling time and not on your day of reception, and plant themselves there, like old and intimate friends. This, too, is a social misdemeanour that deserves

both punishment and rebuke. Of the same class is neglect to return a formal visit which the one has prayed the other to make. When acquaintance has ripened into friendship, then the counting of visits, to and from, is an indignity and ridiculous. But while things are in the early stages, before the husk has been removed or the starch washed out, we have to be careful and exact; and a 'blazer' in an evening party is not more out of place than the careless freedom of intimacy attempted with one who is only on the first line of an undeveloped acquaintance.

To intentionally overdress for a small and informal gathering is, again, a social crime meriting castigation. To intentionally underdress for a gorgeous affair of diamonds and orders, is the same crime turned round and showing the other side. The one is an ostentatious kind of reproach which brings shame and confusion into the ranks of the entertainer—a reproach of poverty and meanness, of insufficiency and being below the mark, unpleasant enough to the one on whose head this special vial has been poured out. The other is in its essence an arrogant insult, as who should say: 'You are not worth making a fuss about. Your best is only parallel with my second-rate, when all is said and done. I, in my older clothes, and by no means "spiffy" in my get-up, am quite as good as you in your diamonds and orders; and so I would have you understand.' This was the verbal translation of that famous appearance, when a man of light and leading in his own way, arrived at Mrs B's grand evening party, in muddy boots and with trousers turned up over the ankles. On the same plane, as far as heinousness of social offence is concerned, is the sin of unpunctuality, which in its special essence is also an arrogant insult and the very soul of ill-breeding.

These are the chief of what we may call the circumstantial crimes of which those in society are guilty. The more spiritual misdemeanours are even worse. Chief of these more spiritual immoralities is the habit of evil-speaking in general, and specially of evil-speaking against those from whom you have just this moment accepted hospitality. Those sneers at the dinner! those gibes at the music! those ill-natured jests to the disfavour of the host, of the hostess, of the guests, of the whole arrangements! How hateful they all are! and what a bad heart, if not a weak, feather-headed brain, they show! This indeed is one of the worst social crimes we know, coming as it does into the category of immoralities of a profounder nature than itself. All this group of faults needs the knife; and none are more common. And none are more contagious for the one part—more deep-seated for the other. The habit of ill-nature is like a cancer that eats daily deeper and deeper into the flesh, poisoning the blood, and finally destroying the life, which here means truth and charity. We may attack types as vigorously as possible, but individuals should be sacred. Where the cap fits, so much the worse for the head whereon it is set; where the individual falls into the ranks of the type, the lash cast round his shoulders is undirected by the design of the executioner. This is a very different thing from the personal ill-nature which permeates society and eddies round in poisonous talk, besmirching all on whom it falls—that dishonourable and dishonest treachery which smiles in the face and stabs at the back, which pretends friendship and practises hostility. Yet how many of this kind one knows in what is called the world! People of whose loyalty no one can be sure, disloyal indeed as they are all. Yet we are simple enough to think that we individually shall be exempt. Every one else, but not we. The sugar given to us is pure, though that to others is poisoned through and through. When we come to the knowledge that we fare just as badly as those others, we are then indignant, and cry: 'Who would have thought it?' holding up our hands in horror at the treachery every one could see but we ourselves.

Cognate with this crime is that other—the betrayal of confidences—with its weaker shadow, the retailing of gossip and the repeating of conversations, quasi-confidential and not meant to be repeated. All these are different shades of the same thing; and a bad thing it is. More than half the mischief that takes place in society has its rise in this dishonourable chatter—now repeating things not meant to be scattered broadcast; now carrying from house to house that hideous rag-bag of gossip; now more gravely breaking trust, and betraying positive confidences, to the infinite damage of all concerned. Is it not Horace who says that even a quarrel with your friend does not absolve you, his confidant, from the duty of keeping sacred his confidences? And if not a quarrel, where it is to be supposed there has been wrong on both sides—you naturally thinking the wrong done to you as big as a mountain, and yours done to him no heavier than a gossamer thread—then assuredly not for idleness; not for the desire to show your own importance and how you have been trusted; not for the baser love of destroying the prestige of others, that you may appear all the whiter and higher; not for any of the puerile motives which create that mean wretch, a gossip, are you justified in betraying what has been confided to your honour. The betrayer of confidences is a social criminal of the deepest dye; and though he does not come into the list of the Ten, he is in the index expurgatorius, together with his brother, the 'Mauvaise langue'—him of the bitter speech and ill-natured commentary.

Social crimes are that heedless speaking before strangers of religion, politics, and people, by which we so often tumble fathoms deep into conversational bogs, and that ferret-eyed inquisitiveness which wants to know, you know, all and everything there is to know about all and every one within hail. This last is a common hotel fault, and the others are rather of the drawing-room and the club. Of the mistakes made by the unwary about people, anecdotes are rife; and ludicrous enough are the efforts by which the culprit has sought his release from that coil wherein he did so wilfully entangle himself. 'That ugly woman?'—'My wife'—'No, that other?'—'My sister,' is the norm of all the rest. For almost always these incautious babblers speak in dispraise, not in

praise, and so are flung over the rocks, with no hope of redemption. No man pities them, for when we come to think of it, it is an evil thing to fall foul of even the looks of an unoffending stranger, against whom you can have no kind of grudge. If she be homely to the extent of hideousness, what business is it of yours to say so? Cannot you keep your opinion to yourself? Are you the edile sent out to arrange the world's standard of good looks, with leave and license to trounce all those who do not come up to the mark? Behind that homely mask—we will call it muzzle if you will—may hide a soul of purest loveliness. And this goes further in the long-run than the most exquisite face that ever made your dreams like hours spent in Paradise, with a vacant mind or a corrupted heart.

As for religion or politics, he who introduces among strangers these vexed questions must be such an absolute idiot as to call forth pity rather than condemnation. It is one of the first things we are taught to avoid—one of the first practical lessons we receive while we are yet young and callow and ignorant of the precepts of worldly wisdom. In these days of multifarious shades of faith and passionate partisanship in politics, reticence is more and more imperative, and it behoves us to keep a calm sough indeed, if we would not come to humiliation. With excitable folk politics act as the proverbial red rag to the bull. Discussion is impossible. Fury in attack and unbridled wrath in defence, are like the clanging of sword and shield. And only fear of that helmeted and blue-coated guardian of the public peace, stolidly marching outside, keeps the belligerents from fisticuffs and mutual pommelling. Social crime as the discussion is, the combatants have sense enough not to let it broaden out into a legal misdemeanour; but at the best it is a sin which adds to its sinfulness the further disgrace of being a blunder.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER II.—THE COUSIN.

In these days of self-restraint we neither weep nor rage; we neither pour out lamentations nor curses.

When a young man of the old days lost his fortune, or his mistress, or both, I believe that he thought it no scorn to let his wailings or his curses be heard by all the world. In these days the young man walks to his club—perhaps it will be his last appearance there—dines as usual with his everyday face and his smile for a friend, and presently goes home.

I am but a child of my generation. Therefore, I did this. And at ten o'clock or so I returned to my chambers.

Outside the door I found waiting for me a man whose appearance was not familiar to me. The man was young, tall, and well set up; dressed well enough, but hardly with the stamp of to-day's Piccadilly.

'Are you Sir George Burnikel?' he asked bluntly, without taking off his hat or touching the brim in the way common with servitors.

'I believe I am. But I do not seem to know you.'

'May I have ten minutes' conversation with you?'

'Certainly not, unless I know who you are and what you want. So, my friend, as ten o'clock at night is not the most usual time for a call, perhaps you will go away and write your business.'

'I have come a good step,' he persisted. 'And I have waited for two hours. If you could see me to-night, Sir George, I should be very much obliged.'

'Who are you, then?'

'My name is Robert Burnikel. I am a cousin of yours.'

'Never heard that I had any cousin of that name, I assure you.'

'I am a distant cousin. I do not want to beg or to borrow money of you, I assure you. I came in the hope that you would listen to me, and perhaps give me some advice. By trade I am a boat-builder; I carry on the same business, in the same place, that your great-grandfather did before he quarrelled with his partner and left Wapping.'

After such an introduction I had no more hesitation, but I turned the key and threw open the door. 'Come in,' I said; 'I am sure it's all right. The hereditary calling of our family is boat-building. The head of the family should always be a boat-builder. Come in.' I led the way into the study, and touched the switch of the light. 'Now,' I said, 'if you like to sit down and talk I will listen. There is soda-water, with the usual accessories, on the table with cigarettes.'

My visitor declined the proffered hospitality. Now that he had taken off his hat and was standing under the bright electric light, the cousin appeared at first to be merely a good-looking young man with a certain roughness of manner as of dress. But as I looked at him, I became gradually aware that this young man was most curiously like myself: I have broad shoulders, but his were broader; I am tolerably tall, but he was taller; my head is pretty large, but his was larger; my forehead is square, but his was squarer; my nose is straight, but his was straighter. Even his hair was the same, and that grew in short strong brown curls all over his head—the kind of hair that is never found decorating the skull of an ordinary weak-kneed Christian. The hair of Mr Feeble-mind and Mr Ready-to-halt is straight. Therefore I have always been pleased to possess stubbly, curly hair. His voice, too, was like my own, only stronger and fuller. To complete the resemblance, I have the short broad fingers of a workman—these fingers force a man to buy a lathe; they never gave me any peace until I had got the lathe. My visitor had exactly the same hand, but it was larger. Strange that after so many generations the

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resemblance between two cousins should be so strong.

Mr Robert Burnikel took a chair and cleared his throat. 'It is a personal matter,' he said, 'and it is somewhat difficult to begin.'

'Looks like borrowing money, after all,' I thought. 'If I may suggest,' I said, 'you might tell me, first, something of the family history. It is ninety years since the connection of my branch with yours was broken off. I am, I regret to say, shamefully ignorant of my own people.'

'Well, Sir George. There was a boat-builder at Wapping died about the year 1780. He wasn't the first of the boat-builders by a hundred years and more; you will find his tomb—one of the fine square tombs on the south side of Wapping church. The churchyard is full of Burnikels. If you think it worth while to be proud of such a thing, you belong to the oldest and most respectable family of Wapping.'

'Of course one likes to feel that there are respectable ancestors.'

'That old man, who died at the age of eighty-five, was great-great-grandfather to both of us.'

'I see. Our cousinship starts a hundred years ago. It hath a venerable aspect.'

'He left two sons at least; those two sons carried on the business in partnership until they died or retired. Then, two of their sons—I don't know anything about the rest—took it over as partners. They quarrelled—I daresay you have heard why,' he looked up quickly and paused—'and they dissolved partnership. One came to this end of the town and became a builder, the other stayed at Wapping, and his son, and his grandson, and his great-grandson—that's myself—have conducted that business ever since. I am now the sole owner of the concern.'

'It is rather bewildering, at first. One would like it in black and white. However, the point is that your branch of our family has remained at Wapping carrying on the old business all these years. I fear there has been little intercourse between the two main currents of the stock.'

'None, I believe. But we were able to follow the fortunes of your branch.'

'There were other offshoots, I suppose, tributary streams, cadet branches, with you as with us?'

'Yes, some of us are in Australia; some are in Canada; some are in New Zealand; some are boat-builders; some are farmers; some of us are sailors; we are scattered all over the world.'

'And some of you rich?'

'None of us are rich. Your great-grandfather, though he called himself a builder, of course, had no necessity to work.'

'No necessity to work? Why not?'

'Why, on account of his immense wealth.'

'Wealth? He had very little. Although as to work, he was a most industrious person. He stamped his image in stucco all over Kensington. But he made very little money. Where did you get this notion of his enormous wealth?'

'Well,' the cousin looked doubtful, but for the moment he evaded the point. 'When one of his sons became a lawyer, and his father being so rich'——

'Again you are misinformed. My great-grandfather left a moderate fortune, and my grandfather had his share of it and no more.'

'We always understood, to be sure, that your grandfather was so rich that he was able to buy his place as judge and his title.'

At this amazing theory I jumped in my chair and sat upright. 'Good Lord! man!' I cried. 'Where were you—where could you be—brought up? Where do they still preserve prejudices pre—pre—pre-medieval?'

'I was born and brought up in Wapping.'

'Can remote Wapping be such a God-forsaken country as to believe that judges buy their seats? Are you so incredibly ignorant as to believe that?'

'I don't know.' He coloured. 'Perhaps we were wrong. They said so. I never questioned it. I never really thought about it. My grandmother used to tell us so.'

'Your grandmother! Permit me to say, newly-found cousin, that my respect for the Wapping grandmother begins to wobble. My grandfather was made judge for the usual reason, that he was a very great lawyer.'

'He died worth a quarter of a million.'

'Well, and why the deuce should he not? If you make from five to ten thousand a year by your practice, and only spend one, and go on doing that for thirty years, and get five per cent. all the time for your money, you will find yourself worth all that at the end of the time. But why are you telling me all this stuff about my own people? Have you got something up your sleeve? Have it out, man.'

'Well, Sir George, the story of that bag of diamonds and things has never been forgotten. It rankled down to my own time. My father used to grow gloomy when business was bad, and he thought of the diamonds.'

'What had that to do with my grandfather?'

'And the fortune that the judge was reported to have left behind him—a quarter of a million—was exactly the value that old John Burnikel set upon the diamonds that your great-grandfather took.'

'My great-grandfather took? Man, you've got a bee in your bonnet. It was not that much-injured old man, but your great-grandfather—yours—who—I always understood took the jewels.'

The cousin laughed gently, but shook his head.

'That was the story they told you, of course. Why, it is nearly a hundred years ago, and we have always been quite narrow in our means, working hard, living carefully, and spending little. Never a rich man among us. Those of us who were not in the business went to sea; not a single man died rich.'

'Then,' said George, 'you must have buried the precious diamonds. My great-grandfather left a few thousands only, and my grandfather had great difficulty in keeping himself until his practice began and increased.'

'Well, they always told me'——

'If you come to that, they always told me'——

'If the bag was not taken by your great-grandfather, who could have taken it?'

'Yours, my dear sir—yours.'

'For no one knew of its existence except those two and the old man John Burnikel. And they found him dying and the bag gone. Not dead, or the bag might have been stolen by some one else. But sick and dying, and the thing was gone.'

'Well, Mr Burnikel, you are a stranger to me, and I think I will not discuss any further the difficult question as to who stole a bag ninety years ago. My ancestor certainly did not, and I do not wish to accuse your ancestor. Perhaps the bag was stowed away somewhere: in a bank; in a merchant's strong room'——

'He was only a simple sailor. He knew nothing about banks or strong rooms.'

'The person who took it—not necessarily your ancestor and certainly not mine—put it somewhere and died without revealing the secret. If you come to think of it, a bag of diamonds into which you dipped whenever you wanted to sell one was rather a dangerous kind of thing to keep. Bankers, not boat-builders, as a rule, keep bags of diamonds. It is somewhere—hidden away—in your back garden, perhaps.'

'Not ours.'

'Or perhaps there never was any bag of diamonds at all.'

'Oh! Yes there was. We've got the old sailor's bed at home with the secret hiding-place at the head, and his chest brass-bound'——

'The empty chest proves the existence of the treasure, I suppose. You have not told me why you came here to-night. Not, I take it, to talk over the Legend of the Lost Treasure?'

'The reason why I came here this evening is this. You know the world and I do not. I want your advice. It is this way. I mean to rise in the world. Wapping is all very well—what there is of it. But after all, it is not everything.'

'Not everything, I suppose.'

'It is, in fact, only a corner of the world. I mean to get out of it.'

'Very good.'

'I see, everywhere, men no better than myself—not so good—working-men, getting distinction on the School Board and on the County Council, and even,' he gasped, 'even Elsewhere,' he said, with a kind of awe and in capitals. 'And I don't see why I should not get on too.'

'Why not? Why not? If you like the kind of work.'

'In short, Sir George—you will not laugh at me—I mean to go into the House.'

'Why should I laugh at you?'

'I will show you afterwards, if you like, on another occasion, my chances and my fitness.'

'To-night you will explain to me, perhaps, where I come in—why you come to me. I am the worst person in the world to advise.'

'I do not ask advice about my own intentions,' said the political candidate, with a certain dignity. 'I advise myself. I am going into the House. What I want you to tell me is this—I have no means at Wapping of finding out how one sets to work in the first instance; how you let people know that you are going to stand; how you find a borough; what it costs, and all the rest of it. If you can give or get for me this information, Sir George, it is all that I shall ask you, and I shall be extremely obliged to you.'

'I can't give it, but I can get it for you, I daresay. At all events I will try.'

'That is very kind of you. Let me once get it'—the man's eyes flashed—'and I will succeed. I am an able man, Sir George—I am not boasting—I am stating a plain fact—I am a very able man; and I shall get on, you shall see. You shall not be ashamed to own your cousin. I shall rise.'

He did rise. Perhaps to illustrate his prophecy. He got up and took his hat.

'I know exactly what I mean to have,' said the confident young man—yet the arrogance of his words was tempered by a certain modesty of utterance—'and I know how to get it. But I must get into the House first. I've planned it all out. It takes time to make one's way. In five year's time—I only ask five years—I shall be Home Secretary!'

'What?'

'Home Secretary,' he repeated calmly. 'Nothing less than that to begin with.'

'Oh! nothing less than that.'

'After that I don't say, nor do I even begin to think. Why, there are a dozen men now in the House who have gone in like me in order to get distinction. I read the debates and I see how these men get on. And I understand their secret, which is open to all. I'm not going to join any party. I shall be an Independent member, and I shall rise by my own exertions and my own abilities.'

I remembered that afternoon's dream, about myself. Good heavens! And here was this man—of my own name—of my own age—so much like myself—this cousin—coming to me with exactly the ambition desired for me by Lady Frances! Was this man who called himself a boat-builder—perhaps in some allegorical sense—really myself? The builder of a boat might be the builder of a man. Was this cousin my own nobler self, the complete and fully developed George?

'I should like,' my visitor continued, 'to show you that I am not an empty boaster. Let me call again. Or perhaps you would wish to see the place that you came from. Come over to Wapping. The yard is not a bit changed. It is just what it was two hundred years ago, when the first Burnikel came to the place. Come at any time; I am always there.'

'Thank you. I will call upon you to-morrow afternoon. Good-night; and, I say, when you have nothing better to do, dig up the back garden and find that precious bag. It may help to pay your election expenses.'

He departed. I remained strangely disturbed. After all the events of the day—the loss of fortune, the fatal absence of ambition; to meet this man—arrogant, presumptuous, ignorant. Home Secretary to begin with! A tradesman

of the East End! And yet—yet there was something in the calm confidence of the man, and in the look of strength. But—Home Secretary to begin with!

*(To be continued.)*

## MONAZITE AND ITS USES.

It is not to be expected that the word 'monazite' is familiar to the general reader, for until recently even the mineral itself was little more than a name to most chemists. But we propose to show how, by reason of a recent ingenious invention, it now comes home to the business and bosom of most of us. In brief, monazite is a natural phosphate of cerium, thorium, and lanthanum, all of which belong to the obscure order of metals; and it is in respect of its thorium constituent that the mineral attracts our present interest. Thorium is a heavy gray metal, which was first discovered about seventy years ago in a somewhat rare Norwegian mineral called thorite. It has the peculiarity of burning into a white oxide when heated in the air, and it is not acted upon by water. The oxide is white, infusible in all acids except sulphuric, and of all metallic oxides is said to be the most 'refractory' to heat.

It is by reason of these properties that thorium has solved the problem of the incandescent gas-lamp. Everybody knows the mysterious 'mantle' that in the new lamp turns the long-familiar yellow flame of the gas into a dense, brilliant, white light; and everybody must have wondered what the 'mantle' is, and to what it owes its astonishing properties. Well, though the method of preparing the 'mantle' is a secret process of the patentees, we will explain the general principle of it.

The 'mantle,' then, is a sort of stocking, loosely woven of cotton, and having the end tied up with asbestos thread. After being sewn, it is plunged into a bath of liquid the chief component of which is monazite, the leading virtue of which, again, is in the thorium it contains. After it has been sufficiently soaked, the 'stocking' is drawn over a metal stand and allowed to dry gradually. Then it is burned from the top downwards, and the remainder is a white skeleton composed of cotton ashes and the metals of the liquor. In itself the skeleton or 'mantle,' as it is now, is infusible, and when placed over a properly prepared burner, instantly makes the gas-flame incandescent.

It is one of the most remarkable things in the history of artificial lighting, and has come as a boon and a blessing to those for whom electricity is still too expensive. Indeed, many people prefer the incandescent gas-lamp to the electric light. There are now several incandescent lamps in the market, but their rival claims to priority do not concern us here. That best known is the patent of the Ritter von Welsbach, for the manufacture of which large factories have been erected at Vienna, Berlin, and elsewhere on the Continent. A patent for an incandescent lamp was taken out by an American, named William Lake, some years ago, but the patent was allowed to lapse, and we are not aware if it embodied the principle of the 'mantle.'

The liquid in which the 'stockings' are steeped contains, besides the ingredients of monazite (namely, thorium, cerium, and lanthanum), certain proportions of didymium, erbium, yttrium, and zircon, but thorium is the essential element. When the new lamp and mantle was first introduced, the supplies of Norwegian thorite soon proved inadequate, and there arose a demand for any material containing thorium in appreciable quantity. Thus it was that monazite became an article of commerce, having till then been a neglected, and practically unknown, mineral. It was at first obtained from Brazil, Norway, and a little from Russia, but now the largest source of supply is the United States.

The monazite of North America is found for the most part in the Carolinas, large deposits having been recently discovered in North Carolina, and in the northern counties of South Carolina. In this region the mineral is found among the sand and gravel in the bed of small streams, but the richest deposits are at the head-waters of the streams, among the detritus of gneiss and schist, &c. In such places monazite is found both in pure crystals of the size of a grain of wheat, or even larger, and as sand in which very small crystals of the mineral are mixed up with ordinary sand and other material. The larger crystals are easily gathered by hand, and the people of the districts where they are found employ their leisure time in gathering them for storekeepers who collect them for the wholesale traders.

The sand is treated much as in 'washing' for gold—that is to say, it is shovelled into a box through which a stream of water is directed, which carries away the ordinary sand and lighter material, and leaves the heavier monazite crystals at the bottom, along with particles of iron, &c. The residuum is taken out of the box and dried, after which it is subjected to treatment by a magnet to extract the particles of iron. After this treatment, the marketable 'monazite sand' should contain from fifty to sixty per cent. of monazite, and is worth on the spot about five cents per pound, while the pure crystals are valued at from ten to twelve cents per pound.

The chief demand, however, is for the pure crystal, as it is complained that the American sand is not always properly cleaned, and has been sometimes shipped with a quite unpayable proportion of real monazite in it. If the monazite sand is reasonably clean, and will yield not less than from two to three per cent. of thorium, it seems to answer the purpose required; but the best North Carolina monazite yields from four to six and a half per cent. of thorium, besides cerium and lanthanum. It is now proposed that the sand should be treated on the spot, and only the valuable material extracted for shipment, to save the cost of carriage of a great bulk of worthless stuff. A process has recently been invented by a German chemist for the economical extraction of oxide of thorium direct from the mineral, and it is designed to organise the monazite industry of the Carolinas on a thoroughly scientific basis.

In Germany the demand for monazite is said to be ahead of the available supplies, owing to

the rapid extension of the incandescent lamp, the profits on which have enabled the manufacturing company to pay fabulous dividends. The Scandinavian deposits of thorite seem nearly exhausted, and though monazite has been found in Russia, it does not seem to exist there —at any rate, so far as is known—in commercial quantities. The Norwegian thorite ore (as distinguished from monazite) usually yields from forty to sixty per cent. of thorium, and the value of it is stated to be from six to eight shillings per kilogram for each per cent. of the metal in the ore.

Pure thorium used to be worth about £50 per pound, but now that monazite has come into the market, it runs only about £7 to £10 per pound. When the first cargoes of Brazilian monazite were imported, they brought about £85 per ton of sand, containing from three to three and a half per cent. of thorium; but such has been the effect of the development of supplies in Brazil and in North America (for Canada is now also yielding some), that the price went steadily down, and was as low as £15 per ton at the port of importation.

Monazite is not merely proportionally lower in value than the Norwegian thorite ores, but is further depreciated by the fact that it costs a good deal more to extract the thorium from monazite than from thorite. The work of analysis, too, is said to be especially difficult, and not one that every analytical chemist can achieve, or that every laboratory is equipped for.

The richest monazite sand, so far, has been found in Brazil, in the southern part of the State of Bahia. There it is gathered on an immense stretch of beach along the coast, from which it is shovelled up and loaded into vessels of light draught. At first the deposits were free to all comers, but now that the value of them is known, the working of them has been brought under regulation by the Government. This Bahian beach-sand is said to contain eighty per cent. of monazite, and the monazite from three to three and a half per cent. of thorium, so that it is richer than the North Carolina sand, but not so valuable as the Carolinan monazite crystals.

These, however, are but a few of the facts we have been able to glean of a quite new industry, the existence of which is known to very few, while the purpose which has called it into being is now familiar to everybody.

## AFTER THE FACT.*

### CHAPTER IV.

I AWOKE between clean sheets in a narrow, natty berth. I had been stripped to the singlet, and yet handled with evident kindness. My clothes hung tidily from a peg; they were swaying very gently to and fro, like the candlestick in its socket, and the curtains of my bunk. I was aboard the *Mollyhawk*, and the *Mollyhawk* was out at sea. I bounded to the floor, to the port; it was open, and I looked out into the alleyway. They had imprisoned me, then, in a deck-house stateroom; no doubt the door was locked. I tried it, found it unlocked, had a vision of white napery and bright silver in the main cabin, and closed the door more calmly than I had opened it. After all, I was in the hands of a deliberate, cool, resourceful rascal; my only weapons, therefore, were coolness, deliberation, and resource.

So I dressed myself with care, and ere I was ready, could smile at the simple wiles which had ensnared me. The simplicity, however, was that of genius; the two farewell letters, of which one, alas! was evidently genuine; the well-acted depression and the air of resigned defeat at the close of a long day in loathly hiding. These pretences, so transparent now, struck no shame to my heart as I recalled them; for I knew that, were it all to come over again, I should be again deceived. What was must be endured; it was of no use thinking about it; one must think of what might yet be done. But where were we—through the Heads? By the gentle, joyful motion it was impossible to tell. Had we shown our heels? And for what port in all the world were we bound? As if in answer, the tramp of feet and the sound of rough voices in unison came to me at that moment through the open port:

> O where are you going to, my pretty maid?
> Wa-ay, Rio!
> O where are you going to, my pretty maid?
> We're bound for Rio Grande!'

I had learned and liked the chanty in my voyage out in the Glasgow clipper; and half involuntarily, half out of bravado, I was joining in the chorus when I appeared on deck. I even lent a hand at the capstan, as Deedes had done himself, and I had the satisfaction of silencing his voice with the first note of my own:

> 'An' it's he-ey, Rio!
> Wa-ay, Rio!
> Sing fare you well,
> You bonny young gell,
> We're bound for'——

'Belay!' cried the jolly rich voice of that great villain, my churchyard acquaintance of Western Beach. As our eyes met, he honoured me with a jovial nod; then my white duck suit came between us, a little creased, but spotless as on the night before; and Deedes was looking me up and down.

'You're a cool one, too,' said he. 'Well, I'm blowed!'

'I am studying in a cool school,' said I. 'Deedes, I admire you; more than ever; there!'

'That's very nice of you, Beetle.'

'Not a bit; it won't prevent me from getting even with you the first chance I see.'

'You'll find that difficult.'

'I shall stick at nothing.'

His face darkened. He had shaved himself clean since the night, and as he showed me his teeth, I thought I had never seen so vile a mouth. It had degenerated dreadfully since his boyhood.

'Take care,' he snarled; 'you're being done pretty well so far. You've the best stateroom aboard, and the cuddy tuck's all right. But

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don't you forget we've got a hold and irons, and rats and rancid pork as well!'

He turned on his heel, and I walked to the binnacle. Next moment he joined me there, dropping a hand upon my shoulder.

'East-by-south-a-quarter-east,' said he; 'we cleared the Heads last night—bound for Rio Grande, or something like it—and that chunk on the port bow is Wilson Promontory. So now you know; and look here, Beetle, old chap, you've been good to me; I'm hanged if I'll be rough on you. Did you really think I was going to do as we said? My good fellow, how could you? See here, Beetle. The yacht's a well-known yacht, Watson's a well-known yachtsman, and he was in Melbourne to divert suspicion the day I did the trick. He stands in for his share. Why not stand in yourself? You've earned your little bit, if anybody has!'

'You promised not to be rough on me,' said I wearily. '*That's* rough. Have you got it all aboard?'

'Have I not! Every penny-piece!'

'And who's Watson?'

I was at once introduced to the big man in blue, with the superfluous comment, 'I believe you've met before. Captain Watson owns and skips this ship, and I skip and own the money; I'm purser, so to speak, but there'll be fair do's at the end of the voyage. You'd much better stand in, Beetle. The captain and I are both quite clear on the point.'

'Oh, so am I,' cried I ironically. 'When one of you two has knifed the other for his share, I intend sticking the one who's left!'

'I consider that remark,' said the captain, colouring, 'in the worst of taste; and if you weren't a friend of Mr Deedes, I should kick you off my quarter-deck.'

Mr Deedes looked thunderous, but said nothing.

'Oh, come,' said I; 'if we can't have our joke, what can we have? I admit, if there'd been any truth in what I said—any chance or possibility of truth—I should have merited a visitation from the captain's boots; but as I was talking arrant nonsense, what did it matter?'

I expected a blow for that, and tried to look as though I did not, being extremely anxious to return it with effect. I was, in fact, the slave all this time of emotional cross-currents, which made my revulsion from these villains the stronger because it was not continuous. I had more than tolerated them at first, but all at once I found myself desiring hold and rats and irons, rather than a continuance of their society. At this moment, however, the old and evil-looking steward was to be seen carrying smoking dishes to the house; the sight appealed to me in another place; and I will own to having changed my manner with some abruptness, and to adding an apologetic word on top of that.

'All right,' said Deedes savagely. 'You've said about enough, and in the cuddy I'll trouble you to hold your tongue altogether. The mate's asleep in the other stateroom—look out you don't lose yours! Look out this isn't your first and last meal up here!'

After breakfast I smoked a pipe in the cross-trees, and looked in vain for a passing funnel. There were but few and insignificant sails in sight, and those in the wrong direction. The sea was like a great blue plate, the schooner a white ant crawling in its centre. The wind had freshened; it had always been fair; white horses rode the sea, but the wavelets were never waves. But for the swell, we might have been in Corio Bay. Should I ever see it again, I wondered, with the straight streets sloping to its brink? And I wondered if Deedes had the same thought, as he leant over the taffrail studying the wake; or had he more pangs and fears than he pretended, and were we less safe?

Presently he turned, exchanged a few words with the captain, who was doing a short trick at the wheel; disappeared for a moment in the house; and then came aloft as if to join me. He did join me, but without a word; he was armed with a telescope, but not, I thought, with the cool assurance of the early morning. And so I left him, perched against the sky, sweeping the horizon with his glass, a prey to poisonous apprehensions which were meat and drink to me.

Yet my eyes were good, and they had descried no sign of sail or smoke to windward. Why then this change in our bold buccaneer? It puzzled me as I reached the deck, and I looked up at Deedes once more with my hand upon the brilliant brass knob of the house door; but the puzzle solved itself as I opened it and stepped inside. Ethel I'Anson was seated at the table.

### CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

'Miss I'Anson!' I fairly shouted.

'Yes, it is I. He said I should not see you. Do go—do go before he comes!'

'Go!' I cried. 'Not see you! I shall see you and stay with you until I'm dragged out by force. That is'—I added suddenly—'unless you are here of your own free will. Of course, in that case'——

'No, no!' cried the girl. 'By trickery! By wicked, heartless, abominable lies! Nothing else—oh, nothing else would have brought me to this!'

'Then we're in the same boat with a vengeance,' said I, seating myself on the opposite side of the table. 'Tell me how it happened—and quickly. He has talked already of putting me in irons; he'll do it, after this!'

'Oh, where am I to begin? There is so much to tell—— But he shall *not* do it!' vowed Miss I'Anson. 'He shall *not* separate the only two honest people in the ship! Oh yes, it was lies, but lies so clever and so fiendish! Let me tell you all. I'll try to be quick. He has been in the bank about a year. You know him perhaps better than I. They say you were at school together. You must know his good points, Mr Bower. I mean the points that would attract a girl. They attracted me. I made a fool of myself. You must have heard about it in Geelong. Well, it's quite true; but it wasn't yesterday, or the day before, or last week. It was in the very beginning. I got over it long ago. But he has always fasci-

nated me. You know him—you can understand? Well, when the bank was robbed I knew he had done it; I can't tell you how I knew, but know I did. His voice was not real. I have been made love to in that voice—there! Well, I went to his rooms. He lunched there every day. I saw his landlady. He had come in to lunch as usual, and said he would ring when he wanted his pudding. He did ring, but was longer than usual in ringing; that was all. His room was the back-room of the house on the ground-floor; the landlady lives in front. Quite a short time ago it was the other way about, and he suggested the alteration. He also made her promise to keep the blinds down in the kitchen, and the windows shut, to keep out the flies and the sun in the heat of the day; he could make her do what he liked. Now listen. The bank garden adjoins his landlady's garden. I found soil on his window-sill, soil on the woodwork. This was in the afternoon when the excitement was at its height; he was in the bank. I came away, making the woman promise not to say a word; but she broke her promise that night, and that was what started the hue and cry. Meanwhile I wrote him a note telling him I knew all, refusing to see him, but solemnly undertaking that if he would put a note where he had once put other notes (because my mother never liked him), and say in it where the money was, nobody should ever know from me that he had touched it. Remember, Mr Bower, I was once fond of him; nay, you did much as I did yourself; you will understand. He has told me all that has passed between you; how he gave you the note to put in the tennis pavilion. And what do you think he said in it? That if I would come to the beach at ten last night he would tell me where the money was. He did tell me. He told me it was sunk among the rocks at Queenscliff. He told me he was escaping in the *Mollyhawk*—this vessel—but he would land me at Queenscliff, and show me where the place was; because he meant to take the gold, but the notes he dare not. It was the notes that mattered to my father and the bank. They were nine-tenths of the stolen sum. Oh, I know I was a fool to believe or listen to a word he said; I should have had him put in prison at the first. But I am punished as I deserve; they will never forgive me at home; it will break their hearts—they will never get over it. And here I am—and here I am!'

She broke down, breathless, and I glanced towards the door. Deedes stood there in my ducks, his face the blacker by contrast; he glared at me, and his evil mouth worked spasmodically; but now more than ever I seemed to discern some foreign trouble in his blazing eyes; and instead of ordering me out of the deck-house, he slammed the door upon us both. Ethel I'Anson whipped her face from her hands.

'That's all right,' said I. 'He's seen us, and he doesn't care. There's something else upon his nerves; when thieves fall out, you know—perhaps they've done so already. I feel hopeful; it's bound to come. There's just one thing I don't size down. I know why I am here; he wouldn't kill me, and alive on land I'd never have let him clear the Heads. That's why I am here; but why are you? You didn't know about the schooner?'

'No, but—how can I tell you?'

'Don't,' said I, for she was clearly in a new distress.

'I must! He wants to marry me—so he says. He never wanted before. But I did not betray him. I have saved him—he will have it so—so I am to be his wife! Oh, Mr Bower, it is the worst insult of all! I told him so, just before you came in.'

'Then that was the trouble,' said I. 'It rather disappoints me; I am counting on a row between those two. But it will come. Cheer up, Miss I'Anson; let him leave me out of irons twenty-four hours longer, and I'll play a hand myself—for you and the bank!'

And so I talked, trying with all my might to comfort this sweet child in her extremity. She was little more; nineteen, she told me. There were elder sisters married, and a brother gone home to Cambridge. He would have to leave there now; and who would pay his passage back to Melbourne? The robbery seemed to spell certain ruin to the I'Ansons, at all events in their own belief; but now at least we knew who had drawn the cartridges from the bank revolver; and I fancied they all exaggerated the element of personal responsibility. I did my best to reassure Miss Ethel upon the point; nor did I leave a comfortable word unsaid that I could think of; and noon, and afternoon, found us talking still across the cuddy table. Luncheon in this pirate's craft was evidently a movable feast, to-day indefinitely postponed. Ethel looked at her watch and found it after three o'clock; we had thought it one; but about half-past three the house door was flung open and in strode Deedes. He did not look at us, but snatched a repeating-rifle out of a locker, and would have gone without a word but for Ethel I'Anson.

The girl was terrified. 'What are you going to do with it?' she cried; and he paused in the doorway, filling it with his broad shoulders, so that I could see nothing but blue sky without.

'There's a big bird in our wake—another mollyhawk!' said Deedes, as I thought with a lighter look. 'I'm going to have pots at it. That's all.'

'Cruel always,' said the girl, as we heard shot after shot in quick succession. But I went to the door, and then turned back as if with an altered mind. I had found it locked.

Ere I could regain my seat, a new thing happened. A bullet came clean through the deck-house, passed over Ethel's head, and must have abode in my brain had I sat a minute longer where I had been sitting for hours.

'Coward!' gasped the girl; but only with her word came the report.

'The chase!' I shouted. 'Down on the floor with you—flat down—that was a Government bullet!' And on the cabin floor we crouched.

Voices hailing us were now plainly audible. But Deedes vouchsafed no answer, save with

his Winchester, and from the spitting of a revolver (doubtless handled by the captain) I gathered we were at pretty close quarters. So the chase had been going on for hours; that was why we two in the house had been left undisturbed and dinnerless; but what amazed me most was the evident good discipline on deck. We must stand some chance; my soul sickened at the thought. It must be canvas that was after us, not steam; but I could not look out to see; my brave comrade would only remain where she was on condition I did the same. Lastly, every man aboard the schooner, myself excepted, must centre his hopes, perhaps his designs, upon the nineteen thousand and odd pounds that lay snug somewhere between her keelson and her trucks.

I have done livelier things than lie there listening to the shots; many more had struck the house, and even where we lay there was no superfluous safety; but my comrade bore herself throughout with incredible spirit, and made besides a sweet, strange picture, there on that matted floor. The sun streamed in through the skylight, and the schooner's motion was such that the girl's face was now bathed in the rays and anon lighted only by its own radiance. I did not know how I liked it best; nor do I to this day, although I see her always as I saw her then. Her blue eyes bent on mine the kind of look with which a man might aspire to meet his death. Her very hand was cool.

The firing on both sides continued intermittently; but once we heard a very heavy thud upon our own deck, and the revolver spat no more.

'That's not Deedes,' said I, shaking my head. 'I only wish it was.'

'Don't say that,' my comrade answered; 'it would be too dreadful! He is not fit to die; he has fine qualities—you know it yourself—and could play a man's part yet in the world.' Even as she spoke the door was unlocked, flung open, and Deedes himself stood looking down upon us across his folded arms. I daresay we cut an ignominious figure enough, crouching there upon the cabin floor. Deedes looked very sick and pale, but the sight of us elicited a sardonic smile.

'Get up,' said he. 'There will be no more fighting. Watson's stiff. I've struck my flag. Your father will be aboard in a minute, Ethel.'

'My father!'

'Yes,' said Deedes, leaning back against a bulkhead, with his arms still folded. 'It's a pilot's cutter—the first thing handy, I suppose—with the police and your father aboard her. One word before he comes. Once you'd have come fast enough to my arms. Ethel—I'm done for—come to them now!'

He unfolded and flung them wide as he spoke; a great look lit his face, half mocking, half sublime; and down my duck jacket, where his arms had been, a dark stream trickled to the deck. Before I could get to him he fell in a white heap under our eyes.

. . . . .

Deedes was dead. Watson was dead. Two constables in the cutter were badly hit; and with their ghastly burden the little ships tacked home in consort to Port Philip Heads.

It was midnight when we saw the lights. The bank-manager and I stood together on the cutter's deck, he with a brace of heavy bags between his heels. His daughter was down below, but the thought of her troubled him still. As he said, the money was the bank's, and it was safe; but his daughter was his own, and this scandal would attach for ever to her name. I denied it hotly, but the old man would have it so.

'Don't tell me,' he grumbled. 'I know the world, and my daughter will step ashore with something unpleasantly like a slur upon her name.'

'Then it won't be for long,' I at last retorted. 'I meant it to keep until we got there; but with your permission, sir, Ethel will step ashore my affianced wife!'

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE constant increase of traffic on the river Thames has long called for more adequate provision for steamers of the greatest draught, and a committee was some time ago appointed by the Board of Trade to consider the whole question. In the meantime the Thames conservancy prepared a scheme having the same object in view, which recommends that a navigable channel should be formed in the river, gradually increasing in width and depth from London Bridge to the Nore. At the bridge this channel would have a minimum width of two hundred feet and a depth of eighteen feet, while at the mouth of the river this would be increased to a minimum width of six hundred feet with a depth of twenty-four feet. As in most enterprises, there are conflicting interests to be dealt with. On the one hand the big ship companies ask for a channel of sufficient depth to accommodate their vessels at all tides, and on the other hand the owners of river-side property assert that such deepening of the river would injure its banks. It is noteworthy that a recent survey of the waterway from the Nore to the London docks has shown that the navigable channels of the Thames are quite two feet deeper than they have been commonly supposed to be.

The movement in favour of horseless carriages has recently taken a definite form. A meeting was held in London on the 10th of December to form 'The Self-propelled Traffic Association.' Sir David Salomons, who presided over a large meeting, strongly urged the necessity for a change in the law regarding vehicles propelled by mechanical power. He stated that this association would have for its objects the encouragement of a new industry, which he was certain would soon be an important one, and he also thought that in the interests of the owners of horseless carriages it was necessary for such an association to be formed. A large number of speakers took part in the discussion which followed Sir David's remarks. Amongst them, Mr Symington from Glasgow, who was one of the few representatives from Scotland, deprecated

any show of aggressiveness on the part of the association, and thought that a policy of conciliation should be adopted which would satisfy the public that their interests were being properly safeguarded. He also urged that if this movement was to be the benefit to agriculture which those interested claimed, the limit of weight of carriages on the roads should be increased. Other speakers were also of opinion that the limit of two tons provided by the bill introduced into Parliament last year was much too low. Lord Kelvin and Mr Shaw-Lefevre were proposed as honorary members, and a representative council was formed to constitute the association. Mr G. Johnston, a Glasgow engineer, is devoting considerable attention to the subject. His oil-motor for tramways has been commended by Sir William Arrol, while his horseless carriage exhibits several useful improvements over the French models. A machine was exhibited at the Crystal Palace in December, showing many improvements, the cost of which was £180. We understand that an exhibition of horseless carriages will be held at the Crystal Palace in the spring. A road competition is also announced for the autumn, with prizes amounting to about one thousand guineas.

We lately had the opportunity of seeing one of these new motors, which seems to have a wide future before it. It is known as the Kane-Pemberton Motor, and is being manufactured by the Racine Hardware Company of Wisconsin, but we understand that an English company has also been formed to work the patent. The engine which we saw, and handled, weighs twenty pounds, and will develop, we are told, two horse-power. It is driven by petroleum vapour which is ignited by an electric spark. The particular engine which we examined was designed for cycling, but it is evident that it can be applied to many other purposes where power is required. It is remarkably simple in construction, is not likely to get out of order, and as it will consume any kind of light oil, it can be run at very small cost.

For a long time it has been a crying evil that our railway stations are so thickly covered with advertisements that it is extremely difficult to discover, amid the maze of lettering, the name of the station itself. The Board of Trade has at last written to managers of the railway companies pointing out that the complaints on the subject are very numerous, but as yet nothing has been done to remedy the evil. Lord Grimthorpe has in the meantime made the useful suggestion that the companies should be compelled by law to exhibit the name of each station, in duplicate, on boards placed at right angles so that the passengers in a train, approaching the platform from either direction, could easily see for themselves at what station the train was about to stop. Another good suggestion is that advertisers should be debarred from using red in their trade announcements, and that this colour should be reserved for the background upon which the white letters of the station name should appear. It appears to us that the two suggestions might be combined with the greatest advantage to the travelling public.

A new method of mural painting formed the subject of a paper recently read before the Society of Arts by Professor Roberts-Austen, who with Mrs Lea Merrit had made exhaustive experiments concerning it. The process consists in using a soluble silicate as a vehicle for the application of the colours, which are chiefly represented by metallic oxides and may be regarded as an improvement upon the system adopted by Maclise in the execution of his well-known mural pictures in the Houses of Parliament. As pointed out by Mr Holman Hunt, who was chairman for the evening, these two works, 'The Meeting of Blucher and Wellington' and 'The Death of Nelson,' deserve great attention, because, though changes had occurred in consequence of chemical action upon certain colours, as a whole they had stood very well. Professor Roberts-Austen spoke well of the new process, and said that as a chemist he believed that the work would be durable, but he could not say that the metropolitan atmosphere would not have a mellowing effect upon the colours employed.

One of the most interesting departments in that marvellous depository of treasures known as the British Museum, is that in which are stored the manuscript letters of eminent men and women. The crowds which throng the museum at holiday time are always attracted to the cases where a few of these original letters are exhibited, and it was a happy idea of the authorities to reproduce at a low price, as has recently been done by the potent aid of the photographic camera, a number of these records of the handwriting of those who have been famous. In the publication to which we refer, which we trust is the first of a series, we have specimens of the handwriting of Queen Elizabeth, Mary Stuart, Cromwell, George Washington, Nelson, and Wellington, while literature is represented by Dryden, Addison, Wordsworth, Keats, Dickens, and Carlyle. Autograph collection has long been a recognised hobby, but this collection of fac-simile letters from those who have helped to make history, carries with it, for thoughtful men and women, far greater interest than mere signatures. The work has been well carried out, and will doubtless be much appreciated by readers and students all the world over.

An interesting paper upon 'The Use and Abuse of Explosives' was read last month at the Camera Club, London, by Captain J. Thomson, R.A., one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives. From this paper we learn that there are now known to chemists more than one thousand different explosive bodies and mixtures, although only two dozen could be named thirty years ago. The sudden advance is due in great measure to the knowledge gained as to the nature of an explosive, and the recognition of the fact that an explosion meant really rapid combustion. In the course of his remarks upon smokeless explosives, the lecturer mentioned that cordite had withstood 'the tropic heat of India, the arctic cold of Canada, and the thunders of a chancery suit.' In the discussion which followed the reading of the paper, it was asserted by Captain Nathan that the results of trials showed that cordite, if

accidently ignited, was not a very dangerous explosive, and was certainly free from the perils which had to be faced in dealing with explosives of the gunpowder class.

A week after the reading of the paper above referred to, Captain W. H. Jaques, late of the United States Navy, lectured at the Royal United Service Institution upon a kindred subject—namely, the production of modern war material in America, and it is interesting to see in what way our military authorities differ in their views from our transatlantic cousins. Since 1884 the Americans have made wonderful strides in the development of war material, and more especially in the manufacture of built-up ordnance and armour-plates. They are also expert in the production of armour-piercing projectiles, and a formidable modern weapon of offence is the 'semi-armour piercer,' which consists of a shell of hardened steel with a bursting charge. 'In the United States,' said the lecturer, 'they were still quite at sea as far as powder was concerned. Some of the leading makers had expended small fortunes in experiments with "high" explosives, but the navy department seemed to have such a dread of any explosive into which nitroglycerine entered as a constituent, that practically their use was prohibited. There was, however, one American smokeless powder which gave promise of being valuable, and it was known as the Maxim-Schupphaus. The advantage claimed for this explosive over cordite and others is its low temperature of combustion, which would tend to reduce erosion of the bore of the gun to the minimum, and the small proportion of nitroglycerine which it contained.'

'A country doctor,' a practitioner of long standing and an ardent cricketer, writes to the *Times* to ventilate a grievance which is of the greatest importance to those interested in the national pastime. He has noticed that of late years severe bruises and fractures caused by the impact of cricket balls have increased in frequency, and in looking for the cause he cannot find it in the undue development of fast bowling, or in the natural increase in the number of players. He attributes it to the use of bad material in the ball itself. A patient of his whose rib was broken by a blow on the cricket field, sent the offending projectile to a well-known professional cricketer for examination, and that gentleman reported that he had examined a great many balls, but this particular one was the worst he had ever seen; it was positively dangerous to use such a ball. Of course, 'cheap and nasty' goods will be manufactured as long as there are persons shortsighted enough to buy them, but cricketers have the remedy in their own hands in dealing only with reputable makers. As 'a country doctor' remarks, 'the longer life of a good ball, and the decrease in the number of injuries, would more than compensate for the slight additional price.'

We are sorry to record the fact that the Davis Straits whale-fishing has this last season proved a complete failure owing to the immense quantities of ice obstructing the ships and preventing them getting to the proper fishing-grounds. Only three whales were captured, although five vessels were employed in the enterprise. Last year the same five ships—the *Terra Nova*, *Eclipse*, *Nova Zembla*, *Esquimaux*, and *Balæna* secured fifteen whales. In the recent expedition the crews of the two last-named vessels occupied themselves in hunting the white whale, and secured one hundred and ninety tons of white whale oil. The Greenland whaling expedition has a better record, the two vessels engaged having killed between them eleven large whales. Nine of these were secured by the *Active*, and this is the biggest catch recorded of any Greenland whaler for the past ten years.

A member of the Institution of Civil Engineers has published some details with regard to foreign made ironwork, which are not pleasant reading for those who have the interests of this country at heart. We are told that at the present time we not only purchase girder and other iron abroad cheaper than we can produce it, but that we are being undersold in all foreign markets. Most contracts are being executed here without profit to the manufacturer, in order to keep the works going and in hope of better times ahead. In two shipbuilding yards the turned steel shafting for ships in progress is being supplied from Germany at three pounds per ton less than it can be procured in our own country. German tires for locomotives are being used here for the same reason. According to the opinion of the authority from whom we quote, trades unions and the agitation for an eight hours' day have so hampered our manufacturers that the foreigner has been able to compete with us in those branches of trade in which we once took the lead of all. He believes that we shall not see a revival of prosperous trade until men are willing to work ten hours a day for a fair wage; for their masters, however long suffering, cannot go on working and receiving no profit for ever.

According to a return published by the French Alpine Club, there were during the past year eighteen fatal accidents to climbers on the French, Swiss, and Italian Alps. These fatalities do not include accidents to those reckless persons who in quest of edelweiss and birds' nests often come to grief lower down the mountain slopes through their own imprudence, for they cannot be fairly classed as mountaineers. Of the accidents named, four persons lost their lives in the French Alps, six on the Swiss Alps, of whom four were British (Messrs Cohen and Benecke, Mr Ayre, and Miss Sampson). Six deaths occurred on the German and Austrian Alps, and two on the Italian Alps.

As surely as the damp still air of winter comes upon us, so surely do the fogs come with it, and the usual agitation about smoke prevention arises in our towns and cities. Of the many ideas which have been patented to combat the smoke fiend, none seems so promising as that which was tried at the end of November at the mills of Messrs J. and R. Snodgrass, Washington Street, Glasgow. The principal feature of the new invention is the furnace door, which is so constructed that the air in passing through passages in it delays the smoke in its progress towards the flue, until the

proper admixture of air has taken place. In the trial referred to, the furnaces were stoked twice, first with the ordinary door in position, and afterwards with the patent door. In the former case the chimney-stack belched forth black smoke for twelve minutes, and in the latter case no smoke at all was apparent. A still more conclusive test followed. The patent door after it had been in position for ten minutes was removed, and the ordinary door substituted for it, with the result that black smoke immediately made its appearance at the stack head. It is claimed for the invention that while smoke is utterly consumed, there is a saving in coal and an increase in the production of steam.

According to Dr Günther, 'Among the salmonoids of the Pacific with which we are acquainted at present, the quinnat carries easily off the palm with regard to size, abundance, flavour of flesh, and economic importance generally,' and in a paper on the chief characteristics of this useful fish, which lately appeared in the *Field*, he tells of a scheme to import frozen quinnat into Europe from the far-off western shores of North America. At the time of writing, fifty tons were in the London market ready for consumption, and arrangements had been made for monthly instalments of double that quantity. The table qualities of the frozen fish are stated to be of the highest, although they were killed months ago and sent to London *viâ* Australia, a distance of about twenty-two thousand miles. It is the cost of this immense journey that seems to stand in the way of an enterprise which is so important from an economic point of view. Some years ago, Mr Henry Ffennell tells us frozen fish from North America or Canada found a ready sale in London at one shilling and sixpence per pound; but even this comparatively high price did not cover the cost of carriage, and the importation was abandoned. We trust that the new scheme will not share the same fate.

'Exploration in the Japanese Alps' was the title of a lecture recently given by the Rev. Walter Weston before the Royal Geographical Society. In these mountains, wherever a hot spring occurred, the natives resorted to them, either on account of their supposed curative properties, or simply to kill time. This taste for bathing seems almost to amount to a vice, and in one place known to the lecturer a man would stay in the water for practically a month at a time, taking the precaution to place a heavy stone on his knees to keep him from floating or turning over in his sleep. The caretaker of the same bath, an old man of seventy stayed in the water the whole winter through.

Quite a revolution in horticulture has been in progress during the past decade, although owing to the secret manner in which the experiments leading up to it have been conducted, comparatively few persons have been aware of the new departure. Every one knows that flowers, as well as fruits and vegetables, are forced so that those who are rich shall have the use of them before unaided nature brings them to maturity. This forcing business is an expensive one, requiring constant attention and skilled labour. Many attempts therefore have been made to get at the golden eggs by cheaper means, and as a result of many trials the opposite process to forcing has been adopted with success. The system consists in retarding the flowering of the plant by refrigeration, and is, of course, only applicable to those which are hardy in this country, by which we mean those which will stand several degrees of frost. The lily of the valley is one of them, and it is much in request for purposes of decoration. Under the old forcing conditions only about fifty per cent. of the buds treated could be induced to flower, but by the freezing method an average of ninety-five per cent. can be secured from the end of summer up to Christmas. It will be noted that the process cannot be applied to evergreens of any kind, and it would certainly be death to camellias, and probably to hyacinths and tulips. It is said that near Berlin three growers alone have nearly three hundred acres of lily of the valley under cultivation, and that they have adopted the refrigerating method with great success. It has been long ago proved that the plant can be cultivated in England with equal success, and we trust that the new method will soon be tried on an extensive scale in this country.

## 'WHERE THE TREASURE IS.'

VERY nearly a quarter of a century ago, I was on terms of considerable intimacy with an officer of the English police, who at this hour fills a position of high trust at Scotland Yard. At the time of which I write he was a sergeant in the force of a great provincial city; smart, alert, ambitious, and resolute to get on. He and I were in one or two big things together. I had got wind of a gang of Russian forgers, on one occasion, and was playing detective on my own account, when the sergeant received instructions to watch the same gang. We met, understood each other, and combined our forces. My silence, as a journalist, purchased his, as an officer, and when at last we bagged our men we each had 'an exclusive.' We were engaged together in conniving at the escape of as thorough-paced a swindler as might have been found in the British dominions. There was a reason for this connivance which may some day make the story worth telling. I lent the sergeant an informal aid and countenance in the capture of a desperate defrauder in his bedroom at the Queen's Hotel, and narrowly escaped being shot for my pains. When I went prowling about the slums of that great provincial city, as I did pretty often, the sergeant was my frequent companion. And when at last he gained his heart's desire, and was promoted to London, I was the only person in whom he confided the fact that the capture which secured his promotion was due to chance.

I have never made notes of these matters, and the names of the people concerned in this adventure have long since slipped my memory, but the facts are clear enough.

In the year 1871, and long before and after, a manufacturing jeweller, in a large way of business, kept shop in St Paul's Churchyard,

on the right hand side as you go westward. The common kind of work was done at Birmingham; the better and more valuable jewellery was the product of skilled hands employed in a small workshop in Clerkenwell. The private clientèle of the house was small, but the business transacted with 'the trade' was probably as large as any in London. Only one commercial traveller was engaged, a Jewish gentleman, a man of exemplary character and charming manners; a linguist, a musician, a judge of pictures, a painter *en amateur*, and a finished expert in precious stones. He had been seventeen years in this same service, and his employer's trust in him was absolute. He drew a liberal commission, kept his own little family in solid comfort at his Brixton home, was a pillar of his synagogue, a pearl among commercial travellers, and deservedly respected. I never saw this gentleman, but I can draw his portrait, and before I close this story I will tell you why. He had large dark eyes, which shone out of a sort of velvety dull softness, as a black-heart cherry shines when dew or rain is on it. He had a well-shapen aquiline nose, and an olive skin. His lips were shapely, but redder and fuller than is common with men of western type. He wore his hair cut short, and his beard was trimmed Vandyke fashion. The notable thing about him was that hair, eyebrows, and beard were of a deep ruddy auburn, a colour handsome in itself, but a little startling and bizarre in a man of his complexion.

In the year 1870, whilst the sergeant and I, unwitting of this gentleman's existence, were hanging on the skirts of the Russian forgers, the commercial traveller had submitted a scheme to his employer. He had employed his taste and leisure in the preparation of a number of designs for brooches, bracelets, rings, tiaras, necklets, and pendants, and he had designed and drawn with beautiful delicacy a case in which to display them. He estimated the cost of the preparation of this tray at about twenty thousand pounds sterling, and his proposal was that the real tray to be manufactured from his designs should be kept in the show-case at St Paul's Churchyard, whilst he should carry round with him a tray of paste and pinchbeck in illustration of style and colour.

Both trays were made. The real thing went into the show-case, and the bogus article went on tour. The real tray was paragraphed in the London and provincial newspapers, hundreds of fashionable people went to see it, orders came in briskly, the new designs became a fashion, and the clever little Hebrew gentleman made so good a thing of his liberal commission that he was more than paid for all his trouble. His employer was of course eminently satisfied on his own account, but by-and-by disaster crept upon him.

The traveller made four journeys a year, covering the three kingdoms on each expedition. He had started on the third round since the completion of the two trays, when the jeweller by a chance examination of his treasure discovered that he was in possession of the imitation, and that his servant had, by some queer blunder, walked off with the real thing. To an unlearned eye the mimic jewels were exactly like the real, but an expert was not to be deceived for an instant. The two trays had been set for comparison side by side outside the show-case, and the traveller had made an accidental exchange. It was a little surprising, but it excited no suspicion. The jeweller sent a special messenger down to Brixton with a note of explanation, and the special messenger came back to say that the gentleman had gone to Birmingham. A telegram was sent to Birmingham, and the jeweller went to his home in the suburbs quite contented and at ease. When a servant has been faithful for seventeen years in things big and little, when he has had hundreds and hundreds of thousands of pounds through his hands, and has never once been out in his accounts by a farthing, an honest man is not likely to grow mistrust from so small a seed as this. But when no answer came from Birmingham—when telegraphic inquiry elicited the fact that the traveller had not been to his customary hotel—when further inquiry proved that he had not been heard of at Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow—when after four or five days, his wife, for the first time since her marriage, was ignorant of his whereabouts—then things began to grow uncomfortable, and suspicion began to peer. Not at all in the direction of the dapper little Jewish gentleman. He was above suspicion, as the wife of Cæsar should have been. Seventeen years of unstained fidelity were not to be rewarded so. But it became clear that some mischief had befallen him—there are hundreds of people in the world who would do murder for the fiftieth part of such a booty as he carried. His employer went mournfully to the police and offered a reward for the missing man's discovery. He was angry at the mere idea that one whom he had trusted so entirely, and whose faithfulness had stood the test so long, had at last deceived and robbed him. The honest heart would have no commerce with that fancy. No! The poor fellow had fallen ill, had tumbled into some aberration of the mind, of which the changing of the trays was the earliest sign, had been robbed, drugged, spirited away, murdered.

The police accepted this view of the case with courteous incredulity, and planned and laboured on their own lines. They networked the country through the telegraph; they woke up every port in Great Britain, and had every passenger list examined; they haunted way-side stations, and shadowed the great termini; they sent the news tingling to every country in Europe and to the United States. Every pawnbroker in Great Britain, every *mont de piété* in France, every dealer in precious stones and precious metals everywhere had warning.

Then, as his own lucky star ordained, the sergeant was sent to London on professional affairs. He called at Scotland Yard to pay a visit of respect to an old provincial superior of his own; partly because a little civility is never wasted—'as *you* know, Mr Murray'—partly because he liked the gentleman in question, and partly because 'out of sight is out of mind with many people.' The late provincial superior was affable to the extent of

a glass of whisky and a cigar; and, at their parting, he confided to the sergeant's charge a packet of handbills, which set forth a portrait of the missing gentleman, a full description of his person, and an inventory of the lost jewels. The sergeant kept one of these for his own private reading, packed the rest in his handbag, and having finished his business by noon on the day following, strolled down to Euston Station in time for the two o'clock train.

On the way he encountered an old friend, with whom he had a glass of whisky. At the station he encountered another old friend—one of the detectives on constant duty there—and with him he had another glass of whisky. The day was warm and heavy, the sergeant had been seeing 'Life' in the capital at the expense of his nightly rest, and ensconcing himself in one corner of a second-class smoking compartment, five minutes before the train's departure he fell asleep. At Chalk Farm he was dimly aware that somebody got into the carriage, and then he slept again. He was half-way to Rugby before he awoke. His fellow-passenger was seated in the opposite corner at the far-end of the compartment, and the sergeant surveyed him uninterestedly through scarce-opened eyelids. It was a Jewish gentleman of a neat and dapper aspect, with coal-black hair, eyebrows, and moustache, and cheeks and chin clean shaven. He smoked a cigar, and read a railway novel, but every now and then he seemed to awake to a sudden interest in a hat-box which was bestowed in the light-luggage netting over head, and at such moments he would screw himself round and look upward, as if he feared to find it spirited away.

'Now,' said the sergeant in telling me the story, 'it's a curious thing, but this is what set me a-thinking. When I was a kid, and right on to when I left home, my old mother never let me get to bed without reading a chapter out of the Bible at me. I never got a lot o' good out of it, as far as I remember, but I never got no harm anyway. I hadn't thought of the words for the best part of fifteen years, but when that chap had looked at that hat-box maybe a dozen times, they came into my head as plain as if a person had spoke 'em in my ear. "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also." And "What have you got there, my friend?" I says to myself; "I wonder."' By-and-by the sergeant had something else to wonder at. The Jewish gentleman drew off a well-fitting glove of tan-coloured dogskin, and began to finger his cheeks and chin with a very delicate carefulness. His face took a cast of anxiety, and he drew from his breast-pocket a small morocco case which contained a comb and a mirror. He combed his moustache, and scrutinised it with extraordinary care. He combed the hair on his forehead and temples, and scrutinised that with extraordinary care. Then he combed his thick black eyebrows, and peered at them into the mirror as closely as if he had been examining them through a microscope. Next he examined his chin minutely and seemed dissatisfied. Once or twice he looked at the sergeant, who lay with his legs stretched out, and the merest hair's-breadth slit of watchful eye quite veiled by the eyelash. And, occupied earnestly as he was in these singular details, the dapper Jewish gentleman never forgot the hat-box for much more than half a minute at a time.

'Where the treasure is,' said the sergeant, with his heart beating like a hammer at his ribs, for he had begun to think what an uncommonly close shave a dark-haired gentleman like that must have taken, to be sure, to have no sign at all of a beard on cheek and chin. 'For a man as is naturally black,' said the observant sergeant, 'gets blue with close shaving, don't you notice, sir? and this chap wasn't a bit bluer on the chin, than he was on the bridge of his nose. Dyed his hair—he had!'

It occurred to the sergeant to wake up and light a pipe, and assume a brisk interest in the landscape. It occurred to him further to cross to the other end of the compartment for a better view of the landscape on that side. He ventured to remark that it was a pretty country, and that the young wheat was looking well. Then he sauntered back to his own corner, and made believe to doze again—with his heart beating more and more like a hammer at his ribs, until he wondered that the other man didn't seem to hear it. For at that nearer view he had seen what he had fully expected to see—an auburn rime on cheek and chin, namely, and a touch of auburn at the roots of the carefully pencilled eyelashes. And all the while he was thinking, so he told me: 'What a stroke of luck! Oh! what a stroke of luck! And here's my step at last.' And yet he had no authority to act, and to arrest a man on such a mere suspicion, and without authority, was a dangerous sort of thing to do. The sergeant was mightily tumbled up and down in his mind, and knew not what to do.

They came to Rugby, and the gentleman got out and ordered a glass of milk and soda at the refreshment bar. Before it was served, he bolted back to the train, and secured his hat-box. 'Now, is he going to slip off here?' asked the sergeant within-doors, 'and if he is, what's my game?' The gentleman went back to the carriage, however, in due season, and the sergeant followed. At Birmingham they both alighted, and the gentleman went to the Queen's Hotel. He chartered a bedroom there, and carried his hat-box up-stairs with his own hands, a porter following with a portmanteau. In half an hour he came down again, passed into Stevenson Square and on into New Street.

The sergeant took his courage in both hands, and went to the manager. A Jewish gentleman with a black moustache had taken such and such a number?

'Yes.'

'That,' said the sergeant, producing his handbill, 'is the man.'

The manager stared, and then laughed. No, he knew that man. He was a red-headed fellow with a red beard and moustache.

'Shaved and dyed,' said the sergeant.

'Begad!' said the manager. 'I believe you're right.'

'You know me?' says the sergeant.

'Yes,' says the manager naming him.

'Very well. I take all the responsibility of this move. That man has the stolen jewels in

his hat-box. Let me into his room, and we'll soon see.'

'It was a common lock to the hat-box,' said the sergeant, concluding his story in great excitement. 'I begged a hair-pin from a chambermaid—one o' them thick strong hair-pins, and the trick was done in a minute. There was the violet-velvet lining of the jewel-case all tore out loose, and rolled into a bundle, and inside it was the whole twenty thousand pounds' worth. And while we was a-staring at each other, like a pair of stuck pigs, back comes his Nibs, sees me a-kneeling over the open hat-box, whips out a revolver, and knocks a hole clean through two sides of my new silk hat, and ruins it. Twelve-and-six it cost me, and brand-new out of Hyams's shop only the week afore. The manager knocks his arm up, and the next shot goes into the ceiling. It was nip and tuck then for a minute, but we got him down, and I had 'em on his wrists in a jiffy. Seven years he got at the Old Bailey, and pretty cheap at that. Five hundred pounds reward is a good deal to a poor man like me, but a London chance is more, and that slice o' luck brought both. That's his Nibs's portrait; that there big coloured photograph over the mantelshelf. His missis sold up the little house at Brixton, and I bought that at the sale for a reminder of him.'

## A CURIOUS CRAFT.

THE summer of last year witnessed the launch and successful inauguration of a craft which may safely be affirmed to be a complete novelty. Half locomotive and half steamship, it combines the dual power of travelling on land or water automatically, and presents generally so many features of interest as to warrant some notice.

Some dozen miles or so from Copenhagen, two large lakes, the Fure Sö and the Farum Sö, are divided by a narrow stretch of land about four hundred yards in width. The problem to which the inventor of the 'amphibious' boat addressed himself, was the construction of a vessel capable of navigating the lakes, and of transferring herself from lake to lake without aid other than that of her own machinery.

The craft, constructed in Sweden by Mr Ljunggren of Christianstad for Lector C. J. Magrell of Boras, the inventor, has a length of forty-six feet with nine feet six inches beam, the draft varying from three feet to three feet six inches. The weight, when empty, is eleven and a half tons; and when loaded with seventy passengers, her full complement, fifteen tons. The vessel is of the flat-bottomed type, and full both fore and aft; the engines, which are twenty-seven indicated horse-power, being adjusted to work both the screw at the stern, and a pair of ordinary railway wheels on an axle at the bow. A similar pair of wheels are at the stern, but are not actuated by the engine.

The gauge of the railway crossing the strip of land is four feet two inches; rails of the customary Danish type being laid down. At each end of the little line a harbour is formed, tapering outwards. The 'amphibious' vessel, on entering the wedge-shaped dock, is brought directly over the rails, and the bow wheels being set in motion, at once leaves the water, and commences to ascend the line, which has an easy gradient of one in fifty. On crossing the summit the brake is applied, if necessary; and descending the incline the novel craft launches itself, taking to the water like a duck.

No less than six overland trips have been made daily during the past summer, and as some twenty thousand passengers have been safely carried by the *Svanen*, it may be assumed with confidence that the novel craft has proved herself equal to her curious task. The owners announce the venture to have been a commercial success, and it is understood that they purpose traversing another isthmus—namely, extending their operations to a third lake, during the forthcoming year. The engineer of the undertaking has pointed out what possibilities lie in the extension of the system here described, and our readers will readily grasp the advantages to be derived in many localities where rapids, &c. intervene, and where the employment of a craft equally at home on land or water would be an inestimable boon; whilst, as the engineer in describing this novel departure in locomotive and boat building justly remarks, 'the employment of such boats, if practical, would undoubtedly obviate the expense and delay of transhipment of cargo.'

At a time when the Chignecto Ship-railway is yet uncompleted, and the still larger Tehuantepec Ship-railway for the time being in abeyance, it is interesting, both to the public and the engineering world, to find the principle at issue successfully applied, both in its mechanical details and its financial aspects, on these far-away Danish lakes.

## SONNET.

ERE baffled Winter, at fair Spring's first nod,
His weakened forces northward home hath led,
While remnant drifts about our path are spread,
The crocus bursts the bondage of the sod;
And, lo! where late among the snow we trod,
The blossom sunward lifts its dainty head,
White, purple, gold, along the garden bed,
To catch the first warm glances of its god.

Thus, in some gloomy season of the heart,
When sorrow all our joy hath overspread,
And ev'ry voice seems but to make us sad,
New hopes arise ere pain can all depart;
We fling aside the discontent and dread,
And go our way with faces bright and glad.

MORTIMER MANSELL.

## *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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# THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

By the Author of 'Mr Magsdale's Courtship;' 'Mrs Lamshed's Will,' &c.

## CHAPTER I.

'Five thousand pounds reward! Whereas some person or persons unknown did between the hours of 5 P.M. on Saturday, 2d May, and 9 A.M. on Monday, 4th *idem*, with knives or other sharp instruments maliciously cut from the picture, by Raphael Sanzio, known as "The Journey of Tobit," the property of Andrew Girdleton, and exhibited by him in his Gallery of Fine Arts, No. 909A New Bond Street, a portion of said picture measuring fifteen inches by nine inches, or thereabout, whereon is portrayed a dog'——

'Could you say what breed or variety of dog it was?' Mr Lee Boughton paused in his work of drafting the advertisement to ask the question of his client.

'No,' replied Mr Girdleton, 'I never saw a dog quite like it. I expect the breed's extinct.'

'Well, well, perhaps the point is not important,' said his solicitor half grudgingly; for Mr Lee Boughton had been a dog-fancier before he was articled, and was still a shining light on matters relative to the Irish terrier at meetings of the Kennel Club. 'Perhaps the point isn't vital. Let's see,' glancing back to the paper before him; 'where was I?'

'Portrayed a dog,' suggested Mr Girdleton gloomily; 'also a left foot shod with a brown sandal of antique pattern.'

'Yes,' said Mr Lee Boughton, writing, 'and have stolen and carried away that portion of the picture known as'——

'Is it necessary to have that over again?'

'It is advisable to put it in due legal form.'

'I was thinking of the expense of the advertisement,' sighed Mr Girdleton; 'but go on.'

'Think of the stake at issue, sir!' suggested his solicitor reprovingly. 'As I understand it, the intrinsic value of the work is fifty thousand pounds sterling, and the mutilation renders it'——

'Worth fifty shillings; but pray don't let me hinder you; I must get back to Bond Street.'

Mr Lee Boughton took the hint, grasped his pen again, and hurriedly scribbled off the rest of the advertisement; which was to the effect that the aforesaid sum of five thousand pounds would be paid to any one who discovered, or gave such information as should lead to the discovery and conviction of the malefactor who perpetrated the outrage. Application to be made to Lee Boughton & Phipps, 125 Lincoln's Inn Fields.

'That will do, I think,' he said, after reading aloud what he had written. 'Now, we are to send this for insertion in a prominent place to all the papers on your list.—Why, bless me, Mr Girdleton, you have forgotten to put the *Collegian* on your list of weeklies. Surely'——

'No, I didn't forget it,' said the great dealer grimly; 'the *Collegian* gets none of my money. It was the *Collegian* that tried to cast doubt on the authenticity of the Raphael, questioned the genuineness of the work, and said I'd been imposed upon, if you please!'

'There must have been some personal feeling,' said the solicitor soothingly; 'either that, or it was a disgraceful attempt to make sensational reading at your expense.'

'It was personal animus, *I* believe,' said Mr Girdleton, rising and drawing on his glove. 'It was once my painful duty to tell Trotter, who does the Old Masters for the *Collegian*, that he was an impostor. That man Trotter, sir, poses

as an authority on every painter contemporary with and prior to Sir Joshua Reynolds.'

'Obviously a charlatan,' said the tactful Mr Lee Boughton. 'Well, this advertisement will sufficiently prove your faith in the genuineness of the work.'

'If paying fifty thousand down in hard cash hasn't proved it,' said the dealer bitterly. 'As if a man of my age and experience were likely to let himself be taken in with a spurious Raphael at that figure.'

'The thing's absurd,' smiled Mr Lee Boughton, tactful and soothing as ever.

'I must go; we shall be pestered to death by the newspaper people for the next week, and I mustn't be away from the place.'

The newspaper people had already begun to pester when Mr Girdleton reached Bond Street. Either the vulture-like instinct which is the gift of all journalists had brought them, or it might have been a type-written circular. Mr Girdleton resigned himself to the ordeal of examination with the best grace in the world. Several brethren of the pencil were present, industriously discussing the sherry and sandwiches which for their delectation replaced the office books on the large side-table in Mr Girdleton's private room.

'Sent for the police yet?' inquired the representative of the *Moon*, after greetings had been exchanged.

Mr Girdleton had sent for a detective. 'Not,' he added, sighing softly, 'that I feel much confidence in the ability of the Scotland Yard people to help me. In such a case, I feel that real aid must come from the Press.'

The youngest reporter dropped his wine-glass in the convulsive snatch he made at an enormous note-book in his breast-pocket; he was new to the business.

'Don't apologise, sir,' cooed Mr Girdleton, pouring out another glass of wine for the abashed youth. 'Mr Waters,' to him of the *Comet*, 'a glass of Madeira before we go into the gallery? I know your time is precious, gentlemen; but if you will join me at lunch, after we have inspected the picture, I shall be able to give you all the information I can without trespassing too much upon your patience.'

The journalists accepted like one man. It is said that if a member of the Institute of Journalists attend any function of whatsoever description whereat refreshments are served, and knowingly refrain from partaking thereof, he is liable to summary expulsion from the Institute. It is not on record that any member has yet been expelled for this offence.

The red rope which ran round the gallery to keep visitors at a respectful distance from the treasures of art upon the walls had, in front of the mutilated Raphael, been carried well out in a semicircle to facilitate inspection, and two policemen stood within the space making heroic endeavours to look important; as grooms might look if set to guard the stable whence the horse has been stolen. Mr Girdleton stepped within the red ropes, beckoned the reporters to follow him, and led the way round to the top of the room, where an increasing throng of shilling visitors was gathered.

'There, gentlemen!' He waved his hand at the picture and blew his nose at the public.

'Girdleton—Mr Girdleton—Mr Andrew Girdleton himself,' murmured the crowd. And ejaculations of 'shameful!' 'wicked!' 'disgraceful!' grew louder and more sympathetic.

The spectacle presented by the famous picture justified the strongest expressions. The central figure was intact save for the left leg, which, cut off above the ankle, seemed pointing mutely to the unsightly gap which yawned against the wooden backing. Mr Waters examined the canvas closely; it had been cut clean, and the absence of ripple or other sign of strain proved that the instrument used had been a sharp one and deftly handled.

'I have instructed my solicitors,' said Mr Girdleton, addressing his patrons outside the rope, 'to offer a reward of five thousand pounds for discovery of the miscreant who did this. I shall spare no effort to bring him to justice.' Then as people began to press forward to express their condolences, he bowed and hastened back to the privacy of his own room, followed by the journalists. Lunch was ready on the side-table, and while his guests ate, Mr Girdleton unfolded his tale, premising that what he could tell would, he feared, throw little light upon the mystery. Last Saturday afternoon at five o'clock the picture was sound; this morning at nine it presented the deplorable aspect they had seen. Two reporters noted 'deplorable aspect,' and Mr Girdleton continued. He was absolutely at a loss to imagine how the scoundrelly vandal (only the youngest reporter noted this) had obtained admission to the gallery. A watchman slept on the premises, and was relieved at eight on Sunday morning by another, who, in his turn, was relieved by the night watchman at eight in the evening. The street door of the gallery—the only entrance—could be opened from the inside, but not from the outside. This arrangement compelled the watchman to remain on the premises, as if he went out and the door closed, he was shut out until Mr Girdleton himself came and opened the door with his master-key. The night watchman could not say whether the picture was all right or not when he went off duty on Sunday morning; nothing had occurred to disturb him during the night, and he did not think of looking. The Sunday man, however, averred that shortly before he was relieved he happened to glance through the glass doors which separated the gallery from the hall, and thought he saw something odd about the picture. The blinds being drawn over the skylights, and the Raphael occupying the place of honour at the top of the room, the man would not be able to see it distinctly. The night porter asserted that he was not disturbed on Sunday night; he admitted the woman whose duty it was to sweep and dust the gallery and offices at eight this morning, and she was the first to discover the mischief. 'And now, gentlemen,' concluded Mr Girdleton, 'you know as much as I do.'

'You have formed no theory of your own about the business?' queried Mr Smart of the *Daily Argus*. 'You don't suspect any one belonging to the place?'

'No. I don't suspect anybody. Welks and

Jackson, the two watchmen, are not likely to have done such a thing. I don't suspect either of them, but as one or other must have been guilty of very grave neglect, I dismissed them summarily this morning, promising, of course, that I would take back the man whom events proved was not in fault.'

'Your own key is the only means of opening the door from the outside?' said the youngest reporter.

'The sole means, and is never for a moment out of my possession.'

'And there is no other possible means of entrance?'

'None, unless we assume that the person came through the skylight with a ladder,' replied Mr Girdleton with a forlorn smile.

'Your clerks are above suspicion?' hazarded Waters, turning a fresh leaf in his notebook.

'The only member of my staff between whom and myself any little difference of opinion has arisen lately, and who, therefore, *might* have motive for injuring me, is beyond suspicion if only because he was away from town from noon on Saturday till ten this morning. He went down to Staines to spend the week-end with his mother.'

Waters emitted a half-suppressed grunt of recognition.

'You will have a rare show for the next week,' remarked Smart, as he rose and took his hat. 'It seems to have begun.' The gallery hall, indeed, was filled with people crowding to the turnstiles, whose continuous clack betrayed streams of shillings.

'Bad news travels fast,' sighed Mr Girdleton. 'It will be a nine days' wonder, I suppose, but it would need a longer boom than we are likely to have to make up a tenth part of my loss.'

'I am afraid so; but we'll hope the offer of a reward will produce results. Good-bye for the present.'

'What do you make of the affair?' inquired he of the *Daily Argus* of Waters, when, having writhed their way out, they found themselves in Bond Street.

'Special edition and three cols. long primer,' replied Waters, 'nothing less.'

'No, no! I believe you'd bleed printer's ink if I pricked you. I mean what opinion have you formed as to this picture-cutting?'

'Pardon; I didn't follow you. Oh, I don't know what to surmise. One of the watchmen might have done it on the chance of a reward being offered, or Eltham might have done it out of spite.'

'Who is Eltham? I don't know the place as well as you do.'

'Eltham is Girdleton's cashier. It was he who went down to spend Sunday at Staines.'

'Well; go on.'

'Mind, Smart, I'm speaking in confidence now. I myself shan't use what I am telling you, and you must promise not to.'

'Certainly, I promise. Then Eltham is the man with whom Girdleton has lately had a difference of opinion?'

'Yes; Girdleton used to ask Eltham, who is of better social position than the others there, frequently to his house—where I may remark you get a rattling good dinner—and Eltham lost his heart to Miss Girdleton. That would not have mattered, but Miss Annie lost hers to him; and the upshot of it was they went a couple of weeks ago hand in hand to papa for his blessing. Papa laughed at them and told Eltham he ought to know better.'

'Naturally, Eltham didn't take it well.'

'He gave notice to leave; but Girdleton, who is really a very kindly fellow, talked to him like a father; pointed out that Miss Annie was not eighteen, that Eltham was only two-and-twenty, and three pounds a week was not an income on which a young man ought to marry. He didn't tell him (as he did me) that he had higher views for his daughter. And Eltham was induced to remain on. But the portals of his paradise at St John's Wood are closed against him for the time.'

'I hardly think there's ground for suspicion in that "difference of opinion,"' observed Smart, ruminating; 'it's not as if Girdleton had treated him harshly.'

'I don't suspect Eltham, mind. But I'm inclined to think Eltham hasn't forgiven Girdleton's good-natured contempt of his pretensions. He told me himself that had it not been for the fact that his mother was partially dependent on him he should have thrown up his berth.'

They were passing the National Gallery, both lost in silent speculation, when Smart abruptly stopped and said he was going back to ask Eltham a question or two.

'Ah! Think of having a shy at that five thousand pounds yourself?' laughed Waters.

'Not exactly. It's only in novels that the amateur detective solves the mystery. I want to get hold of those two watchmen, for it seems to me altogether too extraordinary that neither of them should have been disturbed.'

'Well, I wish you luck. I must go on and evolve a theory out of my own inner consciousness; it's past two, and it will take me all my time to get my stuff out.' Thus disrespectfully did Mr Waters speak of those three columns of large type, wherewith the great British public was to be thrilled in a special edition of that evening's *Comet*.

Robert Smart, enjoying the greater freedom of a writer on a morning paper, had more time to investigate. He went back to Bond Street, and met Richard Eltham just as he came in from his afternoon visit to the bank, whither he had been with a heavy load of silver. The cashier was a sturdily built young man with a pleasant open face, who received Smart cordially enough when he introduced himself.

'It's the busiest afternoon we have ever had,' he observed, 'but nothing to what I expect it will be when the papers have ventilated the business. I am awfully busy, as we are going to remain open till seven instead of six, but I can give you ten minutes.'

'I wanted to ask if you would feel at liberty to tell me the addresses of the two watchmen who were dismissed,' said Smart, a little awkwardly.

'Why do you want to see them?' inquired Eltham pointedly, his manner changing.

'Copy,' replied Smart with a shrug.

'Neither could tell you more than he told us.'

'Mr Girdleton did not say very plainly what they did tell you.'

'I was not present when he questioned them; he had them before him in his own room; but practically it amounted to this: neither man had been disturbed.'

'I understand that you would rather not put me in the way of questioning them,' said Smart, after a little more adroit fencing on Eltham's part.

'I'd rather not do so without referring to Mr Girdleton, and he is out at present.'

'Very well, forgive my curiosity; but it's my business to be curious, you know.'

'Quite so,' returned Richard Eltham graciously; 'and you will understand that I can't let my tongue wag in a matter of this kind.'

Smart said he appreciated the position and took his leave somewhat chagrined. No self-respecting writer on the staff of a journal like the *Daily Argus* likes to give an account of so remarkable an incident, without putting forward a theory of some kind, and so far he was at a loss to think of anything plausible enough to be worth print. He was sorry now that he had gone to see Eltham. The young man's demeanour had impressed him so favourably that his sense of justice recoiled from the idea of doing what he had contemplated; which was to point out that ill feeling existed towards Mr Girdleton on the part of an employee who was said to have spent the thirty-six possible hours at Staines; that there were large facilities in the way of late Sunday trains for running up to town from that riverside resort; and that the movements of that employee had not been satisfactorily accounted for.

'I can't do it now,' thought Smart; 'it would be too mean, after trying to pump him. He has character that young Eltham; he is loyal at all events.'

Richard Eltham had been loyal, and would have been so, had the extent of his information afforded opportunity of disloyalty. But even had his sense of duty to his employer not imposed silence upon him, he had another strong motive for refusing to disclose the addresses of the two watchmen to earnest inquirers after truth. He had, in fact, early in the day conceived the idea of trying to probe to the bottom of the mystery himself. The more he thought about it, the more strongly he felt that this was his opportunity. Mr Girdleton had—and he grew hot all over as he remembered it—treated him like a silly schoolboy, and had laughed at his pretensions. Well, supposing that he set to work, and of his own perseverance and acumen traced the person who had mutilated the famous Raphael and brought him triumphantly to justice, his employer's opinion of him would—must—undergo a change. The reward was not of so much account, though properly invested it would make a handsome provision for his widowed mother and relieve him of a heavy responsibility. The particular result of success which presented itself in most attractive colours was his restoration to Mr Girdleton's private circle, with possibilities to follow of too deliriously delightful a nature to be considered calmly. Richard Eltham warned himself that he was indulging in a dream; but, nevertheless, he locked up the safe that evening with a cheerful conviction that with any luck he might be accepted as his employer's future son-in-law at no very distant date. He took the addresses of the two watchmen from his book, and hurried home to his lodgings in Brixton to get his dinner at once; for he meant to open his detective campaign that same night.

## THE NATIONAL DEBT.

It was confidently expected, before the issue of President Cleveland's message, our troubles in the Transvaal, and recent activity in the Navy, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, at the close of the financial year, have one of the biggest surpluses on record. Available surplus it could hardly be called, because after the 31st of March it could only be applied to the reduction of the National Debt. Should the war-scare not have altered matters, there might be an unexpected drop of something like five millions sterling in the capital sum of British consols. Whether this should really be the case or not, it may not be uninteresting to know something about where all the money they represent originally went to.

Compared with most English institutions—for we can hardly use the word British to anything dating beyond the eighteenth century—the National Debt is quite modern. Kings and governments have always shown a propensity for borrowing, but until about two centuries ago, whenever the debts were not repudiated, they had sooner or later to be liquidated out of current revenue. Had it been otherwise, we should have heard less of the illegal taxation imposed by the Tudors and the Stewarts, as it would have been so much easier for them to obtain what they wanted by loan, based on the credit of the nation. After the Revolution which placed William III. on the throne, the total national liabilities fell short of one million sterling. But the great wars which that king prosecuted on the Continent, swallowed up more money than could possibly be raised by taxation, and the millions gradually increased in number; the Bank of England having been established primarily to facilitate the raising of them. Even a century later, the total had not assumed serious dimensions, though the annual expenditure it entailed proved a grievous burden on an impoverished country. The war with the American colonies doubled it, and by the time the French Revolution of 1789 began to exercise its disturbing influence, the amount had reached the respectable figure of three hundred millions. That proved a mere bagatelle, however, for in the course of another quarter of a century, during which Great Britain was involved in almost every European complication, it was trebled, and after the battle of Waterloo, had attained to the record sum of nine hundred

millions sterling. Every political economist of that day was scared, and had it not been for the marvellous expansion of industry and commerce that followed, the nation would undoubtedly have become hopelessly bankrupt.

It must not be supposed, however, that the country ever received so much money, as the issue of a large proportion of the last six hundred millions was accompanied by jobbery and corruption of the grossest description. British credit in those days did not permit of loans being obtained on anything like the basis of 3 per cent., and there were thus two alternatives, either to pay a higher rate, or issue stock at the lower one at a heavy discount. Unfortunately the latter was chosen, though that was a blunder, and not an act of dishonesty. Statesmen and economists had no experience of national finance on a large scale, and were infatuated with the idea of redeeming the debt at a low price, entirely overlooking the possibility of market appreciation. It was in the allotment of the loans and the subsequent disbursement of the proceeds that the jobbery arose. No period of our political history has been productive of such scandals, and the votes, first of electors, and then of the members of Parliament elected, had to be purchased by the Government at a heavy price. Three per cents. fluctuated during those years between a little under fifty and a trifle over seventy, averaging about sixty, but much of the new stock was issued to political supporters, at a price enabling them to realise at once a profit varying from 5 to 10 per cent. Needless to say, there was always a scramble for it, and much heartburning and disappointment among those who were left out, or who did not consider they had been rewarded with a sufficient amount. But the evil did not cease even then, for the army and navy contractors, into whose hands much of the money eventually passed, deliberately swindled the Government they were supposed to serve, and accumulated great fortunes with amazing rapidity. It is not too much to say that, for every hundred pounds of stock issued, the country received barely fifty in actual value.

We are confronted then by the disagreeable fact, not only that in redeeming debt we are paying back two sovereigns for every one borrowed, but that we are in reality paying interest at the rate of about 5½ per cent., instead of the 2¾ we so fondly imagine. It is no use crying over spilt milk, and national obligations must be rigidly met. That the work of redemption is costly, every one will admit, but it is an important question whether, under present circumstances, the method of procedure is not unduly extravagant. It is the settled, as well as the commendable policy of both political parties in the State to make an annual reduction in the funded debt, and that is accomplished mainly in two ways. A fixed sum is set aside for its service, considerably in excess of what is necessary for the mere payment of interest, and the surplus is used for the purchase of stock in the open market, which is subsequently cancelled. It is easy to see that this surplus becomes larger each year, as the interest on the cancelled stock ceases and becomes available for fresh purchases. And in addition to this, we have already seen that any budget surplus is invariably applied in the same manner. But there is another method known as terminable annuities. The holder of consols surrenders them absolutely to the Government, which, instead of paying him the ordinary rate of interest, grants him something like double for a definite and limited number of years, when the payment entirely ceases, and the stock is cancelled. In the early years of the next century, something like fifty millions of debt will disappear in this manner, and the annuities will cease, and provided there is no readjustment in the meantime, a sum equal to the interest on that amount will be annually applied to the purchase of more stock. The process of depletion therefore is going on, and promises to continue at a very rapid rate.

In addition to this funded debt, or consols, there is always a floating one of more or less important dimensions. Budget deficiencies, should they arise, have to be borrowed; sometimes estimates are passed for the expenditure of large sums within a short period, to be provided only by taxation spread over several years, and that money must meanwhile be borrowed. In these and other ways debt is accumulated, which it is not politic to render permanent, and it is raised by means of Treasury Bills, that is, Government promissory-notes, payable in three, six, and never more than twelve months. Whenever any of these mature, therefore, they can always be paid off provided there is sufficient money in the Treasury. Inasmuch as these bills are now being discounted at less than 1 per cent. per annum, there is a strong temptation to keep them in circulation, and pay off instead debt bearing interest at 2¾ per cent.

At first sight that undoubtedly appears the wiser plan. But however satisfactory it may be from the sentimental point of view of the national credit, to see consols quoted at 106 or 107, it is an eminently unsatisfactory state of affairs for the pockets of the taxpayers; for not only has stock for the sinking fund to be purchased at that figure, but the competition of the Government brokers in the market helps to keep it up. It is bad enough to know that we are cancelling stock issued at fifty or sixty on such terms, but it will be intensely aggravating if, at a future period, perhaps at no very distant one, some grave national emergency arises which will necessitate its reissue, or in other words, that an extraordinary expenditure will be incurred beyond what can be raised by taxation or mere temporary borrowing. Under such conditions the rate of interest ruling would be much higher than it is now, confidence and credit would be disturbed, and the stock so eagerly mopped up at 106, would reappear at a figure much nearer 86. The question arises then whether it is wise policy to go on cancelling the national debt in large amounts at the present price?

That this policy is helping to intensify the evil there can be little doubt. Putting aside any feelings of patriotism, it must be admitted that there are reasons why the debts of other countries should stand quite as high in market value as our own. Nobody supposes that what-

ever may happen, France, Germany, or the United States would ever repudiate their national liabilities. Yet while British 2¾ per cents. are at 106½, German threes are a little under 100, French threes a little over that figure, and United States fours at 112. All these funds are the favourite medium for safe investment in their respective countries, and are readily, almost greedily absorbed. In thrift and wealth, the English peasantry is not to be compared with that of France, and the latter is always ready to take up unlimited amounts of *Rente*. In the United States, the bonds may be used by banks as the basis of a note issue, and are eagerly purchased for that purpose. But in England, investment is confined mainly to one or two classes, banks and kindred institutions, whose business requires them to keep a certain amount of easily realisable securities, private trustees, and of course the public trusts, such as savings-banks. Other things being equal, therefore, British consols should not be higher than their foreign competitors. But there is one important difference. The demand is equally great everywhere. France, Germany, and the United States meet it every now and again by the creation of new stock; Great Britain reverses the process, constantly diminishes what is in existence, and by so doing raises the market against herself.

It is not a matter of suspending the sinking fund; that, for the present at any rate, must remain untouched. But there are other ways of applying it which ought to be considered. The Government, for instance, in one of its departments performs the work of a banker, borrowing money, and loaning it out at a somewhat higher rate of interest to local authorities for public purposes. In that way some portion of the fund might be used, but it would almost be preferable to allow it to remain idle for a time, rather than spend it on the costly luxury of consols at 106. That sooner or later they will fall to a more reasonable level is almost certain, and the accumulations might then be used to greater advantage than can be done at present. That many people are benefiting by the present high price is exceedingly doubtful. Those who invested when they were lower do not realise, because they could not use their money to any greater advantage with corresponding safety. They want a steady income without depreciation of capital; their object was not to increase it, and a decline to cost price would be no hardship. On the other hand, it would not be difficult to prove that there is an element of future danger in the situation, if it continues for any length of time, and any considerable aggregate of trust-money comes to be invested at a high level; and it is not only consols that have to be taken into account, but a large mass of other securities which enjoy many of the same privileges, and move in sympathy with them.

In the management of our National Debt, then, there is much more to be taken into account than its mere economical working. We are sometimes told that the debt is a blessing. At best, however, it is a doubtful one; the country would have got on very well without it, and we should soon console ourselves for its loss. In a larger or smaller amount it will certainly last another century, and it is our duty to make it as little cumbersome as possible to those who follow us. Still it is well at times to recall to mind that posterity has done nothing for us, that it will not be over profuse in its thanks for what we do for it, and that it is quite possible to deal too generously with it. Times are hard and competition is keen, and the National Debt must not be allowed to inflict injustice on the present generation, in order that the next may reap an uncertain advantage.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By Sir Walter Besant.

### CHAPTER III.—WAPPING.

How does one get to Wapping? It is not, I believe, generally known that there are trains which take the explorer to this secluded hamlet. They are the same trains which go under the Thames Tunnel. That is one way of getting to Wapping. Another, and a much better way, is to walk there from Tower Hill, past St Katherine's Docks, where you may drop a tear over the wanton destruction of what should have been Eastminster, the Cathedral of East London. The traveller presently finds himself in a long riverside street. Tall warehouses and wharves are on the south side; on the north side, offices. North of the offices are the docks. Between the warehouses are stairs. Here are Hermitage stairs, and since there is a Hermitage Street, there was probably at one time or other a hermit established on this spot.

Then go back and resume your walk along the street. It is like the river itself, a busy highway of trade; the tall warehouses were built for trade; the cranes are out on the topmost floor, conducting the trade; men are swinging out heavy bales of goods and lowering them into wagons which will distribute the trade among other hands. The street, indeed, is full of wagons loaded and wagons unloaded; wagons standing under the cranes, wagons going away loaded and coming back empty. You would not believe there were so many wagons in London. Except for the drivers of the wagons and the men in the upper storeys tossing about the bales, there are no people to be seen in the street. Passengers there are none. Nobody walks in Wapping High Street except to and from his warehouse or his wharf. He goes there on business. Of shops there are but two or three, and those not of the best. And this is Wapping. It seems at first to be nothing but a narrow slip between the river and the docks. This is not quite true, however, as we shall presently see.

I entered the cradle of my race, fortunately, by the best way, the Tower Hill way. It seems a cradle to be proud of; all ancient crafts are honourable, but some are more honourable than others; surely boat-building is a very honourable craft. Noah, for instance, was an eminent boat-builder; probably the first example of that work has never been surpassed.

For the first time I found myself in the

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midst of trade, actual, visible, tangible—fragrant even. It was a kind of discovery to me. I walked slowly revolving the thing. Exports and imports one reads about: they are words which to me had then little or no meaning. Here were people actually exporting and importing with tremendous zeal. The street was a hive of industry. Not one face but was full of business; not one but was set, absorbed, serious, observing nothing because it was so full of thought. No one lit cigarettes; no one lounged; no one talked or laughed with his neighbour. All were occupied, all wrapped in thought. All walked with a purpose: no less a purpose, indeed, than the winning of the daily bread, or the creation of a pile on which the children could live in idleness.

Presently I came to the mouth of the London Dock, where a swing bridge crosses the narrow entrance, and is rolled back on hinges to let the ships pass in and out. It was open when I reached the place, and a ship was slowly passing through: a three-masted sailing-ship, of which there are still some left. I watched the beautiful thing with the tall masts and shrouds—man never made anything more beautiful than a sailing-ship. Looking to the left I saw the crowded masts in the dock; looking to the right I saw the ships going down the river, and heard the dulcet note of the Siren.

The ship passed through; the bridge swung round; I passed over it and continued my way. At this point Wapping widens and becomes a right-angled triangle, whose hypothenuse is the river, and whose altitude is the East London Dock. This triangle, with the riverside street, is all that the docks have left of old Wapping village. On this occasion, however, I did not discover the triangle; I walked on, the street continuing with its warehouses and its wharves and its river stairs.

A little beyond the bridge I came to a house which would have arrested my attention by its appearance alone, apart from the name upon its door-plate. For it was a solid red brick, eighteenth-century house. The bricks were of the kind which grow more beautiful with years. The door, with a shell decoration above it, was in the middle, and there was one window on each side of it. In the two storeys above there were three windows in each: the roof was of warm red tiles. There were green shutters to the lower windows: a solid, comfortable old house. It was well kept up: the paint was fresh; the windows were clean; the steps were white; the brass door-plate, which was small, was burnished bright; and on it, in letters half-effaced, I read the name of Burnikel.

'The cradle!' I thought. 'Here was born the ancestral builder of boats. But where is the yard?'

On the other side of the street stood a huge rambling shed—two sheds side by side, built of wood and painted black. Through the wide open door I saw the stout ribs of a half-built barge sticking up in readiness to receive the planking of her sides. And there was the sound of hammers. And to make quite sure, there was painted across the shed in white letters the name 'Burnikel and Burnikel, boat and barge builders.'

I stepped in and looked round. There were one or two unfinished boats beside the big barge: wood was lying about everywhere, stacked on the low rafters of the roof, in heaps, thick wood and thin wood; there were tools and appliances—some I understood, some were new to me. Men were working. At the sight of all this carpentry work my spirits rose. This was the kind of work I loved. A beautiful place, such a place, I thought, as I would like to work in myself. And picturesque, too, with its high roof and its black rafters and its front open to the river, commanding a noble panorama, wider than is afforded by any of the stairs in those narrow lanes.

At that moment the master came out of a little enclosed box in the corner, called 'Office,' which was big enough, at least, for a high desk and some books.

At the outset, in the evening, I had remarked the curious resemblance of my cousin to myself. By daylight the resemblance was not so marked. He was one of those men with whom a simple inch and a half above the six feet in height makes them tower over all other men. He looked tall and broad, and strong above any of his fellows. So looked Saul. He glanced around him quickly as he came out, as if to see that his men were working with zeal and knowledge. Then he stepped across the yard and greeted his visitor gravely.

'I saw you come in,' he said. 'I only half expected you.'

'Well, I did want to see the old place. And I wanted to see you again.'

'Here it is then, and here I am. Not much of a place after all. Just the same: the yard is the same, the beams of the roof are the same, and though the tiles have been removed, the work is the same. If your ancestor was to look in here, he'd see nothing changed but the workmen's clothes. They've left off aprons, and they've left off stockings. That's all.'

'Good! We are thus in the last century.'

'Yes. The river's changed, though. The Port of London was a much finer place formerly, when the ships were ranged in double line all down the Pool, and all the lading was done by barges—Burnikel's barges. Well! Look round you, Sir George. Here is where your great-grandfather worked, and where your great-great-grandfather, and so on, ever so far back. This is where you came from.'

He took his visitor over the little yard, pointing out something of the craft and mystery of boat-building.

'I ought to have boat-building in the blood,' I observed. 'The mystery seems familiar to me. Don't you think that so many generations of boat-building—with this little break of just two lives, one a judge, and one a—nothing—ought to make me take to the trade naturally, as a duck to water?'

Robert Burnikel answered seriously. He was a very serious young man. Besides, light conversation is unknown at Wapping.

'Why not?' he said. 'Natural aptitude must come with generations of work. There is a kind of caste in every trade. I know a line of carpenters, from father to son; and a line of watchmakers; and a line of blacksmiths.

These men of mine are all the sons of boat-builders; they grew up in the trade. I don't think they could have done anything else so well. As for you—well, your grandfather was a judge.'

'For the first time in my life, I am ashamed to say that he was.'

'Not that you need be ashamed, I suppose, but still he broke the line. All the rest of us have always been boat-builders or sailors.'

'I suppose, now, that you could make a boat yourself with your own hands, from keel to gunwale, from stem to stern?'

'He would be a poor kind of master who couldn't do anything better than his men. I used to work, hammer, and saw, and plane with the men when I was a 'prentice.'

So we talked about boats and boat-building. Then the master builder looked at his watch. 'Four o'clock,' he said. 'Now come over the way. I live in the old house built by the first of them who came here. We can talk for an hour or so before tea. I told them you might be coming to tea.'

Terrible! Who was 'them?' Fair cousinesses? I trembled and followed.

The old house was that of a solid and substantial merchant who understood the arts of comfort. The hall was wainscoted with a dark polished oak relieved by a line of gold along the top and lit by a broad window on the stairs. The staircase was broad and stately: such a staircase as is impossible in a narrow London house. Robert Burnikel opened the door of the room on the left. 'Come in here,' he said, 'till tea is ready. We can talk at our ease in here. This is my own room.' He looked around with some pride, not so much in the old-world beauty of the room, in which any one might have taken pride, as in the things which belonged to, and proclaimed, his own studies. It would be difficult, indeed, to find anywhere a more beautiful room. The walls were of panelled cedar, dark and polished: over the mantel was a mass of carved wood, grapes in bunches, vine-leaves, scrolls, branches, heads of cupids, all apparently thrown together upon the wall, but there was method in the mass; the fruit and the leaves formed a frame round a shield on which was blazoned—in proper heraldic colours, or and gules and azure—a coat of arms.

'Why,' I cried, 'those are my arms! I thought they were granted to the judge as the first "armiger" of the family. He had them already, then. This is very curious. We were a family of gentlefolk.'

'The first Burnikel, you see, of whom we know anything builds this fine house, lines it with cedar and rosewood, and oak wainscoting; adorns it with wood-carving'——

'That overmantel work might belong to a later time,' I interrupted.

'And had a coat of arms. He was a gentleman, I suppose. If you care about that fact, I don't.'

'Yes, I do care about that fact. Gentility is a real thing, whatever you may think. I am very glad indeed to recover this long-lost ancestor.'

One side of the room, however, was completely spoiled as regards the original intention of him who clothed it with cedar, by the introduction of a bookcase covering the whole wall and fitted with books. There was a central table littered with papers, and a smaller table with a row of books. And there were only two chairs, both of them wooden chairs with arms—the student's chair. The books, one might observe, had the external appearance of having been read and well used; the bindings being cracked or creased and somehow robbed of their pristine shininess. I looked at them. Heavens! What a serious library of solid reading! Herbert Spencer, Mill, Hallam, Freeman, Stubbs, Hamilton, Spinoza, Bagshot, Seeley, Lecky, and a crowd of others for history; Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, Wallace, and more for science; rows of books on the institutions of the country and on the questions of the day.

'These are my books.' Robert pointed to them with undisguised pride. 'I don't believe there's a better collection this side of the Tower. I collected them all myself. And what's more, I've read them, every one, and I know them all.'

'I suppose,' I ventured, 'that you are not married?'

'No, I am not. No, sir. Marriage holds a man down just where it finds him. If I were married I should be wheeling the perambulator, saving money for the children, running for the doctor. No. I shall marry some day—when I have succeeded. Not before.'

'Then you have a mother or a sister living with you?'

'No. Father died five years ago, and there were left my mother with myself, two brothers and a sister. The business isn't good enough for more than one. So my two brothers went off to Tasmania, and they've started a yard of their own. My mother went out to see them, and I think she'll stay. You see mother is a determined kind of a woman; she'd always been master here, father being an easy kind of man, and she wanted to go on being master. Now, there can't be two masters in this house. So, when she understood that, she concluded to go. My sister Kate went with her. Kate wanted to be master too. So it's just as well for family peace and quietness that they did go away. I'm all for peace, and always shall be, but I mean to be master in my own house.'

The speech revealed things volcanic; the son of the mother, the mother of the son, the sister of the brother, the brother of the sister: all masterful, and all striving for the mastery. And the son getting the best of it. So he made a solitude and he called it peace.

'And you are left all alone in this great house?'

'No. Some cousins of mine—not your cousins—mother's cousins, keep the house for me. They are a retired skipper and his daughter. The daughter does the housekeeping. She is also my secretary, and keeps the accounts of the place over the way. Can't follow an argument, of course. No woman can.' This is to have lived all your life at Wapping. 'You'll see her presently. I've told her, by the way, if that matters—only I want you to understand how I stand, and what sort of a man I am

—that I shall marry her one of these days, when I have got on. Not before. Of course,' he snorted, 'she doesn't expect any fondling and kissing and foolishness.'

'Poor girl!' I did not say this. I only murmured, 'Yes, I see, of course,' in the usual way when one is surprised and a coherent reply is difficult.

Here was a gallant lover for you! Here was an ardent lover! Here, in the language of the last century, were flames and darts and pains and madness of love! He was going to wait for ten or twelve or forty years, until he had achieved the object of his ambition: and there was to be no fondling, and the future wife was to be reduced to proper order!

'And now,' said the man of ambition, abruptly, 'about that information that you promised to get for me. That's what we came here to talk about, not coats of arms and girls. Have you got it?'

'I have been to see a man whom I know. He is a politician; he lives in politics; he thinks about nothing else. And I spent this morning with him discussing your case—much as you told me last night. I can only tell you'—I felt a little embarrassed, for obvious reasons—'what he told me.'

'Go on. What did he say? That a boat-builder from Wapping mustn't dare to think of the House?'

'Not at all. They don't mind much what a man is by calling. What I understood last night is this. You wish to go into the House and to make your way upwards by your own abilities, alone. You will force the House to recognise you.'

'Yes. My model is John Bright. I've got his speeches and I know his history.'

'But John Bright became in the long-run a Party man.'

'John Bright was a power in the country as an independent member long before he went into the Cabinet. I want to be a power in the country.'

Then I told him all I had learned; the first steps and so forth; and this and that. He listened patiently: when I told him what other men did, he nodded his head; when I warned him, he shook his head; when I finished, he sprang to his feet impatiently.

'No more warning, thank you. I shall succeed. You do not understand yet, Sir George, that you have to do with a very able man indeed.'

This kind of talk may be arrogant and offensive. But Robert Burnikel was neither. He made an arrogant assertion with a calmness which was modesty. He advanced it as one who states a scientific fact. Belief in himself was a part of the man's nature. More than this, as you will see, he succeeded in convincing those who heard him.

'Now for my fitness,' he went on. 'Listen to this. First of all, there's nobody like me in the House at all. I am a master craftsman. I make what I sell. I am not a shopkeeper. I make. There are working-men in the House: shopkeepers, manufacturers, lawyers, country gentlemen, but the master craftsman the House hasn't got. And it wants him badly.'

'Well?'

'That is not all. This place, so secluded and cut off by the docks and its river, is a little world in itself. You can study everything in Wapping. I know the working of the whole system—parish—vestry—county council—school board—everything. I know all about the church, the parish, the school, the workhouse, the parish rates. That's practical knowledge. But that is not enough. One must understand principles. All institutions are based on principles. So I have read Herbert Spencer and Mill, and all the books that treat of practical things and what they mean.'

'Go on.' I grew more and more interested in this man—this strong man.

'Well, I read the debates every day. Nothing interests me in the paper so much as the debates. Day after day I say to myself when I read the rubbish that is talked there, "This is wrong. This is ignorant. This is foolish. This is mischievous." And I know what I should have said.'

'Well. But you are as yet untried in oratory and in debate.'

'Not at all. I went into the Blackwall Parliament at sixteen; at twenty I led the House. I can speak. I have studied the art of oratory. I have read all I could find on the subject. I tell you that I am an eloquent man. I know that the House doesn't want claptrap; I spoke at Poplar last winter, and I made 'em laugh and made 'em cry just as I chose, and because I wanted to try what I could do with them. That was only claptrap. I can speak better than that. And as for my voice, listen—Do, Re, Mi.'—He ran up and down the scales not only with correctness and ease, but with a flexible, rich, and musical baritone.—'That's good enough for anything, isn't it? Why, as soon as I found I had a voice I rejoiced. I went into the church choir in order to learn the use of it. I didn't want to sing in the choir; it wastes good time, but there is the practice. Nothing like singing for keeping the voice flexible.'

'Very good. Very good indeed.'

'Well, I have told you everything. What do you think about my fitness to go into the House to-morrow, and to rise in it?'

The question was meek. The manner was aggressive. It said plainly, 'Deny, if you dare, my fitness.'

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## MEMORIALS AND RELICS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Edward Fitzgerald, who had been refreshing his memory with *The Fortunes of Nigel* in 1881, could not help remarking to his correspondent, Fanny Kemble: 'Oh, Sir Walter is not done for yet by Austens and Eliots. If one of his merits were not his *clear daylight*, one thinks, there ought to be societies to keep his lamp trimmed as well as Mr Browning.' Well, there is a Scott Club to keep his lamp trimmed, if that were needed, which dines and has excursions, indulges in speeches and the collection of relics and preservation of letters, in order to keep his memory green. The publishers have done their

part in producing varied and abundant editions of his novels, and we have now at least a dozen to choose from. Such a pother is being made at this fag-end of the nineteenth century over many minor writers, that, with limited time and endurance, there seems a risk that Scott may not receive his due from the average reader. Ruskin has said that he could find no words full enough to tell what good Scott had in him to do his readers. The recent issue of his Journal and an instalment of Private Letters only confirms the good impression made by the ten volumes of Lockhart's *Life*. For, as Mr Quiller-Couch observes on this point, 'you may explore here and explore there, and still you find pure gold; for the man was gold right through.' The genial sunshine which Washington Irving felt warming every 'creeping thing' around him into 'heart and confidence' still breathes in the literature which flowed from his pen.

One of the first attempts at a popular biography of Scott was that issued about a week after his death in connection with *Chambers's Journal*. It was announced that this life of Sir Walter Scott was given in connection with the *Journal* 'at a mere trifle, as a still stronger earnest than any hitherto held out, of the desire of the publishers to reduce general literature to the level of the whole community.' It was claimed that there was as much matter given there for three-halfpence as in many a half-guinea work. Also that for about ten years the editors (William and Robert Chambers, who were amongst the ten or twelve persons who left Edinburgh to attend Scott's funeral) had been collecting materials for this brief biography.* A very interesting budget of original anecdotes was also contributed to *Chambers's Journal* by Mrs John Ballantyne. Many waifs and strays of anecdotes and driblets of information have since floated from time to time into print, as it were from the four winds of heaven, and of some of these we may avail ourselves here. Scott lived a robust, full, and busy life, and left his impress in many unsuspected nooks and corners. And the time seems ripe for a fresh gleaning, which can only serve to heighten the impression of his greatness, and simplicity, and robust healthfulness. The late Mr Dykes Campbell had in view some supplementary work to Lockhart, which he, of all men, would have done with patience and intelligence. Robert Chambers, James Hogg, R. H. Hutton, C. D. Yonge, George Gilfillan, and others, have issued monographs on Scott. Mr Andrew Lang is busy with a revised edition of Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, as well as a Life of the biographer. In the way of review articles there is nothing better, despite its watered praise, than Carlyle's essay. Scott's great-granddaughter has described the antiquarian relics of Abbotsford, and Andrew Lang has here and there unearthed some fresh information for his edition of the novels.

One might begin by asking, where is the monument to Scott in Westminster Abbey? Thereby hangs a tale. All the world has admired the result of the labours of that self-taught genius, G. M. Kemp, which graces Princes Street in Edinburgh — as Professor Masson has remarked, the finest monument yet erected to a man of genius anywhere. A few enthusiastic Scotsmen subscribed in one night funds sufficient for a copy of it for New York Central Park. Native Scotsmen were none so enthusiastic over the home monument, for in February 1844 it had come to a standstill for lack of funds, £3000 being required to carry it to the desired height. Nor is it quite completed yet! Sir Thomas Dick Lauder asked the aid of Charles Mackay through the *Morning Chronicle*. A London committee was formed, but the subscription list only reached £269. A Waverley Ball had the patronage of the Queen and Prince Albert, and yielded £1100. These sums were utilised on the main design, and not on statuettes or accessories, as was done with the sum of £600 raised by the London Waverley Ball of 1871. This first London committee got a good deal of wholesome advice in prosecuting their labours. Lockhart looked coldly on the design chosen, and would have preferred a sitting statue at the south end of Castle Street. Lord Lytton thought that the 'money spent on the living might have saved the struggle and prolonged the days of Scott.' What was then being done was but a mockery of the dead. His works were his best monument. If the Scotch wished for such a monument, then it was right they should pay for it, for 'the moment the Scotch suffered Sir Walter Scott to leave Abbotsford unpaid, they lost the only opportunity of rendering practical homage to the man who had brought gold into their country through a thousand channels.' Charles Dickens rather concurred in this opinion. Croker would not subscribe again, because he believed he would never see the monument, although somebody wickedly offered to pay his fare to Edinburgh if he would only do so. In spite of all this criticism, the monument was so far completed at a cost of £15,000, and opened in 1846.

As regards a memorial to Scott in Westminster Abbey, the matter, it appears, stands thus. A committee collected subscriptions to the amount of £171, and Sir John Steell was entrusted with the execution of a medallion, which he completed in 1887. Although the subscribers admired and approved the completed design, Mr J. L. Pearson, R.A., the Abbey architect, pronounced it 'out of scale, and that it would be undesirable to put it in the Abbey.' Dean Bradley coincided in this view, so the medallion has lain in charge of the clerk of works, Westminster, ever since. We are glad to hear, however, that the matter, thanks to a strong memorial, is likely to be satisfactorily arranged.

It is well known that after Scott's failure in 1825, a committee of legal gentlemen stepped in and prevented the disposal of the Abbotsford collection of books and antiquarian curiosities. These are vested in trustees, the Dean and Council of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh. The Scott Museum in Abbotsford occupies five out of the forty rooms there, and the revenue derived from entrance fees is over £400 a year. The house, with grounds and shootings, when let to a tenant, brings £200 a year. Thither to this 'romance in stone and lime' come the feet of pilgrims from the ends of the earth.

* Now published in a revised edition, with Autobiography, in Chambers's series of popular biographies.

A writing-desk on which Scott wrote most of his novels was given to his amanuensis, William Laidlaw; on the death of his daughter Katherine, last year, it passed, along with a collection of letters, to her nephew, Mr W. L. Carruthers, Inverness. The gold snuff-box presented by Scott to Sir Adam Fergusson is now in possession of Mr C. E. S. Chambers, the editor of this *Journal*. In 1892 Mary Gray Garden, a daughter of the Ettrick Shepherd, possessed a small gold brooch, set with pearls, and containing a lock of Sir Walter's hair, perfectly white, cut off after death, and given by one of the family to her father. His pony-phaeton was possessed by Mr W. Macfie of Clermiston, Midlothian; the sofa and fire-grate from his study in Castle Street, by Rev. Donald Masson, Edinburgh. To the Advocates' Library, which already possessed a novel of Scott's in manuscript, the Marquis of Huntly has handed over forty-seven instruments of credit, drafts, and promissory-notes (1819–1825), the latter showing sums amounting to £30,000. The gold watch which Scott presented to Dr Clarkson of Melrose, his medical adviser, after Lady Scott's death, is still worn by a descendant. A ring, bearing the inscription, 'From Jedediah Cleisbotham to his friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie,' along with a scarf pin, are possessed by a son of Mr Mackay, who acted this character in *Rob Roy*. The picture by Sir David Wilkie, 'The Abbotsford Family,' representing the Scott family in lowland Scots peasant costume, was added in 1895 to the Scottish National Gallery, at a cost of eight hundred guineas.

A find of one hundred and three letters written by Scott to Mr George Craig, agent of the Leith Bank, Galashiels, was announced in 1894, but, as may be supposed, these relate chiefly to transactions in money matters with Constable, Coutts, and the Ballantynes. One letter written after his failure, January 28, 1826, proceeds thus: 'The most unexpected failure of Messrs Constable & Co. has thrown my affairs into such irremediable perplexity, that, with the perfect confidence of doing justice to every human being, I have been compelled to ask time to do so. . . . I have the pleasure to think that no other person is likely to be a loser but myself, if this mode (a private trust) should be generally adopted, and that in my own life, if God grant me life and health.' The grand gatherings at Abbotsford were over; the furniture of his Edinburgh house was sold, and he sat down bravely at fifty-five to redeem a debt of over £100,000. By his unparalleled labours, and the judicious farming of his copyrights by his new publisher, Robert Cadell, this was accomplished soon after his death. Cadell was said to have bought most of Scott's copyrights for £8400, though more than three times that amount was paid ere they were all secured. Just before Cadell's death in 1849, these were valued at £60,000; while he was said to have made £100,000 in business, chiefly as Scott's publisher. These copyrights were sold by Messrs Hodgson at the London Coffee-house in March 26, 1851, and purchased by Messrs A. & C. Black for £27,000. 'Time and I against any two, no man in the end shall lose one penny by me,' Scott remarked after his failure. While this was so, it is impossible to estimate what the commercial value of the Waverley novels has been to Edinburgh and Scotland generally; and particularly to paper-makers, printers, bookbinders, publishers, and booksellers.

Most of the printable material connected with Scott, which has been discovered, has been readily given to the public, with the exception of two novels which he began in the decadence of his powers at Naples, the one entitled *The Siege of Malta*, the other *Bizarre*. Lockhart gives the foundation for the last story in the *Life*. A series of imaginary Private Letters of the Reign of James I. has been printed in one of the magazines with Mrs Maxwell-Scott's consent. These were the letters which Scott had penned in 1821, when warned by his friends that he was throwing away good material for an historical romance. He took their advice, went no further, and wrote a novel instead, *The Fortunes of Nigel*.

The coursing meets at Abbotsford seem to have been much enjoyed. 'Losh, woman,' said a farmer to his wife, 'what a day we've had! I wish I could sleep till this time next year. The hunt is the only thing that's worth living for.' Maida, described as one of the finest dogs of its kind ever seen in this country, the noblest and most celebrated of all his dogs, is believed to have shortened its life by excessive fatigue in keeping up with the greyhounds at these coursing meetings. This favourite animal was a present from Colonel Ronaldson Macdonell of Glengarry. He was a cross between the Pyrenean wolf-dog and the deer-hound.

An Edinburgh High Street missionary frequently related an incident of his Selkirk boyhood. He had witnessed the death of a companion who had gone up to pat a horse in a harvest-field, which had kicked him so severely in the head that he died. It was the duty of Scott (then sheriff) to inquire into the cause of death. He sat down in a chair beside a little table, took the boy on his knee, looked down in a kind and encouraging way in the boy's face, and clapping him on the head, said, 'Now, Johnnie, what did the horse dae to the little laddie?' His kindly manner won the boy's confidence, and he told his story in boyish language, and at the close, Scott said, 'There's a sixpence to you, Johnnie, for telling me yer story sae weel.' It is related that he seldom passed boys on the road without speaking, or taking notice of them in some way. Miss Skene has related a pretty anecdote also of her childhood, when Scott discovered she was reading the *Abbot*. 'Well, my little lady, what have you got there? I suppose it is the *Arabian Nights*.' The little girl raised her head soberly, and fixed her eyes on his kind face, and replied: 'No; it is a book called the *Abbot*.' The great man showed his displeasure so plainly, and at the same time hid the enormity of her guilt from her father, who was present, that the book was instantly put away.

When the eldest son of Mr Maxwell-Scott of Abbotsford was born, the Queen is reported to have telegraphed her congratulations: 'He shall be knighted "Sir Walter" when he is 21.' When his mother was presented at court by her aunt, the Duchess of Buccleuch, the Queen kissed her on both cheeks before the court,

saying, 'This is all we have left of Sir Walter.' As Princess Victoria she saw Sir Walter Scott in her ninth year, when he dined with the Duchess of Kent at Kensington.

The world, and Scotland particularly, has never been so enthusiastic about Scott as about Burns; but Scott's creed in life and literature had the democratic touch of a big heart, with the pride of a Scottish laird and gentleman. Once when writing to Miss Edgeworth, he reproved her for attaching too much importance to literature and literary people. 'Let me tell you,' he wrote, 'that I have had the privilege of knowing some of the most celebrated men and women of my time, and that I have derived more satisfaction and comfort from the conversation and example of the poor, unlettered, hard-working people, than from all the wisdom of the learned folks. I have heard finer sentiments and seen finer lives among the poor people than I have ever seen or heard of anywhere outside the pages of the Bible. Believe me, my dear, all human learning is mere moonshine compared with the culture of the heart.' And this goes well with his death-bed advice to his son-in-law, Lockhart: 'My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.'

## THE SEA QUEEN.

By James Workman.

### I.

The following telegram, addressed to Richard Carson, arrived one afternoon in July, at an isolated post-office on the coast of Skye: '*Sea Queen off Holyhead. All well.*' Maggie Mackenzie, the telegraph clerk, was alone when she received it. Her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled as she copied it out.

'That's brave news!' she exclaimed. 'Mr Blake will be a proud man to-day. My certes, he wouldn't be long at the fishing if he knew what was waiting for him here. I should like fine to see his face when he reads it—and I will, too, for I'll hand him the telegram myself the minute he comes in.'

But the light went out of her eyes and she looked puzzled and distressed when she realised that the telegram was addressed to Carson and not to Blake. Carson was not the owner of the *Sea Queen*. Why should the telegram be addressed to him? The men were old acquaintances, and were both stopping at the inn to which the post-office was attached; but it never even occurred to Maggie that Carson might have instructed an agent to forward the telegram in order that he might be the first to communicate the glad tidings to Blake. His most casual acquaintance would have smiled at the bare idea of such a thing. Maggie had, moreover, very good reasons for believing that he detested Blake, and would not scruple to injure him if the opportunity presented itself. He suspected—as he had bluntly informed her—that Alf Blake was responsible for what he considered her incomprehensible refusal to become his wife; and if he could hit on a scheme, however unscrupulous, of crushing his rival, he was not the man to hesitate.

Still it seemed impossible that the innocent-looking telegram before her could be used as a weapon against Alf, and with a smile at her fanciful suspicions Maggie picked up an envelope in which to enclose it. At the same moment the fragments of a conversation which she had overheard the previous night flashed across her mind, and seemed at once to supply a motive for Carson's conduct. She had gathered from the disjointed sentences which reached her that Carson—a professional speculator—had offered Alf a merely nominal price for the *Sea Queen*, and that Alf, despairing of her safe arrival, had almost consented to accept it. If Carson had agreed to increase his offer by a hundred or two, the bargain would have been completed on the spot. Now that Carson was sure of the *Sea Queen's* safety, she had no doubt that he would keep the telegram in his pocket, increase his offer, and induce Alf to part with the vessel for a fraction of its real value.

If he did so, the rosy dreams of fame and success that had come to Alf with the *Sea Queen*—an unexpected legacy from a wealthy relative—would melt into thin air. He was an impecunious journalist with literary aspirations, and he had intended to sell the vessel, invest the proceeds, give up reporting, devote himself entirely to literature, and so realise the most cherished ambition of his life. His name was already known as a writer of short stories and descriptive articles, and with a permanent private income to fall back upon, he had no fear of the future. But unfortunately the *Sea Queen* was not insured, and after leaving Cape Coast Castle at the advertised date, was already two or three weeks overdue; and Alf, who had been waiting in an agony of suspense to hear news of the missing vessel, was beginning to abandon all hope of her arrival. Maggie was sure from his tone and manner on the previous night that Carson would find no difficulty in carrying out his infamous scheme.

Though it was clearly her duty to deliver the telegram at once, she still stood gazing at it with an air of painful indecision. Alf was fishing in the lochs among the hills, miles away across the wet moors. Even if she had been free to leave the post-office, how could she be sure of finding him, or at least of doing so without Carson, who was sitting in the porch staring moodily at the driving mist, discovering what she had done.

Discovery would mean ruin. It was illegal to keep back the telegram or to disclose its contents. She had taken the usual oath. She had solemnly and sincerely declared that she would not wittingly or willingly open or delay or cause to be opened or delayed anything that came into her hands or custody by reason of her employment relating to the post-office, except by the consent of the person or persons to whom the same should be directed. If she were found guilty of violating her oath, she would be instantly dismissed. She believed Carson to be absolutely unscrupulous. If he discovered that she had spoiled his plans by disclosing the contents of the telegram, she did

not believe he would spare her. Even if he did so for the time being, she would ever afterwards be at his mercy. She remembered with a shudder the expression of his eyes, the hard set lines of his face, when he told her that sooner or later he would force her to marry him. What might the fear of exposure compel her to do? If she had already found it difficult to struggle against his strong will and dogged pertinacity, how would she be able to resist him when her whole future, her honour, her livelihood depended upon his silence?

She loved Alf. She realised that clearly enough now; but she did not believe that, except in the way of friendship, he cared for her. If he loved her, if she were certain of it, the sacrifice would be so much easier. But would the consciousness of having thrown away all that makes life worth living, merely to prevent an act of injustice, comfort her amid the reproaches, the contempt, and pity of her friends and relatives? To violate her oath, to face humiliation and disgrace, and then to be abandoned to a lonely, loveless, miserable life, seemed a burden too heavy to be borne. If she were dismissed—— Her face suddenly flushed crimson and then turned white. Would dismissal be her only punishment? It flashed upon her that it might prove the lightest part of the penalty she would have to bear. With trembling fingers she searched a drawer in which she remembered a copy of the Act relating to such matters had been placed. She found it, and this is what she read:

'Any person having official duties connected with the Post-office, or acting on behalf of the Postmaster-general, who shall, contrary to his duty, disclose or in any way make known or intercept the contents of a telegraphic message, or any telegram entrusted to the Postmaster-general for the purpose of transmission, shall in England and Ireland be guilty of a misdemeanour, and in Scotland of a crime and offence, and shall upon conviction be subject to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve calendar months.'

As she read it she was seized with a panic. She could no longer debate the matter in cold blood. Her brain whirled round. She could not think. She could only act, and her action was naturally the result of her sudden terror. She slipped the telegram into an envelope, and almost ran out of the office.

'Hamish!' she called breathlessly. 'Hamish!'

A little bare-legged Highland boy came pattering along the passage.

'Away with this to Mr Carson. He's in the porch. Away with you this minute.'

He darted away with the telegram in his hand, and then she realised what she had done.

'Hamish!' she cried feebly. But the boy had disappeared.

She turned back into the office, faint and dizzy, and leaning on the desk, buried her face in her hands.

'Oh, what'll I do, what will I do?' she moaned. 'I've spoiled his life—I've ruined him.'

From an official and legal point of view, she had done her duty, and yet she was sick at heart with shame and self-loathing. It seemed to her at that moment that she had purchased her own safety weakly and selfishly at the expense of the man she loved.

Hamish scurried past the window and in at the door.

'D'ye see that?' he cried breathlessly, opening his little brown fist, and revealing a shilling. 'Mr Carson gied it me. I'm thinking it will be good news he was gettin', for he smiled and looked awfu' pleased, and patted me on the back and gied me the shillin'.'

Now that Maggie had taken the irrevocable step, she would have given worlds to retrace it. She seized a form and mechanically wrote out a copy of the telegram; but a moment after threw it impatiently aside. Alf was miles away among the moors, and it was running too great a risk to entrust it to a messenger. If she did so, questions were sure to be asked, and the truth would come out sooner or later. She could not leave the post-office herself. Macdonald, the postmaster and proprietor of the inn, was the only other person who could attend to the telegraph, and he had driven to Broadford, and the time of his return was uncertain. In the meantime, Carson might grow impatient, and instead of waiting for Alf to turn up, might tramp across the hills to meet him. Peering cautiously out of the window, she waited with beating heart to see what he would do. He came out of the porch, scowled at the rain and driving mist, and went back. He reappeared again and again, and every time she expected him to take the road across the hills; but after throwing a black look round and muttering angrily to himself, he invariably retreated into the porch.

Maggie had learned to hate the long monotonous days when the rain dripped ceaselessly from sunrise to nightfall, the mainland disappeared in mist, and the dismal gray sea moaned drearily among the rocks. But now the least pause in the steady downpour, the faintest lightening of the sky, made her heart flutter with fear, and she prayed that the rain might not stop, and that Alf might stay among the moors until she had time to think, to decide upon some course of action. She longed for a few hours', even a few minutes' delay. Some way of escape might present itself. Macdonald might arrive and leave her free to act as she thought best. Some friend or agent of Alf's in Liverpool might telegraph the news of the *Sea Queen's* arrival, and then all would be plain-sailing.

She heard the sound of wheels. Was that Macdonald? She darted to the window. It was only a party of guests from the Castle driving merrily through the rain. The sound of steps took the blood from her face. Could it be Alf? It proved to be a drenched fisherman trudging past with a string of saithe, bream, and whiting. The electric bell rang, and she leapt to her feet. It might be a message from Alf's agent. It was only a telegram to one of the guests at the Castle. The suspense became unbearable. She could not sit still. She moved restlessly about the room, trying vainly to determine what she ought to do, listening and watching for Carson, for Macdonald, for Alf, and utterly incapable of deciding on any definite course of action. When

the time came for decision, she did not hesitate a moment. She acted half mechanically, moved—as it seemed—by some power outside herself.

Several hours passed before Macdonald arrived. She thrust the copy of the telegram into her pocket and was half-way to the door, when she stopped abruptly. Carson had turned out again, and was talking to Macdonald.

'Wet day, Macdonald,' he remarked briskly.

'Ay, it's a coarse day,' replied Macdonald drily; 'but it's a grand day for the fishing. Mr Blake'll be away to the loch, I'm thinking.'

Carson was no favourite with the innkeeper. His want of enthusiasm about fishing, and his fear of getting wet, had lowered him immensely in Macdonald's esteem.

'Oh yes,' rejoined Carson. 'He went off soon after breakfast. Wanted to drag me with him, but I wasn't such a fool. Don't see the force of tramping over wet moors, and standing up to my waist in water all day, for the sake of catching half-a-dozen beastly little fish.'

'Ah, well,' said Macdonald coldly, 'it takes all sorts of men to make a world, and I've met many a bigger fool than Mr Blake.'

'Have you any idea which way he'll come back?' asked Carson, ignoring Macdonald's somewhat aggressive tone. 'I thought I might stroll up the hill a bit and meet him.'

'I can't tell you that,' answered Macdonald. 'There's half-a-dozen ways he might come home, and if you'll take my advice, you'll just bide where you are. If you go up the hill, you'll be getting your feet wet, and then who knows what may happen to you.'

Macdonald came in grinning through the passage on which the door of the office opened, and Maggie intercepted him. She told him she wanted to go out, and begged him to attend to any telegrams that might arrive. The grin disappeared, and he looked a trifle crusty.

'My word, lassie, you're no blate,' said he. 'I'm just wet to the skin, and wanting my dinner. Can't you wait a while?'

But Macdonald, like most of those who came in contact with Maggie, could refuse her nothing. One glance at her piteous face, pale and quivering with agitation, disarmed him.

'Hoots, lassie,' he exclaimed; 'I'll manage fine. Away with you.'

She caught a Tam-o'-Shanter from behind the door, slipped it over her curly dark hair, and darted out into the rain. She whisked round to the back of the inn, and ran up the hill. She wished in the first place to escape from Carson's keen eyes, though even yet she hardly knew whether she would warn Alf or not. The path twisted up the side of the hill, and she was soon out of sight of the inn. Then she walked more slowly. The rain was still falling steadily. The heather was like a sponge, the narrow path a series of runlets and pools, the ground soft mire, in which at times she sank ankle deep. The hills before her, the sea behind her, were shrouded in mist. She toiled higher and higher, the rain still falling, the mist thickening. Her Tam-o'-Shanter was drenched through, and her clothes hung on her like lead. Though she had even yet no clear notion of what she would say or do if she met him, she was tortured by the fear of missing Alf. If he had gone astray in the mist, or come by another path, she might be unable to see him alone before he met Carson. Goaded by the thought, she hurried on, mounting one slope after another until she reached a point from which she could overlook a long stretch of moor. Alf was in sight. She instantly darted behind the jutting corner of a wood, shrinking with terror from the decision she could no longer postpone.

II.

In the meantime, Alf was walking across the moor slowly and wearily, with bent head and dragging feet, a forlorn, drenched, miserable-looking object. He was in a mood of black depression. He believed that the cup he had just raised to his lips had been dashed aside. He saw nothing before him but a dreary, hopeless struggle amid uncongenial surroundings. It would have been easier to bear had a brighter prospect never tantalised him. He had been haunted all day by a conviction, which no argument he evolved could shake, that the *Sea Queen* was at the bottom of the Atlantic. He was so sure of it that he fully expected to find a telegram announcing the fact waiting for him at the inn. He began to regret that he had not accepted Carson's offer. Even that would have been infinitely better than nothing. As it was, he would have to go back to his dreary work amid lecture-halls, concert-rooms, and police-courts. He seemed to hear the monotonous throbbing of the machinery, to get a whiff of the indescribable smell of a newspaper-office, and his soul turned sick within him. He was physically exhausted, hungry and wet and weary, and, moreover, he had gone away without any matches, and had been unable to soothe himself with a pipe.

He looked so pathetically wretched that Maggie, peering at him through the leaves, felt a sudden pang of pity and stepped promptly forward to meet him. He glanced up, and was instantly transformed. His cheeks flushed and his eyes danced with pleasure.

'Well, Mr Blake, have you had a good catch?' asked Maggie, with a desperate effort to preserve her usual indifferent manner.

'First-rate,' rejoined Alf, swinging his creel round and lifting the lid. It was full to the brim of fine trout.

'You've done real well,' said Maggie. 'There are some grand fish there. But, dear me, you must be wet to the skin.'

'Yes, I'm pretty wet,' he rejoined, with a glance at his dripping clothes. 'But I think there's not much to choose between us. You're nearly as wet as I am, and you've no mackintosh. We must hurry back.'

'Oh, Skye rain hurts nobody,' answered Maggie. 'I just came out for a walk, and I'm not going back yet awhile.'

Alf's face fell.

'You're not coming back yet?' he repeated dolefully.

'No,' she answered petulantly, 'I'm going farther up the hill.'

'Oh,' said Alf disconsolately, 'I thought—I thought'——

Maggie laughed strangely.

'You thought I'd come to meet you? I wonder what could put that into your head, Mr Blake. But you'd better be moving, or you'll catch your death of cold.'

Alf turned pale and looked away. Then he glanced at her with a pleasant smile.

'Well, I hope you'll enjoy your walk,' he said. 'I do feel rather tired, and so I'll take your advice.'

He plodded drearily on, and she watched him with a curious mingling of pity and irritation. In another moment she was at his side.

'As you're so ready to take advice,' she said, almost rudely, 'I'll give you another piece of it. If any one's for buying the *Sea Queen* from you, you'll tell him you're not such a—such a gowk as you look.'

Alf stared at her in bewilderment.

'What do you mean?' he asked. She thrust the copy of the telegram into his hand.

'That means fortune for you,' said she; 'but it means shame for me. I've no more right to show it to you than I have to pick your pocket, but I couldn't—I couldn't bear—oh, away with you to the inn, and get your clothes dried. I'm for the hill.'

One glance at the telegram was enough. With two strides Alf was up to her and caught her by the hands.

'Maggie,' he exclaimed, and his dripping face shone with delight, 'you did this for me?'

'Ay,' she said, turning aside to hide her swimming eyes and twitching lips. 'And what'll become of me when it all comes out, I daren't think.'

He kept tight hold of her hands, and peered into her face.

'Oh Maggie,' said he; 'Oh Maggie, my dear, do you love me?'

'Love you indeed!' she exclaimed, struggling to free her hands. 'What havers! Away with you to the inn.'

'Not I,' retorted Alf, 'not I. You've got to listen to me, Miss Maggie Mackenzie. I've caught you at last, and every word I've long wanted to say to you, you shall hear before we part. Maggie, my dear, I've loved you since the first minute I saw your bonny face; but till you put that telegram into my hand I was a poor man, and God helping me, I swore I'd never ask you to share the dreary life I've led till now. Besides, I thought—I thought—I was beginning to think that you liked Carson better than me. Now I shall have enough to keep us both; and if you'll be my own dear wife, Maggie, I'll be true and kind to you all the days of my life, and one word from you will make me at this moment the happiest man in all the world. What do you say, Maggie?'

Maggie said nothing, but the light in her eyes made words superfluous. The rain still came washing down, and I suppose two more thoroughly soaked lovers never kissed each other since the days of the Flood.

'Well,' said Maggie mischievously, 'I don't know whether you're the happiest man in all the world, but I'm thinking you're surely the wettest. Down the hill you go this minute, sir, and change your clothes, or'——

She stopped abruptly. There stood Carson, watching them with a look that struck the smile from their faces. Alf had dropped the telegram when he darted after Maggie, and Carson had picked it up and read it. He had realised the situation at a glance. The fingers that held the telegram quivered, and his face was livid with passion.

'Do you quite understand what this means?' said he, ignoring Alf and addressing Maggie. 'Do you know what is the penalty for disclosing the contents of a telegram? In the eyes of the law you are as much a criminal as if you had stolen my watch or forged my signature. You shall pay for this—do you hear me? You shall pay dearly for this. I will teach you to cross my path and spoil my plans.'

Maggie clung to Alf in a sudden paroxysm of terror, overcome by the sickening sensation of weakness which she had always experienced when her will was opposed to Carson's. Even Alf's presence failed to reassure her. He had always seemed too sensitive and diffident to be anything like a match for a prompt, unscrupulous, imperious man of affairs like Carson.

'What do you mean?' asked Alf quietly.

'What do I mean, curse you!' exclaimed Carson savagely. 'I mean that this girl has rendered herself liable to twelve months' imprisonment for disclosing the contents of a telegram addressed to me.'

'And do you suppose,' continued Alf, speaking more slowly and in a lower tone than usual—'do you for one moment imagine that any judge or jury possessed of the most elementary sense of justice would condemn her for exposing one of the dirtiest and most contemptible frauds that even such a man as you ever perpetrated?'

'Take care!' shouted Carson. 'Mind what you're about!'

'I assure you,' rejoined Alf, 'that I am selecting my expressions with the nicest care. You certainly are precisely the most despicable person I ever met, and I have not the smallest particle of doubt that my opinion of you will be shared by every man and woman in the kingdom, if you are ever imprudent enough to make these proceedings public.'

'Then listen to me,' exclaimed Carson. 'I care not one brass farthing what you or any other fool may think of me, and I swear that I will spare no time or trouble or money to have that girl punished as she deserves, unless'——

He paused.

'Unless?' asked Alf.

'Unless you leave Skye by the *Claymore* to-night, and take a solemn oath that you will never see or speak to her again.'

'There is just one little difficulty in the way,' remarked Alf; 'but I am afraid, I am really afraid, Carson, that it will prevent my adopting your no doubt well-meant suggestion. Maggie has just promised to marry me.'

'She shall not marry you,' cried Carson. 'I tell you she shall not marry you. Now, look here, Blake, you don't understand me. You don't know what I'm capable of. If you drive me past a certain point, I'll stick at nothing—do you hear me?—I'll stick at nothing. You'd better get out of my way before it's too late.'

'To use your own elegant expression,' replied Alf, 'I don't care a brass farthing what you're

capable of; and I understand you perfectly. On the other hand, I am inclined to think that you don't understand me. You seem to be labouring under the delusion that because I decline to soil my hands with your dirty methods of money-making, that I am your mental inferior; and that because I have some consideration for the feelings of others, I must, in the nature of things, be a coward. You are simply a stupid, selfish, coarse-fibred bully; and I assure you I care no more for your bluster than I care for the whistling of the wind in the trees. I will give you a sufficient proof of the value I attach to your threats.—Give me your hand, Maggie.'

Trembling with agitation, Maggie slipped her hand into Alf's, and they walked down the hill, Carson, after a moment's hesitation, following close behind. Maggie little guessed what was in Alf's mind when, still clasping her hand, he marched straight into the kitchen, where Macdonald, two or three fishermen, and the schoolmaster were sitting by the fire, and Mrs Macdonald was baking scones. They looked up in astonishment. Carson stood in the doorway. Alf and Maggie made a curious couple—a pale, slim, pretty girl in a Tam-o'-Shanter, and a dilapidated-looking object in a sou'-wester and an oilskin coat, with a creel at his back and a rod in his hand.

'Mr and Mrs Macdonald, and you two gentlemen,' said Alf coolly, 'I wish you all to take notice that I hereby solemnly declare in your presence, as witnesses, that Margaret Mackenzie is my lawful wedded wife.—Is that true, Maggie? Are you my wife?'

Maggie stared at him with white face and wide startled eyes, too frightened and bewildered to clearly understand what he meant. Then suddenly the truth flashed upon her, a rosy blush coloured her pale cheeks, and with a timid cry she buried her face in her hands.

'Come,' said Alf, 'you must speak, Maggie, and speak out so that every one can hear you. Are you my wife?'

And Maggie, quivering with excitement, cried, 'Yes,' and hid her blushing face behind the grimy old oilskin.

'My conscience!' exclaimed Macdonald.

'Well, that beats everything,' said the schoolmaster.

'They're clean daft,' cried Mrs Macdonald, wiping her hands on her apron, and glowing with delight.

'What's the meaning of this senseless mummery?' exclaimed Carson. 'Do you suppose that a ceremony like that will hold good?'

'Here in Scotland it does!' chuckled Alf. 'Maggie's my lawful wedded wife as certainly as if we'd been married by the Archbishop of Canterbury.'

'It's an infernal lie,' shouted Carson. 'I don't believe it.'

'You may believe it or not,' said Mrs Macdonald wrathfully, 'and it matters not the bone of a herring whether you do or you don't. They're man and wife; that's just the simple truth of it.'

'It's true, Carson,' said Alf. 'You're beaten, my man, and you may as well give in; and you may understand, once for all, that you may do or say just precisely what you please. Neither I nor my wife care the weight of a straw for your threats.'

Then Carson threw up the sponge. 'Bring me my bill,' he exclaimed savagely. 'I'll not stay another hour in this Heaven-forsaken hole. Bring me my bill, I tell you.'

'I'll do that, Mr Carson,' rejoined Mrs Macdonald, in high displeasure, 'I'll do that gladly; and you'll be a contented man if you're as pleased to go as I am to see the last of you.'

So the bill was made out, and was perhaps none the smaller for Carson's injudicious insolence; and he stalked off to the landing-place, and waited for six hours in the rain for the *Claymore*, which had been detained at Portree, and sailed for Glasgow, breathing threatenings and slaughter, but came to his senses before he reached the Clyde, and ever afterwards kept his mouth discreetly closed.

And Alf raised the pretty blushing face, still hidden against the dingy wet oilskin, and kissed it boldly in the presence of the witnesses.

'I can do that now, Mrs Macdonald, can't I?' said he. 'She's my wife now—isn't she?'

'She is that, sir; but it's not every one that understands the peculiarities of the Scotch marriage laws, and if you'll take my way of it, she'll just be Miss Maggie Mackenzie until you're made man and wife by the minister. Besides, a lassie has just one chance of making a stir in the world, and that's on the day she's married; and Maggie must have her comings and goings o' courtin', and her bridesmaids and her cake, and her bit presents, as well as the best of them.'

'I'll take your advice, Mrs Macdonald,' exclaimed Alf, 'and some of your excellent scones at the same time, and anything else you have handy, for I'm just on the very brink of starvation.'

'The first thing you'll do,' said Maggie, as one having authority, 'is to go and change your clothes, for you're just for all the world like a sponge, and you're fairly standing in a pool of water.'

And Alf showed that he realised the consequences of his new position by meekly obeying.

## EVENING.

Beyond the summit of the far-off hill,
The golden sun has sunk into the west;
No wind disturbs the air of evening still,
The weary world is peaceful and at rest;
One crimson cloud hangs in the upper air,
Like some fair ship, that in a quiet bay
Lies anchored, waiting for the breeze to bear
Her swiftly to strange countries far away.
A bird or two, that have not fall'n asleep,
Still twitter drowsily from bush or tree;
The shadows gradually onward creep,
And darkness, like the dim eternity,
Which men know not, yet dread, envelops all,
Folding the flower-clad earth within her pall.

A. H. Murray.

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## BIRDS FROM MOIDART.

By J. E. Harting.

Five and twenty years ago, comparatively little was known of the avifauna of Scotland. The labours of Macgillivray and of Sir William Jardine, so fully recognised at the present day in works still popular, though so long ago published, were not confined to Scottish territory, but had reference to a more general investigation of British zoology in which their observations on Scottish birds formed merely a part. It is much to be regretted that neither of these distinguished naturalists lived to prepare a general work on the birds of Scotland, a work which would have been as welcome as it would certainly have been reliable.

Charles St John, gifted with equal power of observation, though with less scientific attainment, has probably done more than any other writer of a past generation to unveil the natural beauties of the Scottish Highlands, and make us acquainted with the haunts and habits of Scottish game and wildfowl, with which he himself was so thoroughly familiar as a sportsman and a naturalist. His *Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands*, his *Tour in Sutherland*, and his *Natural History and Sport in Moray*, are books that live in the memory of all who have perused them; faithful records of accurate observations, delighting as much by the information which they convey, as by the charming and unaffected style in which they are written.

Nor should the name of John Colquhoun, as a writer on Scottish field-sports, be forgotten amongst those who have helped to make us better acquainted with all the wild denizens of 'Moor and Loch.' Though claiming no rank as a scientific ornithologist, he was, like Christopher North 'in his aviary,' and 'in his sporting jacket,' a keen sportsman and shrewd observer, and no one can read his chapter on natural history and sport in Bute—to name one of many—without a feeling of admiration and indebtedness. To Robert Gray, however, we are beholden for the first published attempt at a general work on Scottish ornithology. In 1871 appeared his *Birds of the West of Scotland*, for which he had paved the way in 1869 with a smaller book on the *Birds of Ayrshire and Wigtownshire*. The larger work at once attracted favourable attention, and it was not long before it became 'out of print and scarce.' Although ostensibly dealing only with the west of Scotland, with which Robert Gray was most familiar, it has, in fact, a much wider scope, owing to the observations which are made throughout the volume on the status of various species in the west as compared with their position in the east. In fact, had the author lived, a companion volume dealing fully with the avifauna of the east of Scotland would in all probability have seen the light.

It has been reserved for Mr Harvie Brown, in collaboration with Mr T. E. Buckley, to plan, prepare, and in a great measure to carry out a comprehensive work in sections dealing with the vertebrate fauna of the whole of Scotland and the Isles, and to judge by what has appeared to the present time, nothing could be more satisfactory. The volumes already issued are (1) *A Vertebrate Fauna of Sutherland, Caithness, and West Cromarty* (1887); (2) *The Outer Hebrides* (1888); (3) *The Birds of Iona and Mull* (1890); (4) *The Orkney Islands* (1891); and (5) *The Fauna of Argyll and the Inner Hebrides* (1892); while the sixth and seventh volumes, dealing with the *Fauna of the Moray Basin*, are announced as nearly ready for publication. This admirable series of volumes, which must have cost its authors an infinity of trouble and years of patient observation and collection of records, will contain, when complete, all that is known (or likely to be known for some time to come) of the vertebrate fauna of Scotland and the Isles, although naturally the researches of specialists in various directions will result from time to time in the filling in of details of more or less value.

We have been led to take up the last published volume of this series, which relates to Argyllshire, in consequence of the recent appearance of Mrs Blackburn's sketches of birds made chiefly in that county.* Dwelling at Roshven on that promontory which juts into the Sound of Arisaig between Loch Ailort and Loch Moidart, Mrs Blackburn is favourably situated for observing the wildfowl and seafowl, which at different seasons frequent the salt and brackish waters by which she is surrounded, and of which there is a pleasing variety. Ducks, divers, and grebes come into the lochs; guillemots and razorbills may be seen fishing in the sound; gulls and terns follow the coast-line, along which the dainty ring-dotterel, with sandpipers of various sorts, are always gleaning the harvest of the sea. Farther out the gannets soar and plunge upon the passing fish, of which toll is sometimes taken by the rarer osprey. Concerning the last-named bird Mrs Blackburn tells us that its mode of carrying a captured fish is noteworthy. Instead of grasping it, as generally represented, across the back with the feet held parallel and close together, it takes it fore and aft as a man would hold a spear, and carries it head foremost so as to present the smallest surface of resistance to the opposing wind.

The alleged fondness of the tawny owl for fish is confirmed by the partiality which was evinced by some birds of this species which Mrs Blackburn had at liberty in her garden. When first imported there, they were not old enough to shift for themselves, and so had their food provided for them daily. They were very fond of fish; a share of what was caught was put out for them every evening, and was always devoured before morning.

Amongst other fish-eating birds studied in their natural haunts is the heron, of which a picturesque group of eighteen was sketched one fine summer morning while resting on the shore of Loch Eil, below Ben Nevis. A half-starved bird of this species, captured during a hard frost, was brought home and turned into a garret. It would take herrings out of a bath, and then stand on one leg on a chair for an hour or more, quite still, in a favourable position for being drawn. When the thaw came, it was restored to liberty at the spot where it was found.

Mrs Blackburn has lived long enough in Moidart to have noted some curious changes in bird-life in that district. In 1856 there were no starlings there. 'They began to come only a few years ago, resting temporarily on the islands. Now a good many stay all the year round, and live in the dovecot among the pigeons. Some try to build in the chimneys of the house, if the rooms are empty and fireless, filling them up yards deep with sticks which are very difficult to get out. One has to light an occasional fire to drive them away with the smoke, and prevent their repeating the offence, which they are only too ready to do.' Thrushes, also, are much more numerous now at Roshven than they used to be, probably owing to the increase of cultivation, and enlargement of garden ground. They stay all the winter unless the frost be unusually severe. There were no common sparrows to be seen when the author first knew the district, nor for many years afterwards. Since they came, the yellow hammer is said to have decreased in numbers.

A curious departure from the normal mode of nesting has been observed in the jackdaw and the wood-pigeon. Mrs Blackburn has seen nests of the former bird on the island of Inch Murrin in Loch Lomond among the roots of old oak trees, some of them quite low down in the ground, others above, with great quantities of sticks both above and below. She has heard a tradition to the effect that the wood-pigeons in old times used to build their nests on the ground, but their young having been so often destroyed by passing cattle, they took to nesting on trees. It is curious that the same thing has been reported of the pigeon-like *Didunculus*, or little dodo, in the island of Samoa, in its attempts to escape from the pigs of the settlers which sought for and devoured the young birds. Nightjars Mrs Blackburn has seen 'in the gloaming, running about on their short legs on the gravel near the house, catching white ghost moths near the grass.' The observation 'running about' is new to us. On the wing, or perched upon a tree, this bird is familiar enough, but very few persons are sharp enough to detect it on the ground before it has taken flight, since the soft brown and gray shades of colour in the plumage harmonise so wonderfully with the natural surroundings as almost to defy detection of the bird until on the wing.

Perhaps the most interesting of all Mrs Blackburn's sketches is that which she gives of the young cuckoo ejecting from the nest the young of the meadow pipit, its foster parent. The story is not new, for she published it many years ago, and it gained her some notoriety in the ornithological world, since it confirmed the earlier statements of Jenner, which had been doubted, and even rejected as incredible, by some who ought to have known better. Her observations on the subject have been accepted and quoted by Gould in his *Handbook to the Birds of Great Britain*, and by the present writer in his *Summer Migrants*, and have since been fully confirmed by the late John Hancock from his own observations in the garden of his friend Hewitson at Oatlands (*Zoologist*, 1886, p. 203), a fact which Mrs Blackburn might well have noted in her new volume.

Her drawing of the young cuckoo as well as of the adult bird are amongst the most successful in the book; but there are many others of almost equal merit. The spotted flycatcher feeding its fledgling, the young ring ouzel from the hills of Moidart, the stonechat and whinchat on the furze, the blue tit on the larch, the young hoodie crow which had fallen out of its nest in an old aspen-tree on an island in Loch Ailort, the swimming guillemot with half-closed wings on the point of

* *Birds from Moidart and Elsewhere, drawn from Nature*, by Mrs Hugh Blackburn, sm. 4to, 192 pp. Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1895.

diving—all these are faithful transcripts of nature which do credit to the artist.

The letterpress which accompanies each plate is in many cases too brief. It might well have been longer; for a lady who can observe birds to draw them as Mrs Blackburn can, must have much more to tell concerning them.

It is well for those whose lines are cast in such pleasant places as the author of these charming sketches from the north. While from her sea-girt home she can gaze over moor and loch, we in the far-off city must be content to look wistfully towards the misty mountain top which towers above the far Loch Eil, and thank her for the pleasant peep she has given us of bird-life in Argyllshire.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER IV.—'TEA IS READY.'

THERE was no time for any reply, because just then the door was opened and a girl's head appeared. 'Tea is ready,' she said, and disappeared.

Tea was served in the room on the other side of the hall. Like the study, this room was a lovely old room also, completely wainscoted with cedar. There were the same carvings over the mantel, fruit, flowers, grapes, leaves, and branches, and the shield with the family coat of arms. The room was, however, lighter than the study, partly because it contained in each of the upper panels family portraits, and on the panels below oil-paintings representing the river as seen from the boat-yard, with its ships, barges, hoys, lighters, boats, and all the life and motion and business of the river in the last century. So little regard for art was there in the family that no one knew who had painted these panels. Yet it was no mean hand which had designed and executed them. Many indications pointed to the daily occupancy of the room by the household. In the window, for instance, stood a small table, with a work-basket placed there out of the way; there was a sideboard of the Second George of mahogany, black with age; it was one of the kind consisting of two square towers, each with a locked door and two compartments within, and a broad flat connecting piece with a drawer. In the middle portion stood a noble old punch-bowl, surrounded by glasses—lovely old glasses—the convivial rummer, the useful tumbler, the tall champagne glass, the old-fashioned little port glass, the tiny liqueur glass—a beautiful assortment such as a mere modern cannot understand. On one side of the towers stood a glass filled with spring flowers, and on the other, as if belonging to the masculine sort, a case for spirits. On the panels above the pictures was a row of china plates—they had stood there for a hundred years, only taken down from time to time to be dusted. On the other side of the room, opposite to the door, was a cottage piano, open, with music piled on the top. In one corner, near the fireplace, was a little stack of churchwarden pipes, and in the other corner was a door, half open, which revealed a surprising cupboard. The eighteenth-century housewife demanded so many store-rooms, for all her jams, jellies, pickles, wines, cordials, and strong waters; so many still-rooms, linen-rooms, and pantries for the immense collections which her family wanted for the successful conduct of a household, that it became necessary to have a cupboard in the parlour, or general living-room, as well. This cupboard belonged to the Burnikels of the last century; but its use was continued by the present occupants. Here were kept the cups and saucers, old and new; here was the plate-basket containing the forks and spoons in daily use—silver, not plated, and thin with age; here were certain books which once formed the family library—they were chiefly of the religious kind; here were tea-caddy, coffee-caddy, and sugar-basin; here were the decanters which belonged to the Sunday dinner; here were household account-books; here was the corkscrew; here were mysterious phials; here were kept the marking-ink, the writing-ink, the pens and paper; here was the current pot of jam; here were the lemons; here, in short, the thousand and one things likely to be wanted every day by the household. For this room was the family keeping or living-room; it was not the dining-room, or the breakfast-room; it was the parlour; Robert's room had been the best parlour until he changed it into the study.

One did not take in all these details at once; but I had abundant opportunities, afterwards, of noting everything. Meantime, what I observed first of all was that 'tea' meant sitting down to a white cloth, spread with a magnificent display of good things. I remembered my cousin's ominous words, 'I told them that you might come in to tea;' 'they' had provided this square meal in hospitality for me.

The girl who sat behind the tea-tray, ready to serve, was doubtless the housekeeper, accountant, secretary, clerk, whom my cousin was some day about to marry. A slight, delicate-looking girl she appeared to be; and she seemed shy, her head drooping. Beside her stood, supported by a stick, an elderly man.

'This is Captain Dering,' said my cousin, introducing his friend, 'and this is Isabel Dering.'

The girl bowed stiffly. The captain extended a friendly hand.

'Glad to make your acquaintance, sir,' he said heartily. 'There was a time when I made new friends every voyage, but those times are over. The sight of a stranger at Wapping is a rare event, I assure you.'

'Especially,' I said, 'a stranger who comes in search of a long-lost cousin.'

The face and dress and general appearance of this old gentleman indicated his profession. It was nautical.

'My tough old figure-head,' face and dress and general appearance all cried aloud together, 'tells you that I have been a sailor. My clear honest eyes tell you that I am a

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sailor. My red and weather-beaten cheek; my blue cloth; the shape of my jacket—all proclaim that I am a sailor—and proud of it, sir, proud of it.'

Then Robert Burnikel, to my confusion, because I thought the custom (over a cup of tea) long exploded, pronounced a grace. It was an old family grace dating from the time when all respectable families of the middle class were extremely religious, and the Church of England was evangelical, and when ladies conversed and wrote letters to each other almost entirely on the condition of their souls. Quite a long collect, this grace was. Yet the utterance was as purely formal as that of grace in a college hall, or grace in a workhouse, which is the most formal thing I know. Robert pronounced that grace mechanically.

This form of prayer concluded, we all sat down. A tremendous tea was on the table: ham in slices, boiled eggs, potted tongue, prawns, bread and butter, cakes of many kinds, including plum cake, seed cake, Madeira cake, tea cake (which is a buttered or bilious variety), short cake, biscuits, jam, marmalade, and honey. A hospitable tea. A square tea, in fact. A tea, like Robert Burnikel himself, at once serious and earnest and heavy.

As a rule, I repeat, I take nothing with my afternoon tea. But one must not be churlish. My cousin glanced at me before the prayer, as if to say, 'You shall see for yourself how Wapping can do it.' And I was expected to do justice to all these good things provided for my honour. Why, if this splendid spread was out on the table every day, the captain's clear eye would become yellow and the master would find it no longer possible to follow out an argument, for the black spots, lines, and circles which would be bobbing about between his nose and the printed page. It must have been an exceptional spread. No one could live through a month of such teas. I avoided the ham and escaped the eggs, and declined the shrimps. But I went in for the cake, and on the whole acquitted myself, I believe, creditably. The captain and the giver of the feast, on their parts, ploughed their way resolutely through the whole array of dishes.

When the first pangs were appeased the captain spoke.

'Sir George Burnikel,' he said with solemnity, 'I commanded the *Maid of Athens* which ran between Calicut and Ceylon for many years. As the captain of that noble vessel I've taken passengers aboard of the highest rank—the very highest—not to speak of coffee planters. Not that their rank made them better sailors. I acknowledge so much. But it made me a respecter of the British aristocracy, Sir George Burnikel, of which you are a worthy member. Robert here is all for pulling down. Why? I ask you, humbly, Sir George—why?' Robert grunted.

'Why, I ask? When you break up an old ship, she's gone. Let her be. Let her go on till she's wrecked or cast away. No, sir, when you've carried noblemen upon the Indian ocean, and found out that they are exactly like other people—must be stroked the right way—want the most comfortable berths—drink the same grog, and talk the same language—then you get to respect the aristocracy. Because you see, with their chances, they might have been so very different. And then you ask, why pull down? Why sweep away?' He addressed the question to Robert, who only grunted. It was obviously an old subject of dispute.

Then the captain turned to the table again and proceeded to work through the festive spread in silence. The lagging of conversation enabled me to look about and observe. To observe in a strange house is to make discoveries. First, I regarded the girl at the tea-tray. She was rather pretty, I thought: too pale, as if she took too little exercise or worked too hard, or was underfed; she had curiously soft and limpid eyes—of the kind which seem to hold within them unknown depths of something—wisdom, perhaps; love, perhaps; prophecy, perhaps—according to the lover's interpretation. Her features were regular but not of classical outline: her cheek looked soft as velvet; her lips were mobile. But she was too grave; she looked sad even. I remembered what my cousin said, 'No fondling and nonsense.' At twenty-four one has not a large experience, but I certainly could not help thinking that she was a girl designed and intended by nature to live upon love, and the fondlings and caresses and outward signs of love, which her fiancé thought so ridiculous. To have none! To wait for ten, twelve, fifteen years, and to lack that consolation and comfort! Poor child! Poor Isabel!

And then I made another discovery. The girl was afraid of her cousin—the master—the man who would not permit his own mother to entertain any illusions about the mastery. She was afraid of her own lover! Wonderful! She watched him anxiously; she anticipated his wants in silence; he received her attentions without acknowledgment. Why was she afraid of him? Did he scold and abuse his secretary?

My host, I perceived, conducted his eating with the resolution and the rapidity that becomes habitual when one sits down to eat and not to talk. As I learned afterwards, there was little conversation at the table in this house because the master was always full of his own thoughts and despised the common topics of the day and the season. Perceiving, when he had himself finished a very substantial stop-gap between dinner and supper, that his guest had also ceased taking in provisions, he rose abruptly, pushing back his chair and his plate. One may remark this thing done daily in the cottage and in the village. It is an action which seems to belong to a level lower than that of a master boat-builder: one might have expected more attention to style: but, as I learned afterwards, in a house where one man rules absolute, like Nero of Rome, and nobody dares to expostulate, some deterioration of manners is apt to creep in.

'Now,' he said, 'if you won't take any more tea cake? a few shrimps? an egg? No? Then we'll go and have another talk.—Isabel, you needn't come in.'

The captain took no notice of our departure.

I bowed to the girl, who looked a little surprised at this act of courtesy and rather stiffly inclined her head.

Outside the door Robert Burnikel stopped. 'Up-stairs,' he said, 'I think there is something to interest you. Come along.' On the second floor he threw open the door of a room. 'This,' he said, 'is called the spare room. But I never remember that it was occupied. We could do without it, I suppose; and we never had any visitors to stay the night. So you see, it is only half-furnished.' The room contained a wooden bed with mattresses, but no feather-bed, or spring-bed, or curtains—only the frame; there were three or four odd chairs standing about, and there was a great sailor's chest. 'This,' he explained, 'is the bed of old John Burnikel, the man who had the bag of diamonds.'

'Oh! It is a pity we haven't got the bag as well, isn't it? Did your great-grandfather buy the bed?'

'I suspect there was no buying. He was on the spot and he took it—bed and sea-chest and all. I suppose he thought that perhaps in spite of their failures to find it, the bag might be somewhere about the bed.'

'And he searched, of course.'

'I believe this bed must have been taken to pieces a hundred times. My brother and I once took it to pieces and tapped every piece all over with a hammer to see if it was hollow. Look! Here is the secret cupboard in which people used to hide their things.' It was at the head of the bed. He pressed a certain spot in the woodwork and a door flew open, disclosing a small recess. 'Everybody knew the secret, but everybody pretended not to know. Of course, when the old man was gone, the first thing they did was to look into this secret cupboard. But there was nothing in it. Then they turned the house inside out. Then they quarrelled and fought. Then they dissolved partnership.'

'And then,' I added, 'they accused each other, for three generations after, of stealing that bag. It's a wonderful family story. Let me try.'

I put in my hand and felt round the little cupboard. There was nothing.

'And this,' my cousin went on, 'is the old man's sea-chest. That, too, was brought here at the same time as the bed. The two things, except for a table and a chair, and a frying-pan, were all the furniture the old man possessed. It's a most marvellous thing to think of. What became of that bag? A hundred times and more that old bed has been pulled to pieces, and that old chest has been turned out to see if there was any hiding-place still undiscovered.'

A large, iron-bound sea-chest. I threw open the lid. It seemed to contain a queer lot of useless rubbish.

'The sight of this box,' said Robert, 'makes one believe that there really must have been a bag of diamonds after all.'

'Of course there was. The only thing is—what became of it? Nobody knew anything about it. Nobody was in the house from the time that the old man was taken ill until his nephew came; no outsider stole that bag. What became of it, then? Of course, it is no good asking now. Still it is mysterious.'

'Yes. And about ninety years ago the two cousins were standing over the dead man's bed, just as we are doing now. I feel as if it was yesterday. Don't accuse me of stealing the thing, or there will be another fight.'

Robert smiled grimly. Were there to be another fight he was perfectly assured about the event. A very superior young man in every direction. I noted the smile and understood it. But it was all part of this very singular and masterful personality to which I was thus singularly introduced.

By this time I was fully impressed with the fact that I had to deal with a very remarkable, resolute, and ambitious young man, who cared about nothing in the world but his own advancement; strong and able, masterful, self-confident even to the very rare degree of communicating his secret ambitions. Most men, again, limit their ambitions by the circumstances and the conditions of their lives: they do not look much beyond. The ambition of the average working-man is to get continuous work, sometimes to become a master; the ambition of the average young shopkeeper is to extend his business; the young solicitor hopes for a steady practice; the young author hopes for acceptance by the editor, only acceptance, only a chance; he has no thought at first of great, world-wide success; his ambition increases as he gets on. In Robert's case the ambition was from the outset full-grown. 'I will go into the House,' he said, being only a boat-builder with a small yard and a moderate business; 'and I will become a Cabinet Minister.' Such ambition was immense, presumptuous, audacious, considering his position. And yet, considering the man, apart from his position, I recognised almost from the outset that it was not ridiculous.

## THE TINTOMETER.

Although much might be written about the origin of colour and its beauty and significance in the general scheme of the universe, our principal object in this article is to describe an instrument for the measurement of colour, known as the 'Tintometer.' For scientific purposes colour is measured by means of the spectroscope. The light emitted from a coloured body is split up by prisms, and the spectrum is compared with the solar spectrum and mapped out on a scale. This procedure is all very well for scientific work pure and simple, but the time, accuracy, and instruments required for carrying it out render such a method impracticable for industrial purposes. The analyst has his own methods of comparing and recording colours, but most of the processes require a scientific man to use them. What is needed is an instrument that shall be simple in construction, easily understood, and capable of being worked by any one not versed in scientific methods. In such a delicate matter

as colour, accuracy and reliability are all-important, so that the instrument must possess these qualities in addition. The problem of inventing such a desideratum was taken up by Mr J. W. Lovibond of Salisbury about twenty years ago as a scientific hobby. To engage in research both wealth and leisure are required, and, fortunately, Mr Lovibond as a rich brewer had both. He got together a staff of workers, and hammered away industriously for several years to find the solution of the problem.

The result of their labours is the Tintometer. In its present form a simpler instrument could hardly be imagined, or one more easy to use. It consists of an oblong box, divided by a longitudinal partition into two parallel-sided tubes. The eye, in looking through the middle eye-piece, takes no account of the partition, and sees both tubes at once. Two other eye-pieces are cut in the end of the instrument, so that it can be used either as a binocular or a monocular. At the bottom of one tube is placed the substance to be examined, whilst in the slots of the other tube standard coloured glasses are inserted until the colour of the substance is matched exactly. A coloured solution, such as a dye, is placed in a gauged cell; a solid, such as flour, is compressed into a shallow wooden cell; and a fabric is stretched on a flat piece of wood. Nearly every substance requires some special means of compensating for its texture, so that both sides of the instrument shall appear the same to the eye. Suppose, for instance, that we wish to examine a sample of crystallised sugar. The sugar is compressed into the wooden cell and placed at the bottom of one tube, whilst a similar cell, filled with colourless broken glass of the same degree of fineness as the sample, is placed at the bottom of the other tube. The standard coloured glasses, of which we shall have more to say directly, are then inserted and changed about until an exact match between the two sides of the instrument is obtained. Where flour is to be examined, it is moistened with water and compressed into the cell in a similar way to the sugar; but, instead of broken glass on the other side of the instrument, a cell filled with precipitated sulphate of lime is used to balance the texture of the flour. In the case of a pigment, the colour, mixed with a definite quantity of water, is pasted on white paper, and a piece of the same paper is placed on the other side. Where a dyed fabric is being examined, a white slip of the same material is placed at the bottom of the second tube. A coloured solution, such as a dye, presents the simplest case of all. A definite thickness of the dye is run into the gauged cell, and the light from a sheet of opal glass is reflected through it, the second tube being illuminated by the same reflector.

Although the tintometer itself is so obviously simple, the difficulties encountered in working out this method of colour measurement were considerable. The great trouble has been with the standard coloured glasses, which constitute the important feature of the instrument. They are narrow slips of tinted glass, resembling in shape the slides used for microscopic work, and are arranged in three graduated series of dominant colours—red, yellow, and blue. The differences between two consecutive glasses in the lighter shades are much smaller than in the darker ones, the increase of tint in each case being just perceptible to the normal eye. As the glasses are standards, destined to last as long as possible, every endeavour has been made to secure their permanency in addition to their purity of colour. The red tint is imparted to the glass by oxide of gold, the yellow by silver, and the blue by cobalt. Recent researches of Captain Abney and others have elucidated the fact that any colour can be imitated by a mixture of two other colours with a certain proportion of black or white, that is, neutral gray. This gray is produced by a mixture of the three dominant colours of the tintometer in equal proportions. If we take any denomination in the standards and mix the three, we shall always produce neutral gray, and this is an infallible test of their accuracy. By the discovery of the relation of the three dominant colours to neutral gray, one of the great difficulties in using the tintometer was overcome. Until comparatively recently it was found impossible to register the constituents of a colour that was brighter than the tintometer standards. When it was found that the difference between dull red and bright crimson was merely due to the absence or presence of white light mixed with the red, the difficulty was at an end. By using neutral gray to diminish the brightness of the colour, it can be brought within the range of the standard glasses and recorded. The tintometer standards are not arbitrary, but are compared in the first instance with certain chemical solutions of known strength, so that if the whole of the standards were destroyed to-morrow there would be no difficulty in replacing them.

The value of the tintometer in the arts generally can hardly be overestimated. The reason why it has been so little known until recently is that the inventor regarded the subject largely as a hobby, and took no steps commercially to create a sale for the instrument. Mr Lovibond, however, drew the attention of scientific men to the results of his work by various papers, read before the Society of Chemical Industry; and several chemists, including the writer, used the tintometer more than ten years ago. Nevertheless, the knowledge of its usefulness was confined to a very limited circle, and it is only quite recently that manufacturers are realising its importance.

The applications of the tintometer are much wider than would appear at first sight. Not only do they include such industries as dyeing, colour-printing, and photography, but extend to such heterogeneous crafts as tanning and the steel industries. In many trades its value depends upon the fact that the colour of a substance is to a large extent an index to its purity, quality, and place of origin. To protect their corn trade, the Russian Government only allow the export of flour that comes up to a certain standard of excellence, and the quality is now determined by means of the tintometer. The values of the whole of the mineral oils imported into the United Kingdom are standardised by the instrument. In brewing, it is adopted by several large firms, and there is

hardly any important industry in which it would not be of service. Of course, colours can be added to many sophisticated products so as to deceive the naked eye, but it is not easy to adjust the fraud with sufficient accuracy to deceive the tintometer standards.

One important feature of the tintometer is the permanency of its records. It will be as easy to reproduce a recorded colour in twenty years' time as it is to-day. All that we shall have to do will be to replace the glasses in the slots of the instrument—so much red, plus yellow plus blue, and to manipulate our printing-ink or pigment or dye, or whatever it may be, until it matches them. For this reason the instrument can be used with great advantage to record fugitive colours. In entomological work, for example, it is nearly impossible to preserve the colours of many insects after death. Works of art that are fading could have a permanent record made of them, so that they could be restored at any time to their pristine condition. We may remark in this connection that makers of artists' colours and printing-inks are finding the tintometer of much service.

Amongst other things, many valuable facts on the nature of colour-blindness have been added to our knowledge by Mr Lovibond's researches. Of three hundred and twenty-four observations made on nine persons of Mr Lovibond's staff, none of whom were colour-blind in the ordinary acceptation of the term, one hundred and thirty decided that the neutral gray of the tintometer standard was neutral gray; ninety-one detected a tinge of yellow, eighty a trace of blue, and twenty-three a tinge of red. It might be interesting here to speak of the relations of the colours among themselves, and of the difference between coloured light and the colour of a pigment. Red light is called the complementary to bluish-green, because a mixture of red and green light produces absolute darkness. Similarly, orange is complementary to sky-blue, yellow to violet-blue, greenish-yellow to violet, and green to pink. There is a popular idea that a mixture of blue and yellow light produces green, when, as a matter of fact, it results in total darkness. A mixture of blue and yellow pigments does produce green, because the blue pigment contains a certain proportion of green, and so does the yellow; when they are mixed, the blue and yellow extinguish one another, leaving only the green. In the tintometer standards, the red contains violet and orange; the yellow, green and orange; and the blue, violet and green. To the eye, however, the glasses appear to be simply red, yellow, and blue. If they are combined, the red and yellow transmit only orange, the blue and yellow only green, and the blue and red only violet. One interesting point that came out during the observations was, that women are much more sensitive to colour than men, their perceptions of small differences of tint being more delicate. Most people have different perceptions of colours in the two eyes, and have a greater power of perceiving some colour, being correspondingly blind to others. The only absolutely non-colour-blind person whom Mr Lovibond has met is a woman. He attributes the greater sensitiveness of women to colour partly to an innate faculty, and partly to education. The superiority of woman in this respect is interesting, as recent researches by French savants have proved that, as regards the sense of smell, women are much less sensitive than men. For educational purposes, and for testing colour-blindness, a special set of the standard glasses have been placed in an ingenious screen, to be used without the tintometer. For teaching children, and for testing the colour-vision of seamen, railway engineers, and others, the arrangement should prove very useful.

For scientific work the tintometer is being used considerably. It is installed at St Thomas' Hospital, where it is employed to determine the changes in the blood of the patients, and for other pathological purposes. At the Liverpool waterworks, and at the Massachusetts Board of Health, the instrument is used to record the colour and turbidity of potable waters. For scientific investigation, indeed, the employment of the tintometer is extending rapidly, and much work may be done with it that is as beautiful as it is interesting.

## THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

### CHAPTER II.

The lighting arrangements in the poorer streets of Lambeth, as in other humble districts of London, leave much to be desired; hence, although Eltham had taken the precaution of ascertaining the situation of Horn Lane on the directory map before setting out on his quest, he wandered about the maze of unsavoury streets for a full hour before he succeeded in finding the place he wanted. He had decided to approach Welks, the Sunday watchman first, because his dwelling appeared to be the most accessible. 'But if Jackson's place is harder to find than this,' he thought, as he turned into the forbidding gloom of Horn Lane, 'it will take me a week to find it.'

It was a dingy street running down to the river whereon lights twinkled from the opposite shore. The numbers of the houses were absent from seven doors out of ten, but by careful counting Eltham succeeded in identifying No. 26. The bell handle hung by a foot of rusty wire, and the knocker had been wrenched off, but the application of his stick to the door brought a slatternly girl with a candle.

'John Welks? Top floor back, and you must mind the broke ballisters; but if I was you I 'd go and look in at the "Chequers" before goin' all the ways up-stairs.'

Inquiry revealed that the 'Chequers' was a public-house at the river end of the Lane, and thither Eltham turned, guided by the flare from its windows. The idea of pushing his way into a tavern in a quarter like this in search of one of its habitués was distasteful, and he had to screw up his courage to cross the street. As luck would have it, however, the glass doors were thrust open as he stood hesitating on the threshold, and the man he sought came out on a blast of mingled vapours in which gin held easy prominence.

'Here, Welks,' he said, as the man passed him, 'I want to speak to you.'

Mr Welks required some seconds to realise who addressed him. Richard Eltham, in his mind, was associated exclusively with the office in the Girdleton Gallery and the weekly pay-day. 'Wot! Mr Eltham! Wot's up now? Did you 'ear as I'd got the sack to-day?'

'Yes, I heard you had been discharged, and I thought very unjustly.'

Mr Welks smote his left palm with his right fist and vowed, with adjectives, that it was 'a scannalus piecer injustice, so it was.'

'Come with me and tell me all you can; I've come down here to see you about it. Where can we go to have a quiet talk?'

Mr Welks' idea of a suitable retreat for a confidential talk was the bar of the 'Chequers;' alternatively, that of the 'Hoop and Toy.' Eltham, mindful of his one whiff of 'Chequers' atmosphere, declined both and suggested a seat on the low wall, which held the road along the river-side above the tidal mud; it was a warm night, he delicately urged, and pleasanter out of doors than in.

'Mr Eltham,' said Welks solemnly, as he sat down, 'if it was my last word in breathing life, that there message what that there boy brought me Sunday morning was a plant—a ocus,' by which last word he doubtless meant hoax.

'What boy? What message?' inquired Eltham eagerly, his heart beginning to beat. 'Tell me exactly what happened. I did not arrive this morning till you and Jackson had gone, you know.'

Mr Welks' narrative style was discursive and disjointed, but fluent; patience and attention, however, eventually placed Eltham in possession of a story which he was repeatedly assured was 'the truth, the 'ole truth, and nothing but the truth s'w'elp me.'

Welks had relieved Jackson as usual at eight o'clock, or a few minutes after, on Sunday morning. At about one, seeing the sunshine through the fanlight, and craving fresh air and a glimpse of the outer world, he set one half of the great door open and drew his chair so that he could look out into the street. While he sat smoking his pipe, there came along the street a 'young boy' who asked if he were 'Mister Welks.' Receiving answer in the affirmative, the young boy gave him a letter and waited while he read it; which Welks confessed he did slowly, not being a scholar. The letter stated that Mrs Welks was taken ill, and that his presence was required at her side. For reasons detailed with minuteness, he was not surprised at this intelligence. Mr Eltham might remember that on Tuesday last the 'governor' sanctioned an advance of Welks' wages for ten shillings? Well, Mrs Welks' indisposition made that advance necessary. After consideration he determined that his obligations as husband outweighed his duty as watchman, and that the summons must be obeyed. The difficulty was the door; he could not reconcile it to his conscience to leave the door open, and if he shut it, his departure from his post must be discovered, as nobody but the master himself could open it again. He found a way out of his dilemma by offering the boy a penny to wait inside until he returned, which offer the boy accepted. So he showed his youthful substitute how to manipulate the door handle, enjoined him under penalties not to open the door until he heard a knock, and hurried home to Horn Lane. To his extreme astonishment and dismay, Mrs Welks informed him that she, being as well as could be expected but rather low, had not sent the letter and knew nothing about it. He started back at once, wondering what trick had been played upon him, and when he reached the gallery found the door open and the boy gone.

'Gone,' concluded Mr Welks impressively, 'gone without waitin' for the brown I promised 'im. Then I *knowed* there was somethink up.'

'What did you do then?' inquired Eltham.

Finding that the boy was not anywhere about the place, Welks went to the clerks' office where the safe stood, examined the doors of that, and all the desks and drawers; no attempt had been made to tamper with anything, and Mr Girdleton's room was also undisturbed. Whatever had been the purpose of luring him away no harm seemed to have resulted, and he resolved to hold his tongue about the business. On Monday morning, however, when he answered the urgent summons which came from the office, and heard what had been done to the great picture, he was 'that put about,' he made a clean breast of his failure in duty to Mr Girdleton; and was dismissed on the spot.

Welks having finished his story, expectorated, relighted his pipe, and kicked his heels against the wall.

'Have you got the letter the boy brought you?' asked Eltham.

'No, sir; I threw it into the fire when I heard my missus hadn't wrote it. I was rare savage being 'ocused, I was.'

Eltham made a gesture of disappointment which passed unnoticed in the dark.

'That's a pity. Should you know the boy who brought it?'

'I should,' replied the man with violence, 'and he'd remember me if I ketches hold of him.'

It further transpired that Welks had not seen the boy before, so far as he remembered; he was not a boy who lived in the Lane or its neighbourhood. Welks had lived here himself for twelve years and knew every inhabitant by sight.

Eltham began to feel that an amateur detective's way is not all plain-sailing. He thought a while and then asked from which direction the boy came and what was he like. Welks' reply was prompt enough, but not helpful: the boy came round the corner from Conduit Street, he was a young boy respectably dressed in a clean collar: he had red hair; he did not look as though he came from any distance.

'The boy is the link,' decided Eltham, not very hopefully. 'I suppose, Welks,' he continued aloud, 'that as you were only discharged this morning, you have nothing to do? Nothing, and no prospect of anything? Well, you must help me for the present; the first thing we have to do is to discover this boy. Here's five shillings to keep you going for a

day or two. You spend your time walking about every back street and mews within half a mile of Bond Street; watch the board schools when they are coming out. When you find the boy, you must follow him and see where he lives, and then come to me. When you have found that boy, Welks, I'll undertake to see you righted.'

The man pocketed the silver, saying he would tramp the streets till he walked the boots off his feet; and Eltham, hoping that his ally might at least be depended on to prosecute what he realised was hardly more than a wildgoose chase, went his way homeward. The difference between Welks' story and that which held currency in the office had struck him forcibly at the moment, but with a singleness of purpose, really praiseworthy in a novice, he had put the discrepancy aside while he worked out his own line; and now it recurred to him, he did not attach much importance to it. Mr Girdleton always made a point of flattering representatives of the press, but nobody knew better than he where to stop; and it was plain to the meanest intelligence that if Welks' story were to get into the papers the operations of the detective entrusted with the task of tracing the criminal might be seriously embarrassed. It was a little odd that Welks had not yet been approached by the police, for he would surely have mentioned it had they come to question him; but perhaps they had begun with Jackson or had found another clue which they were following up.

He got up earlier than usual the next morning; he was anxious to see the morning paper, and, moreover, meant to go early to Bond Street, for he was very certain there was hard work ahead for the gallery staff. His *Standard* gave ample indication that the 'Girdleton Gallery Outrage' was to be the sensation of the time. The second leading article was devoted to the subject, and heavy headlines drew attention to a column and a half of matter, descriptive, indignant, reminiscent and conjectural. The account was so far accurate that it told Eltham nothing that he did not know already, and perusal left him with a grateful sense of superiority in virtue of the knowledge he had obtained from Welks. He was at Bond Street by a quarter past nine, but early as it was he found people there before him: a score or two of city men who had been driven from their breakfast tables by the report in the morning paper; a dozen country cousins congratulating themselves on their luck in being able to include such a sight as this in their hard day's pleasure: half-a-dozen press artists who had paid their shillings like men, without waiting for some one having authority to come and accord the customary 'pass;' and lastly, waiting in the hall, a few enterprising photographers seeking permission to 'take a negative.' The 'boom' had fairly begun, and from half-past ten the entrance hall was crammed with visitors seeking admission.

Eltham watched the crowd with special interest; his employer's family rarely came to the gallery, but they would surely not fail today; Mrs and Miss Girdleton had called when the Raphael was first exhibited six weeks ago, and might safely be expected to come and see its present sad condition. The clerks' office was divided from the entrance hall by a glass screen through which the heads of people could be seen by standing on the rung of a high stool, and Eltham's fellow-clerks found occasion to make frequent inquiries concerning the comfort of his seat; after noon had struck, he could not concentrate his attention on his work for five consecutive minutes.

Mrs Girdleton did come eventually, but alone.

'Oh, the crush!' she exclaimed, as she turned into the office and sank into a chair. 'I'll wait here for a minute, Mr Eltham, if you'll kindly ask my husband if I may go through his room; he won't welcome me, if he is engaged.'

The clerks' office communicated with the proprietor's, which in its turn had a private entrance to the gallery. Eltham ascertained that Mr Girdleton was engaged, and nothing loth informed the lady, who declared her intention of waiting as she wished to see her husband.

'It's a long time since we've seen you on a Sunday, Mr Eltham,' she observed, smiling dubiously. She was an amiable but rather silly woman, who still made the most of lingering traces of beauty; she stood in profound awe of her spouse, and took a pride in the circumstance that was apt to be embarrassing. Her view of Eltham's attachment to her daughter differed from that adopted by Mr Girdleton. 'The son of a clergyman,' she used to assure her intimates in a confidential undertone, 'a rector who was an Honourable in his own right, being the son of a nobleman. Fact.'

'How is Miss Girdleton?' inquired Eltham, making a creditable effort to speak of her as a mere acquaintance.

Mrs Girdleton's weak smile of meaning said plainly that she understood and sympathised: she leaned forward to say that Annie had gone yesterday to pay a visit to her aunt at Chester.

'Annie's got a will of her own,' she continued, dropping her voice lower, with a glance at the door of her husband's room, 'and things have not been going smoothly at home of late'—she paused to nod and smile her watery smile—'and so I persuaded father to let her go away for a bit. So I saw her off yesterday by the two o'clock train; first class and everything comfortable.'

'Does she intend to pay a long visit?' asked Eltham, for the sake of saying something; Miss Girdleton's absence from London did not affect him now.

'I expect she will be away until after we move into our new house. You knew we had taken a new house in Queen's Square, Bayswater?'

Eltham was aware that the change had been mooted.

'I hope we shall soon see you there,' whispered Mrs Girdleton, with a crop of smiling nods; 'the longest lane has a turning. Does she write?' and she raised her eyebrows.

Eltham replied that Mr Girdleton had exacted from him a promise not to correspond.

'He made her promise too; but there's been so much crossness and scolding lately, that I thought she might have. *I* should have, I know.'

The rattle of the door handle made her start up quickly, but, her husband's visitors coming out, she covered her confusion by going into his room.

'We are providing rare sport for the private inquiry agencies,' said Mr Girdleton, coming into the clerks' office after seeing his wife through to the gallery, 'but I don't think it will help matters to encourage them all to go a-hunting for the rascal. If any more of them ask to see me, Eltham, just say that the Scotland Yard people have taken the business in hand, and that we have given all the information we possess to the newspapers; they can refer to them. We shall have the detectives complaining that their investigations are hindered if we encourage outsiders.'

Eltham listened, wondering how his own 'private inquiry' would be regarded by his employer if he happened to hear of it.

'I suppose you have not heard anything from the police yet, Mr Girdleton?'

'You don't know the ways of Scotland Yard if you imagine they could have anything to report in twenty-four hours, my boy.'

Fear lest the police should be beforehand with him was the uppermost feeling in Eltham's mind. He was working against overwhelming odds; the detectives had time and experience to give to the task, and, no doubt, all the money they required: whereas he had to rely upon the exertions of a not very intelligent elderly man who, to use a mild expression, was not a teetotaler. He wished he had thought last night of stimulating Welks with promises of reward if he succeeded in finding that all-important boy. If the detectives got hold of him first, he might bid Welks cease his endeavours.

Mr Girdleton was justified of his decision to see no more people who sought information as the preliminary step to competing for that five thousand pounds. Ex-detectives who had retired from 'the force' to set up business on their own account, came in that day at the rate of three an hour. It was a revelation to the gallery staff, that London contained so many of the fraternity, and Eltham's hopes sank lower as each went out leaving as a legacy his supposition that he must do the best he could without the assistance he had a right to expect.

'I b'lieve it's one of them chaps as did it to make a job for his pals,' was the indignant comment of Peters the commissionaire as he ushered out the ninth.

And all day long till after seven o'clock the entrance hall was thronged with well-dressed crowds, pressing forward to the turnstiles whose clacking never ceased. You may see a whole Raphael for nothing any day you choose to go to the National Gallery, but a work by the great master with a hole in it—a hole maliciously and mysteriously cut—is a sight to be seen once in a century. Mr Girdleton was fortunate—if the word be not misused in such a connection—in the hour of his misfortune. Parliament was sitting, but the debates were exceptionally intelligent and dull; no horrible murder justified six-inch letters on the evening bills, and they that put asunder over against Temple Bar had nothing before them that called for the semblance of a verbatim report. A sensation was absolutely called for to give a spice to life; and the mutilator of Mr Girdleton's Raphael supplied it.

'Ruined it may be,' said Peters each afternoon as he staggered into the office, laden with small sacks of silver drawn from the glutted turnstiles, 'but if it's money we want, give me a picter with a 'ole in it to make our fortunes. Shall I call a keb, sir? It's bank time.'

## MONEY AND MUSIC.

By J. Cuthbert Hadden.

A certain eminent living composer, speaking from his own experience, has told us that poverty is a spur to musical genius. It is to the poor in this world's goods that he would turn for artistic greatness. The poor work hard, they study seriously. Rich people are apt to apply themselves lightly to music, and to abandon the painful toil to which every strong musician must submit unceasingly and without complaint. No doubt there is a measure of truth about this view of the case. Russell Lowell was wont to say that the two chief sources of inspiration are a full mind and an empty pocket; and although the empty pocket will not help the musician greatly in these days of push and advertising enterprise, it seems to have been at least no hindrance to the composers and artists who lived in the 'good old times.'

Nothing, indeed, is more sadly instructive than to compare the figures earned by present day musicians of the first rank with the sums which their predecessors, the men whom we regard as the classics of music, earned by the exercise of their art. Before the time of Handel there is practically no record of musicians having been paid at all; and from the fact that they all died poor men, we may reasonably infer that they had either special facilities for getting rid of money, or that they had very little money to get rid of. Even Handel, had it not been for his oratorios and his operatic speculations, would have lived and died as poor as the proverbial church mouse. Walsh, his publisher, paid him pitiful prices for his operas. For at least eleven of these works he received no more than twenty-five guineas each; and the largest sum he was ever paid was only £105, which he got for *Alexander's Feast*. It must not be thought from these small prices that the composer's works did not sell; on the contrary, they always found a ready market, and proved a great source of profit to the publisher. From the proceeds of his first opera, *Rinaldo*, Walsh netted a profit of over £1500, whereupon Handel jocularly remarked to the

musicseller: 'Well, *you* shall compose the next opera, and I will publish it.' Handel, as everybody knows, lost a fortune in trying to establish Italian opera in London; and although he subsequently more than recouped himself by his oratorios, it was not the publisher but the public who put it in his power to do this.

Even when we come down to the time of Mozart, we do not find that the claim of the brain-worker to a fair wage had been recognised. It almost staggers one to recall the fact that *Don Giovanni* brought to its composer no more than £20. For *The Magic Flute* he was paid just one hundred ducats, and yet the manager of the theatre at which the opera was first produced made a fortune out of it. No wonder Mozart had to be laid in a pauper's grave, the very site of which is unknown to this day! Schubert fared even worse. Some of his magnificent songs sold for less than a shilling, and at his decease it was difficult to raise enough money to bury him. Haydn's income would to-day be deemed small by a player in the theatre orchestra, and his 'estate' was almost a minus quantity. Weber, who died seventy-one years ago, received less than £800 in all for his *Freischütz*, one of the most popular operas ever written; while from his five other operas he made only £1600 altogether. By *The Bohemian Girl* Balfe gained less than £1500, although the 'Marble Halls' ballad in that very popular work put some £3000 in the pockets of the publishers.

It is not until we come down to quite recent times that we find the composer satisfactorily rewarded for his work. Wagner was the first of the fortunate men. It is true that in his early years his earnings were very small; but when he had made a name for himself he was able to command very substantial sums. He sold the copyright—not the performing right—of his *Parsifal* for about £9000, which was perhaps the largest sum ever paid to a composer for a single opera; while for the four dramas in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* he was paid £2000. From the American ladies who wished an orchestral march for a centenary celebration he obtained a little over £1000; and it is calculated that his regular income during the last years of his life was about £5000 per annum. With all this, Wagner was very often in difficulties; but he explained the matter himself when he said: 'By nature I am luxurious, prodigal, extravagant, much more than Sardanapalus and all the old emperors put together.' Gounod got £4000 for his oratorio, *The Redemption*, and from an English publisher too; and Brahms is said to receive £1000 for the score of a symphony. Sir Arthur Sullivan composes an opera score in two months, and the reward is usually about £12,000 for the first year alone. As we write, he is said to be preparing a ballet for the Alhambra, for which he is to be paid £2000. Sir Arthur is believed to draw about £30,000 a year from his comic operas alone. A pretty change this since the time when Dr Arne sold his *Artaxerxes* for sixty guineas! Mascagni's pecuniary enrichment from his *Cavalleria Rusticana* up to the beginning of 1895 is put down at about £18,000; and Humperdinck made some £10,000 out of *Hänsel and Gretel* within a twelvemonth. In England the terms for serious work are not very high. Oratorios and cantatas are written mostly for the great Festivals, and the sum paid very seldom exceeds one hundred guineas. Festival committees reckon a great deal upon the 'honour' done to a composer in inviting him to write; and the composer who is not satisfied with that and his hundred guineas must look to his royalties for the rest.

It is, however, perhaps in the domain of song-writing that the most interesting figures fall to be quoted. In this branch of composition, more than in any other, a success often comes quite unexpectedly, and sometimes the poor composer, if he has parted with his copyright absolutely, is excluded from any share in its pecuniary rewards. Some of the veteran Henry Russell's figures are very instructive in this connection. For 'Cheer, boys, cheer,' for example, he received only £11 in all; for 'There's a good time coming,' £2; for 'The Maniac,' £1; for 'Man the Lifeboat,' 10s.; and so on. Yet these songs, in the matter of popularity, held the field for many years, and the sums which the publishers realised from them must have been very large. Again, take 'My Pretty Jane,' one of the most profitable songs to the publishers ever written. Some years ago it brought over £2000; yet all that Mr Fitzball, the writer of the words, and Sir Henry Bishop, the composer of the music, jointly received did not exceed £200. Fitzball, to be sure, declared that it took him just ten minutes to write; and Bishop thought so little of his own setting that he had thrown the manuscript into the waste-paper basket, from which it was fished out by the manager of Vauxhall Gardens. But even so, the composer was surely entitled to a proportionate reward with the publisher; and it is not consoling to recall the circumstance that Bishop died almost a pauper.

Other examples of the kind might be multiplied indefinitely. Everybody remembers 'Grandfather's Clock,' a song which was the 'rage' for many a day. Thousands of pounds were made out of it by the musicsellers, and the copyright sold only recently for £410; but the composer got only a few shillings, and ultimately died in destitution. The same thing happened in the case of Alexander Hume's beautiful setting of Burns's 'Afton Water.' It is said he did not receive even the traditional guinea. The composer of 'She wore a Wreath of Roses' sold his copyright for fifty shillings, and soon after had the doubtful pleasure of seeing it repurchased by a second publisher for £500. George Barker obtained only forty shillings for 'The White Squall,' though Messrs Cramer afterwards paid him £100; and for that immensely popular song, 'Kathleen Mavourneen,' the composer, Mr F. N. Crouch, received just £5. Mr Brinsley Richards sold 'God bless the Prince of Wales' outright for £20; but the publishers, finding the song a success, subsequently made him a present of 100 guineas—not a large

sum in the circumstances. 'Nancy Lee' was another 'Grandfather's Clock' as to popularity, but in this case the composer fared somewhat better. The publisher at first thought £10 a great deal too much for the song, but it is generally understood that subsequently he came to pay pretty nearly £10,000 in the way of royalties to Mr Michael Maybrick. Mr Wellington Guernsey offered his 'Alice, where art thou,' to several music publishers for a five-pound note, but these men of wisdom refused the bargain, only to find, to their sore dismay, that the song eventually attained a sale of between two and three hundred thousand copies. Such cases are constantly occurring. One of the most melancholy men the writer ever saw was an ex-publisher who had declined 'Tommy, make room for your Uncle,' by which a rival made several thousand pounds. When, in 1885, Mr Henry Leslie, the conductor of the famous choir which bore his name, wrote his trio 'O memory,' he offered it to Mr Chappell, but that gentleman refused to take it even as a gift. Next year Mr Leslie issued it at his own risk, and in 1890 he was able to say that, 37,000 copies having been sold, the trio had netted him the nice little sum of £1150. At the same date Mr Leslie's popular 'Speed on, my Bark, speed on,' had brought him in £570. Of course, one has a certain sympathy with the music-publisher in this matter of low prices and cautious dealing. The vogue of a song is often a mere question of chance; and if a publisher sometimes finds himself making money where he least anticipated, he not seldom also finds the tables turned upon himself. Moreover, the agonies of the sensitive who are compelled to listen to some songs *ad nauseam* may perhaps serve as a set-off to the small profits of the old-time musician!

But it is the popular writers of to-day who make the large incomes out of their songs. Thackeray used to say it was amazing how much he received for indifferent work when his reputation was established, compared with what he could command for really first-rate writing when he was still an unknown man. It is apparently the same with the song-composer: once make a 'hit' and the publisher is ready to accept anything—and to pay handsomely for it too. Gounod, who obtained but £100 for the English rights of *Faust*, received in his last years from £80 to £100 for every song he wrote. Sir Arthur Sullivan was content to part with his first ballads for a few pounds—he sold his popular 'Hush thee! my babie,' for £5; a successful man, he can now command £700 down for one song; while from 'The Lost Chord' alone it is said that he has realised over £10,000. Signor Tosti, the composer of 'For ever and for ever,' whose first manuscripts were 'declined with thanks,' can now command £250 for a song; and as much may be obtained by Mr Milton Wellings, Mr Molloy, Mr Cowen, and a few others now at the top of the ladder. Frank L. Moir made over £2000 out of his popular song 'Only once more;' and it was stated not long ago that for three songs Mr Marzials receives from a firm of publishers some £2000 per annum. Michael Watson's publisher said he could always rely on anything he wrote selling, and he generally paid him £75 down for a song. Nor was this a very high figure, considering that the copyright of Mr Watson's much-sung 'Anchored' realised in 1894 the record sum (for a song) of £1212. In these figures the writer of the words does not usually participate at all. He sells his wares right away, and has done with them. Mr Oxenford and Mr Weatherley often get as much as twenty-five guineas for three small verses; less well-known writers get two guineas; and the man who is not known at all must content himself with half the latter sum. Writers of dance music, especially of waltzes, make large incomes out of their works. The Strauss family have realised a fabulous fortune in this way; and it was reported a year or two back that two English ladies were drawing £1200 per annum each from a couple of waltzes. It has to be noted, too, that most of our popular song and dance tune composers, in addition to a certain sum down, reserve to themselves the right of a royalty on every copy sold. In this way their income from a particular composition may last for many years. In spite of these long prices which we have quoted, the publisher generally manages to thrive and even wax fat. When Mr John Boosey died some years ago, he left £74,000 behind him; and this was small compared with the wealth of Mr Robert Cocks, whose personalty alone was nearly £200,000, the real property being probably worth more than as much again. It will thus be seen that music hath charms, very substantial charms, for the publisher, as well as for the select few among the composers.

In these later days the recital pianist, among instrumental performers, is quite leading the way in the matter of figures. Paderewski is, of course, first. When he was in America in 1893 he made £35,000 out of sixty-four recitals, which, allowing two-and-a-half hours for each concert, means £3, 13s. for every minute he was at the piano! Just before the Chicago Exhibition opened, Rubinstein was offered £25,000 for fifty recitals in the States, and at that time this sum was quite unprecedented. It was, indeed, very much more than Rubinstein earned on his first American tour, which brought him only £40 per concert. But pianists' prices have risen greatly in recent years. The best 'house' that Von Bülow ever had was £200; but Rubinstein got a £1000 audience into St James's Hall in June 1887; and even Hoffman, the prodigy pianist, who had only £70 on his first appearance, attracted no less than £650 to the same hall in the Jubilee year. M. de Pachmann, again, touched £400 as his best individual effort in London. Compare these figures with the fee of twenty-four guineas paid to 'the little marvel' Mozart when he appeared before George III. and his consort in 1764; and even with the £96 which poor Weber, dying on his feet at the time, made out of a benefit concert in London in 1826. So late as 1848, Chopin, dying slowly too, received only £60 for a couple of piano recitals at Manchester, the identical sum which he made out of a single recital in Glasgow the same year.

The gradual rise in the payments made to

singers has more than kept pace with the prices paid to composers. A look through the treasurer's accounts of the old Sacred Harmonic Society would confirm this statement in a very certain and interesting way. For example, at the Christmas performance of *The Messiah* in December 1853, Miss Birch was paid eight guineas; Madame Sainton-Dolby, eight guineas; Mr and Mrs Lockey together, sixteen guineas; and Mr Weiss, the composer of *The Village Blacksmith*, six guineas. At the performance of *Israel in Eyypt* in the same year, Mr Sims Reeves took fifteen guineas; Carl Formes, ten guineas; and Madame Sainton-Dolby, eight guineas. Nine years afterwards, in December 1862, for singing in *The Messiah*, Madame Rudersdorff was paid ten guineas; Mr Henry Haigh, eight guineas; while Madame Sainton-Dolby's terms had risen to ten guineas. It need hardly be said that concert vocalists now in full demand would laugh at such fees. Some years ago, when Mr Toole was returning thanks to an audience in the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, he referred to the circumstance that he and Sims Reeves and Henry Irving had all at an early stage of their careers sought professional honours in the Scottish capital. The salaries of the three friends, according to Mr Toole, were then: the singer, thirty shillings; the comedian, forty shillings; the tragedian, fifty shillings each per week. 'Of course,' added Mr Toole, 'we get more now.'

No doubt of it! Mr Sims Reeves has had as much as £120 for one evening; and on one memorable occasion, when he took a so-called 'final farewell,' at the Albert Hall, he drew nearly £2000, with the aid of Adelaide Neilson. Mr Edward Lloyd, who is practically Mr Sims Reeves' successor, averages sixty guineas a concert, and about £300 or £400 for a Festival engagement. For a recent tour in the United States he was paid £200 per night. Mr Santley's douceur for an ordinary concert engagement is about fifty guineas. When he was engaged at the first Leeds Festival in 1858, he sang in eight concerts for £42; but in 1880, when he had reached the zenith of his fame, he demanded 250 guineas for the same work. Later on, the Festival committee found they could dispense with him at three of the concerts, and with true Yorkshire shrewdness they asked him to accept 200 guineas. Whereupon the eminent baritone expressed himself as 'grossly insulted,' broke his engagement, and has never appeared at Leeds since. Madame Albani sings generally for £150; but she too has her special Festival terms. For the Leeds Festival of 1877 Tietjens had been engaged at a fee of 500 guineas (she stipulated that no other artiste was to receive more!), but she died before the date of the Festival, and Madame Albani was chosen to fill her place. Albani insisted upon 550 guineas, in order to take precedence of the dead artiste; but she promised to give, and did give, fifty guineas to the local medical charities out of the fee. Albani's terms at the last Festival (1895) were 400 guineas for four appearances.

Tenor vocalists are specially favoured in the matter of payments. A Spanish tenor, who had originally been a blacksmith, died some years ago worth £160,000, all made out of his voice. The *dii majores* in that line at the present time are M. Jean de Reszké and the Italian tenor Tamagno, both well known to operatic audiences in England. In 1894 the latter made £20,000 off a six months' season at Buenos Ayres, and some years ago he had an engagement at Rio Janeiro for £400 a night, at the rate of ten performances a month during the operatic season. Exactly twenty years ago, when he made his début as a baritone at Drury Lane, De Reszké's salary could hardly have exceeded £10 a week. At the time of writing, it is being stated 'on good authority' that he is being paid at the Opera at the rate of £200 per night, and if the figures are correct, the fee is probably the highest ever reached by an operatic tenor during a London season. For his farewell series of performances at Covent Garden in 1871, Mario was paid a lump sum, which averaged, we believe, about £150 a night, but £200 is quite high-water mark. When in America a year or two ago, De Reszké got £400 for contributing two songs at a private entertainment! But they can do wonderful things in America. Even in the churches the leading singers are paid what in England would be regarded as extravagant salaries for the same duties. In Dr Paxton's church in New York, for example, the leading soprano has a salary of £900 a year; and in the great majority of churches the soloists get from £80 to £100 per annum. These exceptionally high salaries are not due so much to the wealth of the general body of worshippers as to the presence in the congregation of some wealthy individual who is specially interested in the music.

Of course, in this matter of money and music, no one needs to be told at this time of day that Madame Patti is far and away the best remunerated artiste in the world. Patti was the first prima-donna who demanded in Paris a nightly salary of 10,000 francs. When it was conceded to her, her rivals preferred the same claims; so that, to keep her supremacy in the operatic market, she persistently raised her prices to 15,000 francs, which sum she received for each of the three concerts she gave in one week at the Eden Theatre. And yet Patti began modestly enough. When she made her début in London in 1862, she was engaged for five years at a salary of £150 a month for the first year, £200 for the second, £250 for the third, £290 for the fourth, and £400 for the fifth year, the lady to sing twice a week. Until her marriage to the Marquis de Caux, Patti never received from Covent Garden more than £120 per night. Considering that the diva gets £800 per concert in London, and that an American contract recently gave her a minimum salary of £1200 per night, plus expenses and half of all the gross receipts over £2400, times have undoubtedly changed. During the past ten or twelve years Madame Patti's annual average has been about £40,000. To the non-professional mind this may seem out of all proportion to the value given and received. But of course the singer takes quite another view of the matter. When Gabrielli visited Russia in 1768, and Catharine II. wished to have her services, the vocalist asked a fee of 5000 ducats. 'Far too much,' said the Empress,

amazed. 'Why! that is more than I pay my field-marshals.' The retort was inevitable. 'Then let your field-marshals sing for you,' replied Gabrielli.

## CHOPPING OIL IN THE BIGHT OF BIAFRA.

By F. Harvey Major.

Of all the various methods ever devised by the law makers of civilised nations for the purpose of collecting debts, surely none can approach in simplicity the mode of procedure in vogue in the oil-rivers of Western Africa until a very few years ago.

'Chopping oil,' as it was called, is a term which would convey no meaning to the average commercial man accustomed to the lengthy routine of our English law-courts. But West African traders understand it, and many men still amongst us who, fifteen or twenty years ago, resided amidst the miasma-laden swamps fringing the low-lying coast of the Bight of Biafra—such men, when spinning their yarns in congenial company at home in Old England, round a good roaring fire, enjoying their grog and tobacco, recall with a thrill scenes of excitement in which they have participated when 'chopping.' It is a rule with merchants when engaging the services of an agent to take charge of one of their factories on the coast, to insert a clause in the agreement stipulating that he shall give no 'trust'—that is, commercial credit—to any of the natives with whom he may do business, and providing that, in the event of his doing so, his employers shall hold a lien upon his salary, commission, or other emoluments, to the extent of any loss which may be incurred by his infringement of instructions.

When entering into this arrangement, both parties to the agreement, at the time of which I write, knew that under the then existent conditions, trade could not possibly be carried on without a large amount of 'trust' being continually given out; and therefore it behoved the trader to find some simple but tolerably efficient method of recovering his outstanding accounts prior to the expiration of his term of service. So as soon as it became known that he was about to return home, every chief who was indebted to him packed up his belongings, assembled his men, and took himself and them off to his 'barracoon,' or farm, where his slaves were bred, and his produce, palm-oil, ebony, &c., was collected. These 'barracoons' it was the fortune of very few Englishmen to be allowed to visit, for it was obviously of the first importance to the native chief that the whereabouts and resources of his 'barracoon' should remain a secret.

However, the white traders found a way out of the difficulty. By appealing to the king's cupidity, they introduced a system enabling them to get their 'trust' in expeditiously, furnishing at the same time a new and exciting sport, and giving his sable majesty the means of considerably augmenting his private purse.

Say Mr So-and-so is desirous of closing his 'venture' (the name applied to his term of agency) and return to civilisation for a spell. In the first place he ceases to give any of his cargo out on trust, and this step at once proclaims his intentions to his astute debtors, who hurry off up-country at top speed. He now goes to the king, and for a varying amount (calculated at about five per cent. upon the value of the trust he has out) purchases a 'ju-ju,' or 'fetish,' which confers upon him the rights and privileges of a chief. As such rights depend in a general way upon the *might* of each chief, those of the white man, supported as they are by the combined strength of the whole European community, are practically incontestable.

He now levies upon any native produce he may find *afloat*, on the river or tributary creeks, that is not actually under the protection of another white man—that is, not already alongside a trading ship, or a traders' wharf. He takes forcible possession, often only after a desperate struggle, carefully tests and measures the oil so distrained upon, and gives the owner an order for the same quantity upon one of his absent debtors. This order the victimised native executes himself by force if he is powerful enough, otherwise he takes it to the king, who transacts the business for him, charging a 'custom,' or commission, equal to ten per cent.

It occasionally happened that two white men would be 'chopping' at the same time, and then the excitement was fast and furious as the rivals scoured the river and creeks at nights in their efforts to secure oil. The operations frequently extend over several months, inasmuch as the natives would get wary in looking after their goods. Betting ran high as to the success of the rival traders.

Some five-and-twenty years ago there was a trader in Old Calabar, whom I shall call Fielding, for the very good journalistic reason that it was not his name. He was a man of particularly hasty temper; and drinking brandy to excess, as he did, any amiability he might have possessed in his younger days had become so saturated by his fiery potations as to have entirely lost its virtue. He treated his krooboys with the greatest cruelty, flogging them with his heavy twisted rhinoceros hide whip on the slightest pretence; and his behaviour to the natives was such that many times he had been warned by his fellow-traders not to trust himself in their hands under circumstances which would give them a chance to gratify their revenge. One man especially he had been cautioned against. This was one Black Andam, a savage even amongst savages. He was a chief by right of birth, but had lost all status with his tribe through his vicious habits. Having no property, he existed as best he could by pillaging and murdering the weaker members of neighbouring tribes when opportunity offered, and by acting as scout, or spy, when any trader was 'chopping;' for bringing information as to

where oil might be lying, he would always get a 'dash,' or present.

Fielding had once detected Black Andam in the act of pilfering some trifling article on board his ship, and had tied him up to a pump wheel and flogged him, laughing at Black Andam's threats to pay him off for the indignity some day. Fielding's 'venture' was nearly up, and he commenced chopping. Representing one of the principal houses engaged in the trade, he did a large business, and consequently gave an extensive 'trust;' so he was naturally very keen in closing his accounts.

One night about ten o'clock he returned on board his ship much elated after 'chopping' three puncheons of oil, and, with unusual generosity, invited his clerk, a young fellow named Ward, to join him in a glass of brandy. After the two had consumed half a bottle, he ordered Ward to turn in, and settled down to continue his orgie *solus*. He was well into the second bottle when a canoe came alongside, and Black Andam mounted the accommodation ladder and stepped on to the poop.

'What thing you want here, you black devil?' said Fielding, seizing a revolver menacingly.

'I come for tell you I done savey five puncheons. He be in Monkey Creek, and s'pose you come one time (now), you fit to chop 'em, for only two men live for canoe with 'em,' was the reply.

Fielding, ripe for anything after the quantity of liquor he had taken, said he would go at once; and Ward, who had been aroused by Black Andam's coming, when he heard the decision, ordered a gig to be lowered into the water and manned. No doubt, Fielding would have made use of a gig had his orders not been anticipated; but flying into a fit of drunken rage, he turned to Ward and asked what he meant by giving orders aboard the ship without instructions? Ward replied that he knew the gig would be wanted and only ordered it to save time; but Fielding, from sheer obstinacy, now signified his determination to go in Black Andam's canoe, and told Ward to retire to his room, threatening to put him in irons if he interfered again; then, having put on a pair of long boots and a big coat, he took a stiff tumbler of neat brandy and followed Black Andam down the ladder. The canoe, a small one, was an old patched-up concern, having only four men to paddle it, and when Fielding and Black Andam took their seats amidships, there was not more than three or four inches of gunnel above water. Fielding lit a cigar, and the canoe pushed off into the darkness. The strokes of the paddles had scarcely died away in the distance before the gig, with muffled oars, and in charge of a thoroughly reliable krooboy, was sent off in pursuit by Ward, whose instructions were that it should keep within call but out of sight of the canoe, unless anything suspicious was heard, when it was to dash up and act as might be required. Ward then turned in and went to sleep.

About three o'clock in the morning, Fielding's gig ran alongside the ship of a trader named Hartley, and the head krooboy going on board, asked to see the master at once. He was awakened, and shocked beyond measure at the boy's report, which was to the effect that after leaving his ship he soon overtook the canoe, which he followed a little distance astern, but still close enough to hear Fielding laughing and talking with Black Andam. They proceeded about five or six miles down the river, when suddenly a scuffle was heard, then a shot, followed by a fearful shriek from Fielding. The gig dashed forward full on top of the swamped canoe, but the only man they could find was Black Andam, who was holding on to the canoe with one hand whilst he brandished Fielding's revolver in the other. He was secured and tied up in the bottom of the gig, which, after cruising about for some time without finding any trace of Fielding or the other four men, then made for the nearest ship.

Black Andam was taken aboard Hartley's ship, where his lashings were exchanged for heavy irons, and he was locked up in the fore peak, Hartley going in Fielding's gig to break the news to Ward. Ward was noted for his coolness under all circumstances, but Hartley, when he awoke him and told the news, was not prepared for his remark, 'Good gracious! Hartley, old fellow, you don't say so? *and he had my keys in his pocket!*'

A 'palaver' was held to discuss Fielding's death, but the affair remained a mystery.

Black Andam was handed over to be dealt with by the king, but had the terrible fate for which he was to be reserved been known, the traders would certainly have liberated him. King Archibong was about to build a new house, so he consecrated it by digging a kind of cellar under the principal apartment, and immuring Black Andam in it alive with a supply of provisions and water sufficient to last him for about a month. It is said that the screams, curses, and groans of the miserable wretch were heard for several weeks. Whatever the extent of his guilt during life, no one can think of his fearful end without a feeling of pity.

## THE UGANDA RAILWAY.

THE interest recently excited in Uganda, and the construction of a line of railway opening up the country, now about to be vigorously pushed forward, calls attention both to the district in question and to the new means of access to it. Into a descriptive account of Uganda itself it is foreign to our present purpose to enter, our intention being to confine ourselves to a succinct account of the new railway, and to dwell briefly on its more salient features and characteristics.

The assumption by Great Britain of the inland protectorate of Uganda and the basin of the Victoria Nyanza Lake, rendered imperative the formation of a railway affording direct access to the coast, the total distance from lake to ocean being a little over six hundred and fifty miles. A brief glance at the map of Africa will at once enable the route selected for the new railway to be readily followed.

From Mombasa to Tsavo, the first one hundred and forty miles is over plain land, and the formation of the line will be particularly easy. This section is covered with mimosa scrub, and includes the Taro desert, a waterless tract of sixty miles extent. The next fifty miles from Tsavo to Kibwezi is the tsetze-fly belt; but the ground is still level, and neither cuttings nor embankments will be required. Some forty miles beyond Kibwezi rolling prairies are met, and the country of the Masai is traversed.

Near Kikuyu a sharp rise commences, the rise being about six hundred feet in ten miles. This district is some six to seven thousand feet above sea-level, and is remarkably healthy. A long stretch of rolling prairie and grass land covered with game is now traversed, and no engineering difficulties are anticipated. At Kedong the gradient falls sharply. After leaving Molo, a thickly wooded country is met; and at Udoma ravine the only serious obstacle is encountered, for the ravine is three hundred feet in height and three hundred feet in width. A substantial girder bridge will be thrown across the ravine.

The next ten miles shows a rising gradient of one thousand feet through the dense Subuyu forest, the home of the savage elephant-hunting Wadarobo tribe. The line on leaving the forest enters a thickly populated and highly cultivated country, rendered somewhat difficult to traverse by the tributaries of the Nzoi River. The remainder of the route passes through an easy country until the terminus at Berkeley Bay, on the north-east shore of the lake, is gained.

The line will be constructed on what is technically known as the 'telescopic principle'—that is, it will be pushed forward from one end (the coast) only, and the rails and material will come forward along the route already laid. The estimated time for construction is four years, and the total cost will be £1,865,000. The exact gauge and weight of rails have not yet been finally decided upon; but the valuable experience already gained in India with similar lines will enable these details to be determined without difficulty. The original estimate, prepared in 1893 by Major Macdonald and Captain Pringle, gave a total cost of nearly two and a quarter millions sterling, or over £3400 per mile, which has been modified in the new design down to £2700 per mile.

Without wearying our readers with arrays of figures, we may briefly state that the working expenses are estimated at forty or fifty thousand pounds per annum, accordingly as three trains per week each way, or only one train per week each way is run. The entire journey will take eight days, and, as travelling will be only by day, strong stations, similar to those in India, will be provided for the trains to put up at nights.

Three classes of traffic will be carried—namely, goods, passenger, and Government stores traffic. In connection with the first named, it is interesting to note that the present rate of carriage by native porters for the journey is £180 per ton, a tariff which will be lowered to £17 per ton on the new railway. Some idea of the frightful cost of the present arrangement may be gathered from the fact that the carriage alone (by native porters) of a steamer to be built on the Victoria Nyanza amounted to twelve thousand pounds. A large trade in barley, wheat, india-rubber, ivory, and coffee, as well as cotton, is anticipated, and it speaks volumes for the future of the new line that ground along the route is already being taken up.

Mr Pilkington, of the Church Missionary Society, who has long been resident in the country, says that the making of the railway will prevent a great loss of life. At present, the road to the coast is a disgrace. On his way down, he continually passed skeletons on the road, and once a corpse. His party had picked up three sick men, who had been left by caravans to die of starvation. A Government official had remarked to him that slavery was not to be compared to caravan work, which was a disgrace to civilisation. In a tract of one hundred and fifty miles of foodless desert, infested with lions and hyenas, many porters fell victims. In this direction alone the railway would be of inestimable value. According to Bishop Tucker, within the past fifteen years a peaceful and beneficent revolution has been in progress in regard to the habits and customs of the people.

Enough has been said to show that the Uganda Railway will not only open up a promising and fertile country, but that its construction cannot fail to impart an impetus to the manufacturing industries of Great Britain.

## A BALLADE OF MY HOME.

Say, where is home—by sea or land,
Bright summer fields or silent shore,
In lowly cot or mansion grand,
In years to come or days of yore?
'Tis where life's way is covered o'er
With heart's-ease, fragrant, fresh and free;
So hear my song, oft sung before—
Thy heart, dear love, is home to me.

In darkest moments when I stand
With feet most weary, heart most sore,
Thoughts often come in merry band,
True, tender dreams from memory's store,
Of long days when your clear eyes wore
The hue of skies and distant sea:
God left me then no boon to implore—
Your heart, dear love, was home to me.

Why heed the ills from Fate's stern hand,
These woes that she doth on us pour?
Life's but an inn—we, guests trepanned
To pay an austere landlord's score.
I pay it bravely and ignore
The road's mishaps—it leads to thee;
And there, by all true poet's lore,
Thy heart, dear love, is home to me.

ENVOI.

So bide we then a short while more,
Till gentle Death shall turn the key,
Swing wide at last the welcoming door,
And your dear heart be home to me.

WILFRED S. HACKETT.

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## MOTIVES AND METHODS OF AUTHORSHIP.

By G. Eyre-Todd.

One branch of art has been defined by Shakespeare as the holding of a mirror up to nature, and another branch has been described by Matthew Arnold as a criticism of life. Probably because it fulfils both of these definitions, the art of letters possesses a perennial interest alike for the man in the study and the man in the street. In the early periods of society, it is true, the lives of authors seem to have been but little regarded. Almost nothing is known of the personal history of Homer or of Henry the Minstrel. This, however, is most probably owing to the fact that means of record were scanty. At any rate, ever since literature became a popular possession, there has been a living and widespread interest in the circumstances of its production. Indeed at the present hour it would seem, from the list of contents of some periodicals, as if the gossip about authors and their work threatened to absorb a greater attention than the actual work itself. This interest, however, is not altogether an idle matter. The colour of an author's hair, his exact height, and what he eats for breakfast are not certainly of vital importance. But why a book was written and how it was written are points of information which frequently go far to help to a proper understanding of the work. Few therefore will deny that curiosity regarding the circumstances of literary production may be legitimate enough.

Even apart from the light which they throw upon the works to which they refer, the motives which have led to the writing of some books have been in themselves sufficiently romantic and interesting. Of the inception of *Frankenstein*, her adaptation to modern life of the ancient story of Prometheus, Mrs Shelley gives an account which, for the sake of the persons concerned in it, cannot but possess a strong claim to regard. The summer of 1816 was cold and rainy, she records, and was passed by the small but famous party of which she was a member, in the environs of Geneva. In the evenings the company crowded round a blazing wood-fire, and amused themselves with the reading of some German ghost-stories which happened to fall into their hands. Under the influence of these, Lord Byron suggested that each of the company should write a story of the supernatural. Following up the idea, Byron himself began a story, a fragment of which he printed with his poem 'Mazeppa.' Shelley made a beginning with some account of an experience of his own early life. And Polidori set to work upon an idea he had of a skull-headed lady, whom, however, he subjected to such dreadful experiences that she was presently unfit for further use, and had to be summarily despatched. Mrs Shelley herself, for lack of a subject, was long in making a start. There were, however, she relates, many and long conversations at that time between Lord Byron and Shelley, at which she was a devout, if silent, listener. At one of these, among other subjects, the poets discussed the nature of the principle of life, and whether there was any probability of its ever being discovered and communicated. That talk lasted long into the night, and on going to bed after it, Mrs Shelley declares, she could not sleep. 'I saw,' she wrote, 'with shut eyes but acute mental vision —I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half-vital motion.' Here was the germ of a story. The dreamer awoke realistically conscious of the horrid spectre standing by her bedside, 'opening the curtains, and looking down at her with yellow, watery, but speculative eyes;' and that day she began her tale with the words, *It was on a dreary night of*

*November*, making little more than a transcript of the grim terrors of her dream.

Most readers also are familiar with the touching story of the production of *Rasselas* by Dr Samuel Johnson. Few who read that story would gather from its contents any inkling of the ultimate motive which lay behind the writing. The book contains the elaboration of an ideal, the working out of a theory, and might well have been the occupation of many happy hours. The circumstances of the book's production, however, were sad and grim enough. Johnson's mother had died. It was the year 1759, when the rewards of literature were still most meagre and poor, and though he was already well-known as author of *London*, the *Life of Savage*, and the great dictionary, Johnson found himself without the means of providing a decent funeral. It appears typical of the solid character of the man that he sat down, heavy no doubt of heart, but with settled purpose. Day and night his pen ran on, sketching his happy valley, and in a single week, it is said, he had produced the story of *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.*

Much has been said of late years against the writing of novels 'with a purpose.' These lose in art, it is averred, more than they gain from didactic intention, and it is urged that the discussion of theories should be confined to the more appropriate vehicle of treatise or lecture. Nevertheless, much has been done in this age of ours by novels, and poems too, written 'with a purpose.'

Sir Walter Besant has written more than one good book of this class, and few will be found to deny that his stories have been excellent as fiction, quite apart from any intention which lay behind it. When purpose in novel-writing is mentioned, one particular romance occurs to every memory. Besant had seen with pity the misery of East London. He had seen the girls with flat chests and lack-lustre eyes; he had looked at the men, pale and spiritless. Many a mind, before the novelist's, has asked itself the true reason for this state of things; more than one means, such as the farm-colony of General Booth, has since been devised for the cure of it. The conclusion to which the novelist came was that the people lacked happiness. So he set himself to sketch a palace of rational pleasure for them. He bade the world look at these men and girls, and he sketched what might be the effect of a little joy introduced into their lives. Give these girls a little music, a little dancing—give them a lover, he said, and watch the change. Sir Walter Besant wrote *All Sorts and Conditions of Men.* He called it 'an impossible story,' but probably no work has done more to direct attention to the condition of the poor in cities. Its publication brought about an entire fashionable crusade upon the slums; and what is better, by way of practical outcome, the central feature of the story, a People's Palace, with all its adjuncts, now rises, not only in East London, but in many other cities.

Before Walter Besant, in somewhat of the same temper, came Charles Dickens. Prince of humorists as he was, and one of the warmest and kindliest of hearts, the author of *David Copperfield* was not the less a master of scathing satire. Again and again his 'novels with a purpose' taught society to sympathise with the sufferings of the poor, and more than once these same productions struck a deadly blow at the oppressions of official life and bumbledom. It cannot, perhaps, be said that because of the writings of Dickens the evils of 'red-tapeism' have entirely disappeared from Government offices; but there can be no doubt that the delays of law have become infinitely less since the writing of *Little Dorrit.*

It is needless, perhaps, to cite instances in which poetry has been written with a distinctly social or political purpose, and has not the less been true poetry for the social or political effect which it has produced. Mrs Browning's 'Cry of the Children' undoubtedly helped Lord Shaftesbury to put an end to the child labour in coal-pit and factory which used to prove so fatal to its victims. And if the misery of the unnumbered London seamstresses toiling and starving under the 'sweating system' has not yet been sensibly lightened, it has at least had more eyes of sympathy turned upon it since Hood wrote his heart-moving 'Song of the Shirt.' Again, on the farther side of the Atlantic, 'Uncle Tom' promoted to an incalculable extent the abolitionist feeling; subsequently the slave-poems of Whittier, and the *Biglow Papers* of Russell Lowell at one and the same time furnished the battle-cry of the Northern movement, and became the masterpieces of their authors.

It is not to be denied, however, that a motive which enters largely into the writing of books, at least nowadays, is the pecuniary one. Literature has become a profession like the other professions, and men are found to enter it for the sake of the loaves and fishes. And probably it may be said with truth that never was literature so well paid as now. It is true that Sir Walter Scott in the beginning of the century received large sums for his works; but he was almost the only writer of his time who did so. At the present day, more than a dozen authors might be named offhand who count on receiving for each work a cheque of at least four figures. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that no really great work was ever produced from this sordid motive alone. There never was a great book written, it has been truly said, without a great enthusiasm behind it.

The mere accidents, however, by which some books have come into public vogue, have been not a little remarkable. *Lorna Doone*, for instance, as every one possibly is not aware, threatened for some time to be an utter failure. Notwithstanding its exquisite qualities, it lay for several months all but dead on the publishers' shelves. Then the marriage of the Princess Louise occurred, and the similarity between the name of her husband, the Marquis of Lorne, and that of the heroine of the book, somehow attracted the public eye, with the consequence that the stock of *Lorna Doone* was immediately exhausted, and new editions called for. Sooner or later, however, it can hardly be doubted, the merits of the romance must have been discovered without this adventitious aid, and the book have achieved success upon its intrinsic worth.

Of late years there have been many apparently

sudden and phenomenal successes in the arena of authorship, none of which probably has been either quite so sudden or so phenomenal as it appeared. The list includes Mr J. M. Barrie, Mr Rudyard Kipling, Mr Stanley Weyman, and 'Ian Maclaren.' The case of Mr Barrie is well known. *Auld Licht Idylls* and *A Window in Thrums*, with which he achieved success, were by no means the author's first ventures into literature. It came out afterwards that there had been at least one previous volume from his pen, with the ominous title of *Better Dead;* and for long after the fame of *A Window in Thrums* had been assured, a religious weekly kept publishing reprints of articles by the author which had appeared, without attracting notice, years before. Mr Rudyard Kipling, too, seemed to spring suddenly into fame with the production of *Soldiers Three*, and some Indian poems and articles in the magazines. But it transpired, upon inquiry and better acquaintance, that his art had been perfected during years of residence in the East, by much story-writing in the Anglo-Indian journals. Again, Mr Stanley J. Weyman seemed to leap into sudden renown the other day with the publication of *A Gentleman of France* and *Under the Red Robe*. But the reader who looks at the *English Illustrated Magazine* for December 1883, will find proof that quite ten years before that apparently sudden acquisition of fortune and fame, Mr Weyman was perfecting his art, and shouldering his way to recognition among the common crowd of story-tellers. As for 'Ian Maclaren,' whether or not his pen has long been practised in the art of deliberate story-telling, it has for half a lifetime, as is well known, had constant practice in moving the emotions of men in a kindred and hardly less literary way.

The truth, indeed, appears to be that success in literature, like success in every other profession, comes even to the ablest men only as the result of long and hard work. When an author, like a comet, bursts suddenly upon the public ken, few take the trouble to reckon up the long years that have gone to the preparation of his brilliance. In the case of Sir Walter Scott, for instance, fame seemed to come with the appearance of his first poem and his first romance, and hardly even yet do people take time to reflect on the lifetime of preparation of which these works were the flower. Though the work of collecting *The Border Minstrelsy* is sometimes cited as the labour amid which Scott obtained his materials and his inspiration, few remember the translations, prose and poetry, from the German, which were the first practice of his hand; and the world forgets the editing of *Sir Tristrem*, and the writing of the *Life of Swift*.

Industry and perseverance, 'an infinite capacity for taking pains,' if they are not indeed genius itself, as has paradoxically been said, form at least the indispensable accompaniments to it. Mr Rider Haggard declares that he writes his books simply by keeping at work on them. And the industry of Mr Rudyard Kipling may be measured by the fact that he is said to have written *The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot* seven times over, and then to have made considerable corrections on the proofs. The late Professor Huxley was another writer whose industry in perfecting his literary expression was only rivalled by his genius.

Strikingly contrasted with this necessity for industry have been the personal inclinations of some conspicuous writers. Thackeray confessed that his besetting sin was laziness: he could never write, he said, till the printer's devil was at his door. The story, again, is told of Dickens, how once in a stationer's shop he was startled by hearing a lady at the counter inquire whether the next number of a certain novel, then appearing in monthly parts, were out yet. Little did the customer guess that the next part of the story was not yet even in existence, and that the gentleman at her elbow, in fact, stood there for the purpose of buying the paper upon which he intended to go home and write the chapter asked for.

Though the publication of stories in monthly parts by themselves appears to have died out since Dickens's time, publication by instalment in weekly and monthly periodicals appears of late to have taken firmer hold than ever. The method is carried out to still greater extent in France, where even the daily journals set great store on their *feuilletons* of fiction. *Le Petit Journal*, a year or two ago, paid M. Richebourg no less a sum than 80,000 francs, about £3750, for the right to publish *La Dame en Noir* in its *feuilleton*, and the publication was said to have increased the daily sales of the paper by thirty thousand.

Similar instances, though perhaps scarcely so conspicuous, might be given of the effects of serial publication in this country, where stories managed in this way have been known to raise the circulation of the periodical in which they appeared by ten and twenty thousand at a time.

The necessities of such a method of publication must sometimes, one should suppose, do no small harm to the construction of a romance. It can hardly help the artistic proportion and evolution of a story when the author is aware that a climax of some kind must be wrought to a point in every chapter. The method, however, has more than one advantage, which, from the writer's point of view, may be held to compensate to some extent for this drawback. It allows an opportunity, during the progress of the story through the press, for an author to learn betimes the popular opinion of his work —an opportunity which several novelists have not been slow to profit by. A well-known recent instance of this was Mr Kipling's treatment of the conclusion of *The Light that Failed*. When the story appeared in a magazine, the popular voice declared against its termination, a happy one, as untrue to probabilities, and a concession to convention. And when the tale appeared later in volume form, the public found that the ending had been changed, and was now, with more truth to probability, of a tragic cast. But an even better instance is recorded of the late Anthony Trollope. While a story of his was running through one of the magazines, the novelist one day happened to dine at a provincial hotel. In the smoking-room after dinner he overheard some young men discussing his story, which was attracting a good

deal of attention. As a whole, they praised it highly; but one point they agreed unanimously to condemn. In the tale there was a certain troublesome old lady who, they said, and they gave their reasons, had become entirely unbearable to the reader, a fact which they were surprised the author had not by this time found out. Trollope, the story goes, listened for a time in silence, but at last he got up, walked over to the amateur critics on the hearthrug, and made them a profound bow. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I beg to introduce myself: I am the author of the story you have been good enough to discuss. I have listened to your criticism, and have heard you condemn Mrs ——. I am sorry she is disagreeable to you, but she shall be so no longer, for I shall go home and kill her off at once.' And he did it.

To this opportunity of alteration and correction there falls to be added the further advantage that the serial publication of a story frequently proves, to the author, the most profitable. And the pecuniary return is what to some people, authors not excluded, appears the final test of art.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER V.—A BARGAIN.

Robert shut the study door carefully as if to exclude any chance of being overheard. The room was dark now save for the gas-lamp on the opposite side of the street. He lit a reading-lamp, which threw a little circle of bright light on the papers of the writing-table, and awakened reflections on the polished walls of cedar, luminous breadths which intensified the shadows between and below. The room felt ghostly. I took a chair outside the circle of light; my cousin took his own chair in his own place within the circle. Then an odd thing happened. Some one in the other room —of course it was Isabel—began to play. She played some soft music, a reverie, a song without words, a romance, a gentle suggestive kind of music; it acted on me as a mesmeric influence; it is a weakness which always falls upon me when I hear soft music played with sympathy—suggestive music. It falls upon my brain, and I seem to see visions and dream dreams. So while Isabel's fingers rambled over the notes, and her music fell soft and sweet upon the soul, it seemed as if I was only sitting again where I used to sit a long time ago, and that I had just been talking of the recent loss of those jewels with my cousin, whom I suspected of the theft. And I remembered the bedside watching and the death of old John Burnikel, and the search after those diamonds, and the deplorable quarrel with my cousin and the fight that followed. I say that I remembered all this as if I myself was present at these events. Then things got mixed. I had stolen these diamonds myself. By these, and as judge, second baronet and third baronet, I succeeded in gaining more wealth and distinction. But—a very important thing—time was up. My cousin's turn was now to come.

'Well,' said the boat-builder, 'I have told you everything—all my ambitions—quite openly and freely. I have trusted you.'

'You have.'

'I trust a man, or I do not, by his face. That's why I trusted you.'

'All that you have said is in confidence, of course.'

'Isabel doesn't know, except that I mean to go ahead. Well, what you told me before tea is disturbing. All the same I mean to go into the House as an independent member. And I know the borough I shall choose. I shall stand for Shadwell, where they know me. As for the money that the election will cost—well, I can't very well afford it, that's certain, but I must plank it down. It will be an investment.'

'Very good.'

'Then tell me, is there anything I have forgotten? I want to stand at the next general election. I want to begin nursing the borough at once.'

'Perhaps—there may be—one thing,' I replied, with hesitation.

'What thing? I have thought it all out. I can speak. I am not afraid. I can give and take. I know the institutions of the country and their history. I know the questions of the day and the actual facts about them. I've got a memory like a well-ordered cupboard. What have I forgotten?'

'You are not the man I take you for if you are offended.'

'Nonsense, man. You can't offend me.' There are two or three ways of pronouncing the last four words. They may be so emphasised as to convey the highest compliment or the greatest contempt. Robert's way inclined to the latter. He expressed moderate contempt and self-satisfied superiority. A touchy man would have been offended. I am not a touchy man; and I took the reply—compliment or contempt—with a cheerful smile, wasted because unseen in the gloom of the room. I might as well have scowled.

'Well, then, you have forgotten one thing. That is—manners.'

'Manners!' In the bright light I saw his eyes flash and his cheek flame. It was as if the limit of patience had been reached. 'Manners?' he repeated. 'You mean that I don't know how to behave. I'd have you learn, then, that we behave as well at Wapping as Piccadilly.'

Robert snorted with indignation. For a moment I feared that I had mortally offended him. So I hastened to bring along what the Persian poet calls the watering-pot of conciliation.

'One moment. I mean this. You have set before yourself a definite end. Your design is to become a power in the House. You cannot afford, therefore, as you very well understand, to neglect any means of attaining this end. Now, a power in the House must mean in some sense or other a man of society. Not to know the ways and usages of society would be the greatest possible hindrance to you. Tell me, for instance, do you possess that simple article, indispensable for society—the common dress-coat?'

'No, I've got an office-coat and a house-coat

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and a Sunday-coat. What more does a man want?'

'Nothing more, really. But we are artificial. Have you, next, ever been to an evening dinner-party?'

'We dine at one o'clock every day—the good old time. There are no evening dinner-parties here.'

'It is the good old time, no doubt. Still we are, as I said, artificial, and society dines in the evening. Now, as to a reception or a ball, or anything of that sort'——

'Oh!' Robert groaned. 'What has this kind of thing got to do with me?'

'And as to the common language of society, and as to such simple matters as the art and literature and drama of the social world'——

'What has all this got to do with the business?'

'A great deal. My ambitious cousin, knowledge of all your subjects will not advance you by yourself. Even oratory will not advance you by itself. You must make yourself a *persona grata;* you must become one of the world; you must dress, talk, act, behave in their way, not in yours. Mind, you must.'

My cousin groaned again.

'For instance, part of manners is the art of suppressing yourself. You must learn to show a less serious front.'

'Learn to pretend—that's what your fine manners mean.'

'Learn to assume a side of smiles and light talk—and, perhaps, of lighter epigram. You must be able to laugh at things. Do you know that a man who can laugh has ten times greater chance than a man who is always in earnest? You will cultivate, my cousin, if you are wise, the manners, talk, ways, customs, and usages of society, before, not after, you go into the House. Believe me, if you are to rise, as seems likely, you will have to learn these things somehow, and you had better learn them quietly and at leisure before you go in.'

My cousin banged the table with his fist. 'Good Lord!' he cried. 'First you tell me that I must join a party and make myself a slave, and lie, and wriggle, and cringe, and fetch, and carry, and say, and do what I am told. Do you think I would enter the House on such conditions? Never!'

'As you please.'

'And now you tell me, in addition, that I must learn the niminy-piminy, trumpery pretences that you call manners. Well, I won't. You may have your manners, and I will keep mine.'

'Then you will fail. Understand me, cousin. This is not a question of Piccadilly ways. It is one of taking your place with the members as their equal, from the outset. This is of the greatest importance to you. At present—I speak freely—your manners are only those of a superior working-man. You have lived alone in this corner, and you have forgotten the need of manners. I say that you must learn our manners. You must! You must!'

You will observe that I was at this time greatly struck with the man's ability as well as his courage. A smaller man one would have suffered to make his way as he could, sink or swim, probably the former, from sheer ignorance of manners. But this man conquered me. I had never before met with any man who knew so much and spoke so well, and at the same time had such an excellent opinion of himself. Conceit and vanity we have with us always; they are given by kindly Providence to make up for incompetence. But that an able man should be so avowedly self-reliant is rare. I thought that the man himself justified my plain-speaking.

He was staggered. 'You can't make me a lardy-dardy fine gentleman,' he objected, weakly.

'There is no such thing nowadays. The young fellows are all athletes. I don't want to make you a man of fashion, or a man about town. Nothing of the sort. I want to make you a well-bred, quiet man, able to hold your own. You are built for the part; you look the part. I want you to put on a glove of velvet to hide your wrist of iron. Do you understand that?'

The prospect of hiding a wrist of iron pleased the man who desired strength above all things. The use of the velvet, and how this choice fabric lends itself to ambitious purposes, he did not, as yet, understand.

'Well,' he said, unwillingly. 'You may be right. Perhaps there is something in it. But if there is, I am too old to learn. Manners can't be taught. There was no school for manners.'

I got up. 'Before I go, cousin Robert, I have something to tell you. All the confidences shall not be yours.'

'Something to tell me?' Robert looked up, but there was a discouraging want of interest in his eye, and an intimation conveyed by his manner that he was thinking about himself, and was not at all interested in my confidences.

'It is not a very long confidence. Not a tenth part so long as yours.'

'That's good,' said my cousin. 'Cut along.'

'Well, it is only this. You called upon me, you have talked to me, in the belief that I am rich.'

'A quarter of a million of money the judge left behind him.'

'He did. But it is all gone. My father was unfortunate in certain transactions. He lost it all. I only found it out—found out, that is, the whole truth, yesterday—the day you called upon me.'

'What! Lost your fortune? What are you going to do now?'

'That I don't know yet. Perhaps you may be able to help me. On the other hand, I may be able to help you.'

'Have you got nothing?'

'Two or three thousand only.'

'Oh! He calls three thousand nothing. If I had as much. Well, what would you like to do best?'

'Frankly, I don't know. I have learned nothing except the use of a lathe and carpentering tools.'

'You ought to be a boat-builder, by rights.'

'I believe I ought. Well, Robert—I may call you by your Christian name—you shall put me on to something or other. And as for me, I can introduce you, at least, to some pleasant people.'

'I want useful people.'

'They may be useful as well. You shall help me, and I will help you. Is that a bargain?'

Robert hesitated. Every business man looks upon a bargain from all points of view, and especially to see how it will benefit himself. He made up his mind apparently that the bargain was in his favour, for he stretched out his arm. 'Hands upon it, cousin.'

At that moment—it was a happy omen—Isabel's music burst into a glad triumphal march.

So I presently sat down and wrote two letters—the first to my cousin Robert, and the second to Frances.

This was the first—the important, epoch-making letter:

'My dear Cousin—I have been turning over in my mind the difficulty in which we were stuck during our last conversation. And I have a curious proposal to make to you. It is this: You shall take me into your yard and teach me the trade or craft of boat-building—all about it—making—selling—wages—prices—materials—everything. Perhaps in six months or so I may be master of the subject. You will do this for nothing. I, for my part, after the day's work, will take you home with me—to my chambers. And for five nights out of the week I will arrange something or other that will give you that kind of experience of which we spoke. If this arrangement pleases you, send me a letter in reply.'

That was how it began. We entered upon this exchange without understanding what was to follow—who ever understands what is to follow? If we were to understand what is to follow, nobody would do anything, because whatever follows is sure to contain the drop of bitterness or incompleteness, or the unlooked for evil that goes with everything. We were, in fact, without knowing it, preparing for an exchange. As you shall see, the bargain meant that Robert was to take my place, and I was to take his. But as yet, I say, we suspected nothing of this.

In the morning I presented myself in the guise of a working-man. That is to say, I put on a fishing-costume of tweeds. Perhaps, as a working-man, I ought not to have taken a hansom, but, of course, one is not correct all at once in every detail.

Over that first morning let me lay, piously, a few asterisks.

* * * * *

At half-past twelve we knocked off for dinner. Quite ready I was to knock off. I walked across the street with my cousin and joined in the early dinner, which was served at one. We had, I remember, stalled ox and humming ale, and a ginger pudding.

'Going to learn how to build a boat, are you?' said the captain. 'Ha! You couldn't learn a more useful thing nor a prettier thing. A boat's about the loveliest thing that a man can make. Every kind of boat; a man-o'-war's launch; or a little up-river cedar and putty skiff; the loveliest thing it is. And what in the world is there more useful? As for you, sir, a Burnikel, even if he is a nobleman, ought to take to boat-building by nature.'

Robert took his dinner, as he had taken his tea, in silence. It was the custom, I perceived. Isabel carved, at which one marvelled. I observed that she carved well. When she was not carving, she sat at the table pale and silent, watching Robert, her task-master, and her ice-cold lover. She took very little dinner—much less than a girl of her age ought to take. She looked as if she had no other interest in life than just to satisfy her master. As for youth and life and cheerfulness, these things did not appear to exist in the house. Yet Robert was only twenty-six, two years older than myself, and Isabel was not yet twenty-two.

Dinner over, the captain returned to his own den at the back, whence presently proceeded the smell of tobacco. I believe that he also solaced himself after dinner with a glass of something warm and a slice of lemon in it. Robert, observing that he always went over the way at two, retired into his study. He was one of those unfortunate men who never waste their time. We all know the kind; they use up every odd ten minutes.

Isabel, as soon as the cloth was cleared, spread out her account books and began to work.

'Is it good,' I said, 'to work directly after dinner?'

'I do not know. Robert always works after dinner.' I observed that she had a very sweet voice, soft and musical.

'Robert is a strong man. You are not a strong man. May I use the privilege of a cousin—you are to be my cousin some time—to point out to you that many things which Robert may do with impunity, you must not even attempt to do.'

'The work has got to be done, and I cannot ask whether this time or that time is best.'

'Why not play a little after dinner? You play very well.'

'I never play during working-hours. Robert would not like it.'

'Then'——

'Please, Sir George, allow me to go on with my work.'

I said no more, but stood at the window and watched her. She had a head of comely shape; and her features were good, but why so sad? Why so pale? Why so silent?

Presently I went back to more aching shoulders and tired wrists, envying the workmen, who never wanted to straighten their backs, and whose wrists seemed made of iron.

The foreman stood over me. 'You're handy with the tools,' he said.

I worked like the rest, without a coat, and with sleeves turned up. But I deny the apron. In the last century every working-man wore an apron, and every serving-man in a shop wore an apron. Now we have left off that badge of trade or servitude. On the whole, I think that I am glad that I never wore an apron. I kept my working-clothes in the house, and changed them in the morning and for dinner, and I declare that as I grew to

understand how a boat was built, how her lines were laid down, how her skeleton was put together, how her ribs were clothed, and how she was finished and fitted, a noble enthusiasm—the family enthusiasm—seized upon me, and I felt that true happiness lay not in ambition, which in Robert's case I regarded with pity; not in wealth, taking my own case as an example; but in the building of boats.

## THE LONG ARM OF COINCIDENCE.

### A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

Novelists and playwrights are often ridiculed for their indebtedness to the 'long arm of coincidence' to pull them out of the difficulties of a tangled plot, and, without doubt, their demands upon this convenient *deus ex machinâ* are frequently of a kind to provoke our incredulity. At the same time it is hard to place any limit to the possibilities of coincidence, and most persons, who have had much experience of life, must be able to recall some strange coincidences which were altogether outside the pale of probability. The story we purpose telling here affords a singular instance of unexpected incidents happening at the very moment when a man's life was quivering in the balance, and supplying evidence to save him from the gallows.

On the night of Monday, June 10, 1861, a mysterious and brutal murder was perpetrated at Kingswood Rectory, about four miles from Reigate, in the county of Surrey. The rector, with his wife and family, was on a visit at Dorking, and the house had been left in the sole charge of Martha Halliday, wife of the parish clerk. She was absolutely alone, for the servants had accompanied their master and mistress, and her husband had to look after his own house, as there was no one to take his wife's place there. But Martha being a woman of courage and nerve, had no objection to sleeping alone at the rectory, as she had frequently done before.

She was last seen alive by her husband, who parted from her between six and seven o'clock in the evening. When he went up to the rectory the next morning to see his wife, he found the back-door locked, but on going round to the front-door, to his surprise found it ajar. He entered and called to his wife, but receiving no answer, went in search of her. She was nowhere down-stairs, but, on entering her bedroom, to his horror he saw her lying dead on the floor in her night-dress. That she had been brutally murdered was evident at a glance, for her hands and feet were bound with hempen cord, a handkerchief was tied over her face, and a stocking had been thrust tightly into her mouth.

Halliday promptly gave the alarm, the parish constable arrived, and a minute search of the premises was made. But they had not to go far for a clue to the murderer. Under the bed, a few inches from the spot where the murdered woman lay, there was picked up a packet of papers tied round with string. The papers, six in number, were all in German. One was what is called in Germany a service-book—the credentials furnished by the authorities to craftsmen and others—and was made out in the name of Johann Carl Franz of Schandau, in Upper Saxony, a minute description of whose person it contained, similar to that in a passport. There were also two certificates, one of birth and one of baptism, both bearing the name of Johann Carl Franz.

The other three papers had apparently no connection with Franz. One was a letter without address, soliciting relief from some lady of quality, signed 'Adolphe Kröhn.' Another, dated 7th June (three days before the murder), was in the handwriting of Madame Tietjens, addressed to Mr Kroll of the Hamburg Hotel, America Square, requesting him to send the bearer, a destitute fellow-countryman, back to Germany at her expense. The third was a slip of paper with a number of addresses jotted down upon it, among them that of Madame Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind).

Besides the papers, there was found in the room a roughly shaped bludgeon of beechwood, not long cut from the tree. This, however, had not been used, for the woman's body bore no marks of blows, and it was evident that death had been caused by suffocation, for the stocking had been rammed into her mouth with such force that the tongue was forced back over the glottis or narrow opening at the upper part of the windpipe. The footprints on the flower-beds under the windows were of different sizes, and showed that two persons at least had been concerned in the crime. The motive was doubtless robbery, but the men were probably frightened when they found that they had killed the woman, whose resistance necessitated violence, or else they were alarmed by some sound outside, for they decamped without taking anything from the house.

With such an important clue as the packet of papers to start with, the task set the police seemed an easy one. It was soon discovered that two foreigners, one short and dark, the other tall and fair, had been seen in the neighbourhood of Kingswood on the day before the murder (Sunday, 9th June). They had applied for lodgings at the Cricketers' Inn, Reigate, and had slept there on the Sunday night, remaining in the house till four o'clock on the Monday afternoon, when they left. During their stay they had only quitted the inn twice to make some purchases, and on each occasion had only been absent a few minutes. The potman was certain that he should recognise them both again, because, hearing them talk in an outlandish tongue, he had taken particular notice of them.

Then a labourer remembered having seen two foreigners in a beech wood not far from Kingswood, about seven o'clock in the evening of the day of the murder. He passed within a dozen yards of them and knew they were foreigners, because they were speaking in a language which he did not understand. This was an important piece of evidence, for, on examining the wood, it was found that a branch had been newly torn from one of the trees, which exactly corresponded with the bludgeon found in the room.

But the most startling evidence was that supplied by the wife of a brush-maker at Reigate, who remembered that on the day of

the murder, two foreigners came into her shop and bought a ball of string of a peculiar make, very seldom manufactured, known as 'rublay-cord.' One of them could speak broken English, but when they conversed together it was in a foreign language. She showed them several different kinds of string before they selected this particular one, which was precisely identical with that found round the murdered woman's hands and feet.

The only other fact of importance was that two men, apparently foreigners, had been stopped by a policeman at Sutton, some eight or ten miles from Kingswood, about two o'clock on Tuesday morning, that is to say, presumably two or three hours after the murder was committed, and in reply to the constable's question, 'Where are you going?' one of them said, in a strong foreign accent, 'To Old Pye Street, Westminster.'

So far the scent was hot, and it seemed as if the quarry must be speedily run to earth. But the trail was lost at Sutton, and every effort to pick it up again failed. No one could be found who had seen anything of the two foreigners after the policeman accosted them at two o'clock on the Tuesday morning. The Government offered a reward of one hundred pounds; Mr Alcock of Kingswood Warren, M.P. for the division, added another hundred pounds; but no further clue was forthcoming, and the murder of Martha Halliday seemed destined to be classed among the unsolved mysteries of crime, when an accident put the police upon the track of the murderer.

On the 2d of July, more than three weeks after the murder, a German was taken into custody in the East end of London on a trumpery charge of assault. The inspector on duty was about to let the man go, when it suddenly flashed upon him that the fellow bore a resemblance to the description circulated of Johann Carl Franz, and he ordered him to be detained until the Reigate police could be communicated with. The Reigate inspector came up to town, saw the suspected German, and, after close examination, decided that he was sufficiently like the description of Johann Carl Franz, given in the service-book already mentioned, to justify his arrest. Accordingly, the man was brought up before the Reigate magistrates for examination. He gave his name as Salzmann, denied that he was Johann Carl Franz, of whom he declared he knew nothing, and was remanded for further inquiries. At his second examination he caused a profound sensation by voluntarily confessing that he *was* Johann Carl Franz, the owner of the papers which bore his name. But at the same time he stoutly denied all complicity in the crime, declared that he had never been in or near Reigate or Kingswood in his life, and told the following story to account for the discovery of his papers by the side of the murdered woman.

He had landed, he said, from Germany at Hull, and had made his way through Leeds, Oldham, and Manchester to Liverpool, where he hoped to get a passage to America. But, failing in his object, he resolved to tramp to London in search of work. On his way thither he fell in with two fellow-countrymen, both sailors, the one named Adolphe Kröhn, the other Wilhelm Gerstenberg.

The latter had no papers, and being of about the same stature and complexion as Franz, was perpetually asking him for the loan of his papers, as the description, he said, would suit both of them. But Franz refused to grant his request. One evening in May they all three lay down to sleep behind a stack of straw in an open field. Franz was so tired that he slept soundly. When he awoke, his companions were gone, and they had taken with them his papers and his bag, which contained a suit of clothes of the same stuff and pattern as he was then wearing. Among the papers stolen from him was one which was missing from the packet found in Kingswood Rectory: it was a railway guard's testimonial or certificate. From the moment he awoke and discovered that his companions had deserted and robbed him, he had never set eyes on either of them. He had eventually reached London, where he wandered the streets in a state of destitution till he met a fellow-countryman whom he accosted and asked for assistance. The man took him into an eating-house, and whilst he was having his meal, read to him from a newspaper the account of a murder, the perpetrator of which was supposed to be a German named Johann Carl Franz. He was dreadfully alarmed on hearing this, and resolved to assume another name; for that reason he had called himself Salzmann.

So far the story was plausible, and as Franz declared that his clothes had been stolen as well as his papers, and that those clothes consisted of a suit exactly like the one he was wearing, it was within the bounds of possibility that the witnesses, who swore that they had seen him at Reigate on the day of the murder, might have mistaken his double, Gerstenberg, for him.

But there was something else which the prisoner had to explain. When his lodgings in Whitechapel were searched, there was found a woollen shirt which he admitted to be his—this shirt was tied up in a bundle with a piece of string, and this string was 'rublay-cord' of precisely the same manufacture as that which had been sold to the two foreigners at Reigate on the day of the murder. The prisoner's explanation was that he had picked up the bit of string casually in a street close to his lodgings—it was lying on the pavement outside a tobacconist's shop. He remembered this, because it was on coming out of the shop, after buying half an ounce of tobacco, that he saw the string and picked it up.

Here was the weak place in his story. For the manufacturer of the string was called and swore that it was of the same uncommon kind as that with which the hands and feet of the murdered woman were bound—that it was his own special manufacture, unlike that made by any other manufacturer—that the woman who had sold the ball of string to the two foreigners was an old customer of his, and that he had recently sent her a consignment of that particular kind of 'rublay-cord.' It was extremely unlikely that a piece of that peculiar string, his own special make, should be picked up casually in the streets of London where very little of it was used.

The prisoner was also asked to say where he was at the time the murder was committed. He could not tell, but he supposed he must have been tramping on the road to London. He was not, however, able to prove an alibi, and there was no evidence but his own assertion that he had not been in the neighbourhood of Reigate at the time when several witnesses swore to having seen him there.

The magistrates had no hesitation in committing the prisoner for trial, and there was little, if any, doubt in the minds of those who had heard or read the evidence that Johann Carl Franz was the murderer of Martha Halliday.

The case came on for trial at the Croydon Assizes on the 6th of August 1861. Mr Justice Blackburn was the judge: Serjeant Ballantine conducted the prosecution, and the Honourable George Denman, Q.C. (afterwards Justice of the Common Pleas) was specially retained by the Saxon Embassy to defend the prisoner.

There were some discrepancies in the evidence adduced for the prosecution, of which the prisoner's counsel made the most in cross-examination. For example, the potman at the Cricketers' Inn, Reigate, swore that the two foreigners who stayed there on the Sunday and part of the Monday, did not leave the inn, except for a few minutes, from the time they came till the time they left, and one of those foreigners he identified on oath as the prisoner at the bar. But another witness, a labourer, swore positively that the prisoner was one of two foreigners whom he met and spoke to at four o'clock on the Sunday afternoon four miles from Reigate. Clearly, then, the foreigners seen by the labourer could not have been the two who stayed at the Cricketers', and if the potman were correct in his identification of Franz as one of the latter, the labourer must be mistaken, and *vice versâ*.

Then the woman who sold the string would not swear positively to Franz as one of the men who came to her shop, though the servant, who only saw them through the glass door, identified Franz as the taller and fairer of the two foreigners without any hesitation.

Despite the severe cross-examination of all these witnesses and the discrepancies disclosed thereby, the case looked very black against the prisoner until his attorney was put in the box, and then the whole aspect of the trial was suddenly and sensationally changed.

Now this attorney, before acting as Franz's legal representative, had appeared as interpreter before the magistrates, and he was called by the prosecution to verify the prisoner's answers to the questions put to him, and his own explanations of the proceedings to Franz, whose knowledge of English was very imperfect.

In the course of his examination-in-chief, the attorney was questioned as to his knowledge of Franz's handwriting, and a manuscript-book was suddenly put into his hands by Serjeant Ballantine, who asked abruptly, 'Is this the prisoner's handwriting?'

The witness, not knowing what was being sprung upon him, but recognising at once that the handwriting *was* that of Franz, answered hastily, 'Yes—but I never saw this before.'

Counsel for the defence asked to be allowed to look at the book and found that it was a diary kept by the prisoner. Each day's events were carefully recorded, with the names of the towns at which he had stopped, until he reached Leek in Staffordshire—at that point the entries abruptly ceased.

Mr Denman expressed his surprise that notice of the existence of this diary had not been given to the attorney for the defence, and then the following remarkable facts were brought to light. The diary had only come into the hands of the prosecution on the preceding evening. It had been picked up by two tramps on a heap of straw in a deserted hovel in Northamptonshire, on the 9th of July, *the day after* the prisoner had told his story to the magistrates. These men arrived in London a few days before the trial, and hearing some persons talking about the murder in a public-house, they caught the name Johann Carl Franz frequently repeated. On searching through a newspaper they saw the name printed, and recognised it as identical with that attached to a paper which they had found inside the diary. They showed both documents to the landlord, who advised them to communicate with the prisoner's attorney, who would probably reward them for their 'find.' But by mistake they went to the attorneys for the prosecution. Mr Denman asked to see the paper which had been found by the tramps inside the diary. Apparently it had been thought of no account by the prosecution—at any rate, Serjeant Ballantine was not aware of its nature, and the surprise of the court may be imagined when it proved to be the railway guard's testimonial or certificate which Franz declared to have been one of the papers that had been stolen from him. This was a most singular corroboration of one portion of the prisoner's story, but there was a more startling coincidence yet to come.

In cross-examination by counsel for the defence, the prisoner's attorney said he had taken great pains to try and verify the statements made by his client, and with regard to one piece of evidence, which was held to tell strongly against the prisoner, he had made a remarkable discovery. Franz's explanation of his possession of that damning bit of 'rublay-cord,' was that he had picked it up on the pavement outside a tobacconist's shop in a street not far from that in which he lodged. The attorney, while trying to obtain evidence for an alibi in the locality in which Franz had lived, turned into a tobacconist's shop for a cigar, and the first thing which met his eye on the counter, was a ball of this very 'rublay-cord!' On inquiry he found that the tobacconist was in the habit of using this particular kind of string. Now this tobacconist's shop was but two minutes' walk from the street in which Franz had lodged, and on further investigation, it was discovered that the premises of the string-maker who manufactured this peculiar 'rublay-cord,' were closely adjoining the tobacconist's shop. It was therefore quite possible, nay, even probable, that the prisoner's story of the way in which he became possessed of that damning piece of string was true.

No witnesses were called for the defence;

Mr Denman had thus the advantage of addressing the jury without a reply from the prosecution, and the value of the last word in such cases is often inestimable. In a powerful and impressive speech, which lasted four hours, he pressed home the force of these striking coincidences in corroboration of the prisoner's story with great vigour and point. The judge, too, one of the ablest, most clear-headed and logical reasoners on the bench, laid considerable stress upon them in his summing-up, and the end of it was that, after a long deliberation, the jury gave the prisoner the benefit of the doubt and acquitted him, though it transpired afterwards that at first *ten* of them were in favour of a verdict of 'Guilty.'

It was a case that fairly bristled with coincidences on both sides, but those in support of the prisoner's innocence were the more strange, and the more striking. If the tramps had not discovered the diary and the railway guard's certificate when they did, and had not been prompted to show it to the landlord of the inn—if the attorney had not accidentally gone into that tobacconist's shop and seen the ball of 'rublay-cord' lying on the counter—there would have been no independent evidence to corroborate the prisoner's story, and Johann Carl Franz would undoubtedly have been found guilty and hanged. He owed his life, therefore, to

> A 'strange coincidence,' to use a phrase
> By which such things are settled nowadays.

Disheartened by the acquittal of Franz, the police made no further attempt to solve the mystery of Martha Halliday's murder. Yet there was more than one problem connected with the case, which the public would have liked to see worked out to a solution. Were there two distinct pairs of foreigners in the neighbourhood of Kingswood on that eventful 9th and 10th of June? The evidence certainly seemed to indicate that there were, and this in itself was a curious coincidence. While, strangest of all was the fact that neither of these two pairs of foreigners could be traced beyond Reigate and Kingswood, unless indeed the policeman at Sutton were correct in assuming that the persons he stopped were foreigners—a point on which some doubt was thrown. If they had been spirited away by supernatural agency they could not have vanished more completely or left less trace behind them.

## THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

### CHAPTER III.

Even as the turning of defeat into victory is the consummation of tactics, so is the conversion of loss into profit the apotheosis of business. Mr Girdleton had always professed a large contempt for the skill of the detective department, and the continued failure of the men entrusted with the task of finding the destroyer of his picture, to make any progress worth reporting, seemed to afford him a certain melancholy gratification which became apparent in his manner towards his subordinates. For a few days after that eventful Sunday, his clerks had approached him with inquiries for news in fear and trembling; but now the clouds had cleared away, and though Mr Girdleton's manner was a little subdued, it was recognised in the outer office that the 'governor,' like a true philosopher, had made up his mind to look upon the redeeming features of his misfortune. The 'takings,' although they often rose to a hundred pounds and over in a day, held out no promise of full compensation for the original sum paid for the Raphael; but when the London public was exhausted the picture was to go on tour: to Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other great towns where a rich crop of shillings might with confidence be looked for.

The newspapers were doing their duty nobly. The *Collegian*, it is true, had at first contented itself with expressing in four lines its regret at learning 'that the apocryphal Raphael acquired at so absurd a price by the proprietor of the Girdleton Gallery' had been injured by some person unknown. But its younger rival, the *University*, attacked it so fiercely for its 'ungenerous attitude,' that the *Collegian* 'felt bound even at the risk of wearying our readers to justify again the position we have taken up from the outset,' and forthwith launched forth a series of editorials so closely critical, so caustic, and withal so aggressive, that every literary and artistic weekly of any pretensions at all, attacked 'our usually fair-minded contemporary' with a degree of energy that left no doubt in the public mind that the 'Girdleton Gallery Outrage' was a National affair. All the illustrated weeklies subscribed to the illusion by publishing full-page pictures of the Raphael as it was, and as it appeared now; and Mr Girdleton's banking account swelled in precise ratio with public feeling as thus stimulated.

Some five weeks had passed since the day of the outrage; the continued non-success of the detectives began to excite sarcastic comment in the evening papers and to vex the patient soul of Mr Girdleton.

'They can't find the scamp himself,' he said; 'I'll try for the stolen fragment.'

Accordingly he paid another visit to Lincoln's Inn Fields, which was followed a day or two later by the appearance of another advertisement setting forth that inasmuch as the former reward had not been claimed, Messrs Lee Boughton & Phipps were now instructed to pay the said sum of five thousand pounds to any person who should place in their hands, intact, and in sound condition, the missing portion of the picture by Raphael Sanzio whereon was portrayed, &c., &c. Further, it was delicately hinted that Mr Girdleton did not intend to institute criminal proceedings. This new advertisement had its effect upon the takings, which latterly had shown symptoms of falling off; and upon the newspapers whose enthusiasm was beginning to flag. The *Diurnal Intelligence* and *Eastminster Gazette*, for example, vied with each other in hysterical applause of the public spirit and forgiving disposition of that eminent patron of the fine arts, Mr Andrew Girdleton. It is one of the redeeming features of high civilisation that you may receive credit for all the virtues of a citizen and a Christian by caring for your own interests.

Richard Eltham, to whom these weeks had been a period of unbroken anxiety, was moved to despair by the new advertisement. He had long since rectified his first omission by promising Welks five pounds on the day which should see him introduced to that 'young boy;' and Welks, according to his own account, had been indefatigable in tramping the streets; but his eyes so far had not been gladdened by a glimpse of the owner of the red hair and clean collar. He avowed his belief that the boy had been 'sperrited away.'

'I'm afraid we may as well give it up, Welks,' said Eltham on the evening of the day when the amended offer of reward appeared. 'This will draw the thief himself to a certainty. He can't sell the piece, and it must have been stolen in hopes of reward for returning it.'

Welks growled; if he had taken his information to the police, he would have done better. He had lost 'a sight of time and shoe leather' hunting for that boy.

'I'll give you a sovereign, anyhow,' said Eltham with an effort, for he could ill afford the periodical refreshers he had already disbursed. 'Have the detectives been at you again?'

'A dozen times, sir,' replied the man, mollified, 'but *I* can't tell them nothink, I can't;' and he chuckled.

At first Eltham had been fearful lest his ally should be bought over, but Welks had discovered a vein of staunchness that surprised and delighted him. That there should be an element of self-interest in his loyalty was to be expected, and Welks never made any attempt to disguise it.

'You'll deal fair and honest,' he repeated again this evening. 'I trusts you to deal fair; but it ain't much I'd get out of the police once they'd got all out of me. They're too friendly like, these 'ere 'specially 'trusted. "'Ave a drink, Welks," they says, and I 'as a drink. "'Ave another drop—it won't 'urt you;" and I 'as and it don't, and then a drop more, and then it's "Come, now, out with it, 'ere's arf a crown; I'm 'specially 'trusted with this 'ere job; give me a hand, and *I'll* remember you if you tells wot you know."' Mr Welks shook his head knowingly at the shallow wiles of the detectives. 'But I never knows nothink; they're all 'specially 'trusted, bless their 'arts, but I can't tell anythink.'

'Then nobody knows about the boy's visit yet?'

'No, Mr Eltham; nor won't.'

'Well, I wish we'd had half the luck your discreet silence deserves, Welks. Here's the sov. for you. I'm afraid it's no good your looking for the boy any more now, though.'

'I'll take a turn round to-morrow again, sir; it won't do any harm.'

'It will do no harm,' said Eltham carelessly, for he could not see that it could be of any use. The thief would return the stolen fragment within the next day or two, as surely as the sun would rise; and Eltham went home feeling that his chief object in life had been swept away.

But the days passed and no word came from the mutilator. The clerks grew mystified to the verge of insanity; Eltham cheered up a little, rejoicing that he had not damped out Welks' ardour; and Mr Girdleton relapsed into gloomy silence again.

'It proves that the motive was spiteful and not mercenary,' he said, 'and that being so, there is little hope of recovering the piece.'

It was in the afternoon, about ten days after the new advertisement appeared, that Peters stepped into the office and informed Eltham that their late night-watchman begged leave to speak to him. Eltham hurriedly changed his coat and went out, to find Welks waiting for him on the other side of the street.

'I thought I'd come and tell you as I'd found the boy, sir; comed on him by accident like. But mayhap it's no good now?'

'Really, Welks, I'm not at all sure that it isn't. The reward has not been claimed, and we may just as well go on. Come back here this evening at seven o'clock sharp, and show me where the boy lives. You ascertained that, I suppose?'

Welks had followed the boy home; and Eltham returned to his work treading on air. Never in his life had summer afternoon been so interminable; the clocks seemed to have conspired against him. His wits went wool-gathering; he made mistakes in counting his cash, blundered in posting his books, and had to be called back to lock the safe; but at last he was free to go.

Mindful of Welks' vindictive feelings against the guileless instrument of the rascally schemer who had decoyed him from his post, Eltham was careful to impress upon him the necessity for gaining the boy's confidence. How they should proceed must depend upon circumstances. Welks agreed to everything he said, and led the way through back streets, which he seemed to prefer to a more direct route, till they arrived at a mews half-blocked with carriages in process of washing and horses being rubbed down. Children were playing wherever there was a little unoccupied space, and presently Welks caught Eltham by the arm and stopping dead, pointed, like a well-broken setter, to a group engaged in a noisy game of marbles.

'Wait a bit,' said Eltham, who felt himself growing pale with excitement: 'let's look on for a minute; I want to hear the boy's name.'

A boy whose red hair singled him out knelt to play, and a good shot was received with acclamation.

'I say, Charley,' said Welks, duly prompted, as the successful player stood aside, 'you didn't wait for that 'ere penny t'other Sunday.'

The boy looked startled, but recognising Welks, replied shyly that he left because he 'was afraid mother would lick him if he was late for his dinner.'

'Well, look 'ere,' said Welks, ostentatiously thrusting his hand into his pocket, a motion which exercised a magnetic attraction upon Charley.

'Who came to the gallery while you were there?' asked Eltham.

'In the gall'ry? w'y, nobody.'

'Then who gave you the letter you brought to Mr Welks?'

'He—the footman.'

Further questions elicited the information that the footman belonged to the house to which Charley's father took his carriage. He would show the house if they liked; and, told they would like, he marched off before them up the mews, and along Hanover Street, drawing his hand against the railings as he went. This was the house; he was standing whistling to the cook's canary in the window, when the footman came up the steps and gave him a penny to take the note round to the gallery.

'Wot next?' inquired Welks, when the boy, duly fee'd, had run back to his game in the mews.

Eltham glanced at his watch; it was a quarter to eight, dinner-time, when the servants would be busiest. Nothing could be done for an hour or so at least, and what then, he had not quite resolved.

'You can go now, Welks; I'll see the business through, and will write to you to-morrow if I see this footman to-night. We are not going to catch the thief and pull the bit of the picture out of his coat-tail pocket this evening, you know,' he added, as the man hesitated. 'All I can do is find out from the footman who gave him the note for you.'

This did not seem to fully satisfy Welks; but after lingering a few moments, he muttered something and went off; Eltham, glad to be alone that he might consider his next move, glanced at the number of the house and strolled up the street. The address, 65 Hanover Street, seemed familiar to him, but in what connection he knew it he could not call to mind. The fact of the note having come from that house, and the idea that he ought to know who lived there, clung together, and he began to imagine that there might be a link, possibly an important one, between the two. He quickened his pace, and set off in search of a public-house whose window should offer that chaste excuse for refreshment in the shape of 'Post-office Directory Here.' He found one, and having gone through the necessary formality, at the cost of twopence, obtained the book he wanted. 65, Markham, Henry. Ah! for the second time that evening he felt his heart beating like a hammer. He knew the Markhams by name as friends of the Girdletons, and now remembered that he had been told they lived in Hanover Street. So the fateful note had come from their house. He pushed the directory aside, and left the place in a state of baffled wonderment that almost deprived him of power to think. What did it mean? What could it mean?

He had forgotten it was dinner-time for himself as well as for other people, as he returned to Hanover Street and began to pace up and down, keeping ever a watchful eye on the area gate of No. 65. The long June twilight was softening; a newsboy passed bawling 'extry spayshul,' and Eltham followed him, hoping that by chance the footman might be tempted out to buy; the boy sent a yell of exceptional volume, as it seemed, down that area, but it brought him no custom, and Eltham turned back. A policeman strolled by, and observing a respectable loiterer, remarked facetiously that ladies never *was* punctual. It was growing dusk now, and the lamplighter zigzagged his way up the street. Servants on their 'evening out' began to appear, and every clang of area gate made Eltham turn; but nobody emerged from that he watched.

It was nearly ten o'clock when his dogged patience was rewarded. Passing for the fiftieth time, he saw by the light of the street lamp the figure of a man at the area gate of No. 65. Was it? He crossed over and faced an overgrown boy in buttons who had obviously been sent out to post the letter he had in his hand. Eltham pulled himself together and accosted the youth.

'Are you Mr Markham's footman?'

The tall page stared as if in doubt for a moment and said, 'Yes.'

'Would you mind answering a question or two?'

The tall page did not know; he had to go to the post.

Eltham promptly said he would go with him, and made a timely demonstration of selecting a coin from a handful of small change.

'Do you remember one Sunday about six weeks ago, giving the coachman's little boy a penny to take a note round to Bond Street?'

The page did not think he recollected; he carried such a many notes. But his memory having been judiciously aided by mention of the hour and repetition of Charley's account of the circumstances, he recalled the incident.

Who gave him the note? Was it the mistress now? The mistress? The page inquired of himself in a dull, heavy way. Or the young mistress? He could not say who gave him the note; but he remembered that he told the parlour-maid he was going out, and she said she could not let him, because lunch was just going in and there was company, and she didn't care if he had been told to take a note to Bond Street or not—— He remembered that it was the young mistress, because of something the parlour-maid said.

Eltham felt that he was getting no further forward. He thought for a minute and asked the page who 'the company' consisted of at lunch that day. The youth repeated 'The company, sir?' vaguely, and Eltham crushed down his growing impatience and replied, 'Yes; who were they? ladies or'——

'It was Miss Girdleton, sir, I remember, because when I'd enounced her, the young mistress calls me back and says, "Take this note," and Miss Girdleton says, "It's late; could he go now?"'

Eltham started visibly at mention of Miss Girdleton's name, but mastering himself with an effort, he asked the servant if he recollected whether the lady stayed long after lunch. The page, however, seemed to be growing uneasy or suspicious at so many inquiries, and replied, with more decision than he had yet shown, that he did not know. Recognising that there was nothing more to be extracted from him, Eltham gave him a shilling, said good-night, and turned towards Regent Street, where he would find an omnibus to take him homewards. His investigations had certainly led

him in a most unlooked-for direction, and he was more utterly mystified than ever. The idea that Annie Girdleton was in any way mixed up with the picture-cutting affair was absurd, but she might be able to give him valuable assistance in unravelling it. In the peculiar circumstances he must set aside his promise not to correspond and write to her; all he need do was to ask her if she remembered lunching with the Markhams on that Sunday, and how it came that she was the sender of that note; half a sheet of note-paper would suffice, and her answer received, he could go on again. How lucky it was, what a really wonderful stroke of good fortune, that that page was such an idiot! A youth of ordinary intelligence must have connected the note with the outrage when he read of it in the newspapers, and could thus have put into the hands of the detectives a key that would unlock the whole mystery. His dullness had demanded patience, but Eltham felt quite affectionate towards the slow-witted fellow now.

He wrote to Miss Girdleton that same evening; he told her how he had been induced to pursue his quest; touched upon the precious possibilities which lay behind success, and begged her to tell him how she came to despatch that note. Half a sheet of note-paper and three whole sheets sufficed for the communication.

As he had anticipated, when he went up to Bond Street next morning, Welks was waiting about for him, eager to hear the result of last night's inquiries. Eltham told him he had discovered the person who sent the note, but the sender was at present staying in the country; he had written, and as soon as a reply was received they would go on with their task; they must be content to suspend operations for a few days; the delay would do no harm now they were fairly on the scent. Welks was quite satisfied to leave the mode of procedure to his colleague and said so; but Mr Eltham had forgotten to say who it was had given the letter to the boy. Now Eltham had expected this very natural question, but, unwilling to bring Miss Girdleton's adored name into the matter at all, did not care to answer it. He hesitated, and Welks repeated his query respectfully but firmly.

'I ought to tell you,' said Eltham hesitatingly, 'but for purely personal reasons I don't want to mention the name: it—it was a friend of mine.'

To a mind of the order of Welks' this hesitation could mean only that Eltham was shuffling or worse.

'You don't want to say?' he echoed, fixing the young man with the eye of distrust, 'and w'y? I've trusted you; told you and only you everythink I could tell. Now you're agoin' back on me when the work's done.'

In vain Eltham vowed he was not; that the name of the sender was quite immaterial; that in a couple of days at most he would tell everything. Welks grew more sullen and less respectful; he pressed the question, and its very reasonableness baffled Eltham.

'I didn't ought to have left you alone, last night,' growled the man meaningly.

'Do you imagine I would try and swindle you out of your share of the reward if we got it?' asked Eltham. 'Why, man, I could have done nothing without your information.'

Welks 'did not 'magine nothink' but Mr Eltham was playing a game for two, and maybe others would pay for the information he had found so useful; he would see, anyhow. And with this final shaft he slouched off.

## ROTHENBURG AND ITS GIANT WINE-CUP.

On the western confines of Bavaria, and less than a couple of miles from the border-line between that province and Würtemberg, the little town of Rothenburg has hitherto remained secure from the ravages of the ubiquitous tripper. Although situated almost in the centre of a district literally overrun with English and American tourists, this charming fragment of the Middle Ages is not only comparatively unknown to all but antiquaries and artists, but has actually resisted the ruthless hand of modern civilisation with such complete success, that many people consider it superior to Nuremberg as a specimen of a mediæval town. Natural advantages have, doubtless, contributed largely to this result. The fact that it occupies the summit of a hill, the base of which is washed on three sides by a small stream, renders addition to the town difficult in the extreme. It is situated in the midst of hilly country, it follows no special industry, and it does not lie on a high-road between towns of importance; these circumstances may account for the unaffected mediævalism which is the characteristic of the place. Imagine a town of eight thousand inhabitants falling asleep in the middle of the seventeenth century, and waking in this—the latter end of the nineteenth—to find itself completely untouched, by the modernising influence of advanced civilisation. Such a town is Rothenburg, and, fortunately, another of its features affords a prospect of its remaining in this picturesque but unique condition, and that is, the breadth of the streets, which are so wide as to give no excuse to the German equivalent for a county council to endeavour to widen them. The mediæval character of the town is enhanced, too, by the excellent preservation of the ancient fortifications, the walls being practically intact.

But of all the attractive features of this charming spot, the annual Festspiel, celebrating the capture of the town by Tilly during the Thirty Years' War, ranks first. At that time, and indeed until 1803, Rothenburg was a free city, taking an active part in the Peasants' War of 1525, and in the Thirty Years' War of the following century. It was in the course of the latter, in 1631, that the celebrated Tilly appeared before Rothenburg, and demanded its capitulation. This the citizens refused, with the result that the gallant little town was besieged and taken. Tilly and his generals proceeded to the Rathhaus, and demanded the

municipal keys of the burgomaster. At the same time he imposed a fine of thirty thousand thalers, and garrisoned the town with his soldiers. The burgomaster pleaded in vain for some mitigation of the penalty, until the victorious general, after remaining for some time unmoved by his entreaties, conceived the extraordinary notion of offering to restore the freedom of the town, on condition that one of the inhabitants should come forward and empty at one draught an immense beaker of wine, containing about three and a half litres (over three quarts). This was an unheard-of feat, even in those hard-drinking days, and for some time his offer remained unaccepted. The opportunity of freeing the town from a foreign yoke seemed, however, too important to be lost, and accordingly, a patriotic citizen named Nusch resolved to attempt the difficult task imposed by the conqueror. As a matter of fact, he drained the beaker at one draught, and though tradition relates that a severe illness followed the feat, still he saved the town, for Tilly kept his word, and restored the independence of Rothenburg.

It is this interesting scrap of history which is celebrated every year at Rothenburg. The Kaisersaal of the Rathhaus, the actual scene of the occurrence, is fitted with a stage, on which the representation, consisting of two acts, is performed. Scenery, of course, is unnecessary, the hall having undergone no alteration since the incident which gave rise to the festival, two hundred and fifty years ago, was enacted.

The play begins with an announcement by the burgomaster that Tilly has laid siege to the town. He is soon joined by the chief citizens, and together they decide upon the course of action they shall adopt. The master of arms enters at this moment with a chosen band, and assures the burgomaster of the loyalty of his followers, and of their determination to preserve the town from destruction. Soon after their departure, the firing of cannon is heard at irregular intervals.

The opening of the second act finds the chief citizens seated together in the council chamber, from time to time receiving news of the battle, brought by special messengers from various parts of the fortifications. The firing, which has hitherto been irregular, now becomes loud and frequent, when suddenly a messenger enters, his head bandaged, and bleeding from a severe wound. He brings the dreaded news that the Powder Tower has been blown up, that Tilly has effected an entrance, and is advancing with his officers on the Rathhaus. A few moments of suspense follow, when the conqueror, preceded by heralds, and followed by his officers and a company of armed men, enters the Kaisersaal, and occupies the seat vacated by the burgomaster. Having announced the punishment he proposes inflicting on the town, he is approached by some chosen citizens with a view to obtaining mercy. Tilly, however, remains inexorable, and the deputation is just retreating, when the cellarer comes forward, and offers the victor and his generals the best wine the town can produce. After some hesitation the offer is accepted, and soon afterwards, an immense glass, containing over three imperial quarts of wine, is brought in. Having tasted the wine and pronounced it excellent, Tilly drinks once more with his generals, when it occurs to him to ascertain the capacity of the vessel. The cellarer informs him that no man has ever drained its contents at one draught, and then it is that Tilly, ordering it to be filled once more, offers to restore the independence of Rothenburg if one of its citizens will perform the feat. Consternation fills the whole assembly, when the heroic Nusch comes forward, and after a short prayer, begins the task which was to free his native city. This is the 'Meistertrunk,' the incident giving its name to the Festspiel, and it is here that the interest in the play reaches its climax. Deep silence fills the hall as Nusch gradually drains the huge glass, when Tilly, rising from his seat amid great excitement, realises with some dismay that the feat is accomplished, and demands the name of the hero. He then declares himself satisfied that the conditions have been fulfilled, and after receiving the thanks of the citizens, and a bouquet at the hands of the cellarer's daughter, retires with his officers from the Rathhaus.

Such is the outline of the Festspiel, in which about a hundred persons—all natives of the little town itself—take part. The acting is excellent, and it is frequently difficult to realise that the performers are quite innocent of dramatic training. The costumes are accurate copies of those of the period in which the incident took place, and contribute largely to the charm of the scene. Tilly himself is a capital representation, both as regards acting and costume, while the burgomaster scarcely falls short of him in either respect.

In the afternoon—for this quaint performance takes place in the morning—the victorious Tilly and his followers march in a procession through the town, finally encamping in a part of the ancient moat. Upwards of three hundred people, many of whom are on horseback, take part in the procession, and it adds very considerably to the interest of the day. Several Hungarians were numbered among Tilly's actual forces, and these are faithfully represented, together with a few prisoners and captured spies, who are secured to carts and gun-carriages. The weapons carried by this strange army are those of the period which it is intended to represent, and look just as if they had been borrowed from the Tower of London for the occasion; large two-edged swords, lighter basket-hilted ones, halberds, spears of blood-curdling pattern, obsolete muskets and pistols, all help to give character and reality to the scene. One feels transported from the prosaic everyday life of the nineteenth century back to the romantic glamour of the seventeenth, of which the poetry alone, without the inconveniences, remains to us; and the mediæval appearance of the streets and houses goes far in preserving the illusion. As the last of this strange army vanishes, like the spirit of an age that is past, a bewildering feeling steals over one; the kind of bewilderment Rip van Winkle probably experienced on coming to life

once more; the kind of bewilderment one is a prey to as a child, when the merciless curtain descends on a brilliant transformation scene at the pantomime. It is difficult to banish the feeling of vague regret on being compelled to return to the outer world, to be swept on by the tide of 'improvements,' which have done so much to destroy the charm of little towns like Rothenburg.

## THE STORY OF AN I.D.B.

'Well, old man,' said an unfamiliar voice, as I was waiting for my train at Liverpool Street, 'you're not a day older. Going home to tea in the same old steady fashion? What, don't you know me? I should have known *you* anywhere!'

With puzzled eyes I turned and stared at a big bronzed bearded man whom I had no recollection of having seen before. He laughed loudly at my perplexity—so loudly that several people stared at us, which as a staid city man, hating to be conspicuous, I very much disliked. Consequently it was in no friendly fashion that I eyed the stranger who thus noisily claimed acquaintance.

'Don't you remember Harry Downham,' he said at last, 'who worked under you in that dog-hole of an office long ago—where I suppose you're still grinding on in the same old way? Shake!' he added peremptorily, thrusting out a huge sunburnt hand with which he grasped mine till my fingers were crushed. 'Now you must come and dine with me. Your wife? Oh! she won't mind your playing truant for once;' and in a short time my masterful acquaintance and I were seated opposite each other in a well-known restaurant.

Yes, I did now remember him. But he was changed indeed from the slim young fellow who had been the flightiest clerk in the office, and whose shortcomings had, after innumerable grumblings on the part of the firm, led to his dismissal. Occasional surmises had since been indulged in by his former comrades as to his career, none of them of a complimentary kind, as I candidly remarked.

'They weren't so far wrong,' he answered carelessly. 'I was never fit for humdrum life and bricks and mortar. The wild freedom of uncivilised regions was my ideal. Would you like to hear my adventures? though your rigid respectability may be somewhat rudely shocked.'

Of course I assented. One always has a certain curiosity about an acquaintance who disappears in impecunious guise, and turns up years afterwards with all the external signs of wealth which Downham showed in rather too pronounced a fashion for good taste.

'Where have you come from?' I said, looking at his bronzed face curiously.

'From South Africa. Landed at Southampton two days ago. Am I going back? No, sir, not much. It wouldn't be healthy. The country's too hot—in all senses. I've made my pile, and am going to settle down in the south of France, where my sister's been living as a governess for years. Poor girl, she'll know what leisure and luxury are now; and there's a charming place I've bought there. Climate and surroundings just suit me, for my chest, big as I look, sometimes gets wrong.

'What have I done in South Africa? All sorts of things. But my last and most, or rather sole, successful part was that of an I.D.B.'

I looked at him in some perplexity, for what he meant I could not guess.

He watched me with an amused smile. 'You seem puzzled, old man,' he said. 'It's nothing to do with dynamite (I started—being a nervous man). Not but what explosions of a sort are sometimes its consequence. I thought you knew what those mysterious initials meant. They're as plain in South Africa as A B C in your foggy island. I.D.B. means an Illicit Diamond Buyer. An illicit diamond is one which has been conveyed—good word that, Shakespearian isn't it?—from the mine in other than legal fashion. And there's a deal of legality, let me tell you, in diamond-digging. There's a big staff of officials to look after it. Illicit diamonds are usually found and disposed of by the Kaffirs employed in the mines—though by no means only by them—and sold much below their value to—well—speculators like myself, who take their chance in view of the big profit.'

'What?' I gasped. 'Then you actually bought—stolen property!'

'Well,' he said, coolly refilling our glasses, 'that's perhaps your way of putting it here. It's not ours in South Africa. Besides, I think I've heard even in this respectable city of money-lenders buying reversions for a mere song, and speculators purchasing stocks and shares from despondent holders, knowing secretly that those stocks and shares were going up in a day or two with a bound. Also of houses and land bought, from private knowledge of a speedy demand for them, for a trifle, the sellers being quite ignorant of it. Haven't *you* heard of such things?'

I did not reply. I was too much upset. Here was I, a head clerk of many years' standing, dining and drinking champagne at the cost of an illicit diamond buyer.

'However,' he resumed somewhat tartly, 'I don't ask for your approval; I simply wanted to amuse you with the story of my adventures; so you may imagine I'm soliloquising.

'Why should the mining companies have the monopoly of all the diamond yielding districts?' he continued in a fierce tone (and I thought it best to drink my champagne since the bottle was opened and say nothing—these adventurers sometimes carry revolvers, I believe). 'There's a big profit in these things. The law is very stringent, and there's great difficulty in passing the stones from the finder to the I.D.B. But the profit tempts people—and in all classes too, let me tell you—to engage directly or indirectly in the traffic.

'I began very modestly, and as capital increased I increased my speculations. At last, suspicion was awakened, and I was searched, when leaving the Fields. But the searcher, though very pertinacious and clever, had been seen by me before I saw him. I was smoking a big Dutch pipe, and this gave me an idea.—"Sublime tobacco that from east to west!" You don't smoke yet, I suppose? No! Oh, you've missed a good deal of life's pleasures.—Well, I

popped my four diamonds into the big bowl, covered it with 'baccy, and went on puffing and chaffing the searcher, who was burning to distinguish himself. I knew this defeat would make him more pertinacious than ever. And so it was. Now I had bought of a Kaffir some stones of great value, and how to get them out safely puzzled me not a little. Some fellows under similar circumstances had recently tried various dodges which had long been popular, false boot-heels, hollow riding-whips, and so on, and in each case the diamonds had been discovered with very unpleasant consequences. For years of compulsory working at the breakwater, for instance, may be the result, and yet I was determined to chance it rather than lose these stones, which I shall never forget for the trouble they cost me.

'After perplexing myself day and night—my enemy X always hovering about near me—a sudden idea flashed into my brain. I had a particularly ugly bulldog who was of a surly disposition, and was much laughed at on account of my fondness for him. This dog wore a thick collar which was a necessity, and that collar gave me the "tip." I removed it, cut slips in the inside and put the diamonds in them. As I was leaving the Fields, X of course pounced on me, and I affected a certain amount of uneasiness, which produced on his mind corresponding glee.'

Here Downham paused and opened his pocket-book, and from it he took the photo of about as ugly, ferocious, and disreputable a bulldog as was ever associated with heroes of the Bill Sykes class.

'Isn't he a beauty?' he said fondly, as he handed me the photo. 'I shall always love that poor dog: he died on the voyage home from the absurd prejudices of some of the passengers who didn't appreciate his playful nature—as I'm pretty sure—and pushed him overboard; at any rate he disappeared. Yes, sir, that dog got my best haul through!'

'Didn't X search him?' I timidly queried.

'Search him! Everybody gave him as wide a berth as they could—they were under delusions about him, pretty creature! No—poor Grip lay down, while the clever X was fussing about me, and growled at him. "Send that infernal dog of yours off," he said irritably, and little did he think when I obediently did so that he was sending off the biggest haul of I.D.s he was ever likely to find. Of course he found nothing on me, and his rage was a caution. However, he went off, and some days later I started homewards by leisurely stages.

'I felt pretty secure by this time, and carried the diamonds in my pocket. However, as the train left the station for Capetown, I chanced to see one of the diamond fields detectives jump into the guard's van. That was a sufficient hint to me to make things snug, but how to get rid of the diamonds this time I could not see, as Grip wasn't accompanying me that journey. Looking round the carriage, I saw a broken black bottle under the seat. There was my *cache*, as the Indians say.'

'But surely the detective,' I mildly interposed, 'would have looked under the seat?'

'Well, I suppose he would,' duly remarked Downham, 'unless he were as big an idiot as—some people. Just wait, my good friend, before you credit a man with congenital idiocy.'

I shrank back silent. He looked fierce and dagger-like, and on the whole I began to wish I'd gone to Liverpool Street for some other train.

'What I did,' he resumed, 'was this: I wrapped up all the stones in pieces of newspaper, and carefully put them into the bottle, filling up the spaces by more paper as tightly as possible. Then I looked carelessly out of the window, smoking, but my eye always on the guard's van. When I saw nobody looking out—of course the chap thought I hadn't seen him, and was probably telling the guard what a fine haul he was going to make—I quietly dropped the broken bottle clear of the line, marking the spot—one's eye gets well trained out on the veldt, you know.

'At the next station up came the detective. They have power to search suspects, you know, and I was accordingly rummaged again. But this chap, Z let's say, was as unsuccessful and as riled as X. Of course I hadn't a diamond about me. And much indignation did I display. Some days later I went back to the place where I dropped my black bottle, found it and its contents intact. After that I had no more adventures with those stones, and they—partly—bought my place in the south of France.

'Yes, they're very clever those D.F.D.s, and have many people in their pay, both black and white, called "traps." They don't usually make mistakes, but they did in my case. What do *you* think?' concluded Downham, emptying his glass.

What I thought I certainly was not going to say, and, indeed, I hardly knew where I was. It was an awful experience for a steady-going man of business whose career has been as unruffled as a duck-pond. I parted from him, however, with much outward cordiality, but I have not seen him since. I sincerely hope that he will remain at his place in the south of France, which I shall carefully avoid if I ever visit the Continent.

## A THRUSH'S SONG.

A song of exultation, strange and sweet.
What hidden dreams of Spring within thy breast
Console thee, in that passionate strain expressed?
A poor caged captive in a narrow street—
No respite from the fret of passing feet—
No listening mate, no outspread wing, no nest.
Yet visions of some inward charm possessed
Make blissful freedom of thy sad retreat.

If I, a captive singer, for one hour
Upon the confines of such joy might stand,
I too should share thy courage and thy power.
Give me one glimpse of thine enchanted land,
I too would utter transport. None should guess
A broken heart that sings of happiness.

E. Blair Oliphant.

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## UNITED STATES CURRENCY.

To an ordinary British citizen, a currency difficulty is something of a mystery. He goes about his daily business, settling his minor transactions in the gold and silver coin of the realm, with the occasional use in England of a five or ten pound note, and the more frequent one in Scotland of the pound notes in such active circulation. The weekly return of the Bank of England is about the last thing in the world he ever dreams of studying, and if he did, the chances are he would not understand it. He knows there is sufficient gold there to cash all the notes he is ever likely to have, and still leave a little in the vaults for the next comer, and consequently goes on his way with contentment. The cables from the United States, which have for some time past been published almost daily in the leading newspapers, are apt, therefore, to bother him, and he wants to know what all the fuss is about.

In the first place, the foundations on which the currencies of the two countries are built are radically different. The note-issuing institutions in Great Britain are joint-stock chartered institutions, in which the public are stockholders, and which are absolutely free from any departmental control of Government, although the issues are regulated by Act of Parliament. A certain reserve must be maintained in gold coin or bullion, and the balance must be covered by high-class interest-bearing securities, such as consols. But in the United States, the national Treasury is the issuing and controlling institution for the greater part of the note circulation, which is largely in excess, both actually and in proportion to population, as compared with this country. Notes are issued there from one dollar upwards, and coin, except for the fractional parts of a dollar, is unpopular and little used. The Treasury is legally enjoined to hold in reserve a certain amount of gold against its notes, a much smaller percentage, however, than the Bank of England, and the remainder is covered simply by the national credit. When the Bank of England loses too much of its gold, it has to sell a portion of its securities to increase its stock; but when the United States Treasury is in a similar position, it has no negotiable securities to fall back upon, and is compelled, therefore, to borrow from the public. That is what is taking place at the present time, only as fast as the Treasury is replenished, the gold is drawn out again for reasons which we have now to consider.

The existing currency arrangements date no further back than the civil war, some four and thirty years ago. Previous to that period, there had been many rash experiments, and much ensuing trouble. As far back as the War of Independence, there had been a paper currency, and from that moment the nation might be divided economically into two camps, hard money men and soft money men. The former contended that all financial settlements should be effected in gold or silver dollars of full value; the latter always hankered to make legal tender something that was not as good as honest metallic dollars, and so inflate the currency. First one party and then the other gained the upper hand, but the result of a temporary victory of soft money principles was one of the worst panics the country has ever experienced, in the year 1837, when there was scarcely a solvent bank or mercantile establishment left in the States. Hard money then won the day, and in 1840 it was resolved that all payments made to or by the Treasury must be in gold or silver. That meant that all lands sold by Government had to be paid for in that way, and the principal object of inflation was to buy those lands cheap. With that wonderful recuperative power, which has been the marvel as well as the envy of the older European states, the United States shook off the effects of the disaster, and twenty years later, had practically liquidated their national

debt, and established their currency on a sound hard money basis.

Then followed the ever memorable struggle between North and South, which for several years engaged the attention of every active citizen, and brought the industrial work of the country almost to a standstill. Both sides were soon short of money, and had to resort to various expedients to raise it. The South issued Confederate bonds, and sold them for whatever they would fetch, many English sympathisers investing in them at low prices, only to lose whatever they put in them. The North began to issue the famous greenbacks, so-called from the colour in which the back of the notes was printed, and in February 1862, decreed by Act of Congress that they should be legal tender. At first they passed current for very nearly their face value, but soon underwent a rapid depreciation, and by the middle of the same year, were worth little more than half the gold or silver dollar. This process continued, until two years later the paper dollar was worth barely forty cents in good money. But in the meantime another step had been taken. The Government of the North found it quite impossible to go on issuing greenbacks in unlimited quantities, and like the South, was compelled to borrow in interest-bearing bonds. As an inducement to banks to subscribe freely for these, the National Bank Act was passed in 1863, by which properly constituted banks were authorised to issue notes up to ninety per cent. of the face value of any bonds they held and lodged with the Treasury. Thus came into existence the two principal paper issues of the United States, the greenbacks, or, as they are officially called, legal tender notes, and the national bank-notes.

Soon after the conclusion of the war, the struggle between the hard and soft money men was renewed. There was a fairly general consensus of opinion that the national debt, then somewhere about five hundred millions sterling, must be reduced, if not paid off entirely, but one side wished also to resume specie payments, while the other insisted on the greenbacks, amounting to about three hundred and fifty million dollars (£70,000,000), remaining inconvertible. It was decreed, however, that payment should be resumed on the 1st January 1879, and that for that purpose, the Treasury should never hold a less sum than one hundred million dollars in gold, or a reserve equal to nearly thirty per cent. The quantity in circulation was not to be increased; the nation was by that time again advancing in prosperity by leaps and bounds, debt was being rapidly discharged, and as the banks had to relinquish the bonds to the Government, they were compelled to withdraw the notes issued against them. Thus the very awkward predicament arose, of a rapidly increasing trade having to be carried on with a constantly decreasing currency, and a fresh agitation for inflation sprang up.

In the meantime, however, another very important event had happened; Germany had demonetised silver in 1873. Up to that year, the gold and silver dollar had always been of intrinsically the same value, but in Acts relating to legal tender, the gold dollar only was accustomed to be mentioned, probably only by accident, as there was then no idea that silver was about to undergo any severe depreciation. But when that metal began to fall rapidly in value, those interested in the silver-mines of the West conceived that they had been tricked, and joined hands with the soft money men for the reinstatement of the silver dollar in the currency as full legal tender. That meant in reality a change from a gold to a silver standard, because, when silver had depreciated twenty per cent., nobody would pay a gold dollar when a silver one worth eighty cents would discharge the debt. The outcome of the movement was the passing of the Bland Act in 1878, under which a quantity of silver was to be purchased by Government every month sufficient to coin two and a half million standard silver dollars. With great effort about fifty millions of these dollars were forced into circulation, until at last the American people rebelled, and would take no more of a coin nearly equal in size to our five-shilling piece, which, on account of its unwieldiness went at one time by the designation of 'a cart wheel.' But the coinage had to go on, in accordance with the Act, and the question arose, what was to become of it? It was answered by a decision to issue certificates against it, and so during the twelve years that the act remained in operation, silver certificates or notes for upwards of three hundred million dollars (£60,000,000) were issued, and put into circulation.

Everything apparently went well, and the prophecies of the bankers and capitalists of the Eastern States, to the effect that the country would pass to a silver standard, were entirely falsified. Two things had in fact been going on during those twelve years to delay the inevitable result—the expansion of the country required a constantly expanding currency, and the withdrawal of national bank-notes at the same time created an additional opening. The three hundred and sixty million silver dollars therefore, mostly in the form of paper, proved no incubus, and circulated side by side with the gold ones, particularly as they were tenderable to Government in payment of all taxes and customs duties. But in spite of the absorption of so much silver, that metal had gone on declining in value, and the silver party in America, determined to give it a lift, and emboldened by their previous success, sought to improve upon the Bland Act. In 1890 they substituted the Sherman Act for it, by which the Government was compelled to purchase every month four and a half million ounces of silver at the market price, deposit it in the vaults of the Treasury at Washington, and issue in payment to the sellers, notes payable in either silver or gold at the option of the Secretary to the Treasury. It had taken twelve years under the Bland Act to issue three hundred million paper dollars, but in three years of the Sherman Act, one hundred and fifty millions more were issued, at a time too when trade had begun to decline, when the redemption of debt had ceased, and the withdrawal of national bank-notes in consequence suspended.

It is not to be wondered at, that the long-deferred crisis eventually arrived, and the process of piling up liabilities against unrealisable assets had to be stopped. In the midst of another panic, only less severe than that of 1837, the Sherman Act was repealed; but the mischief had already been accomplished, and the United States, instead of the usual quick recovery, has been sinking deeper and deeper in the mire. European, and more especially British investors, fearful of having to accept silver in exchange for the gold they lent, have been withdrawing their capital wholesale, and demanding its repayment in gold. The Treasury has been constantly exhausted by the presentation of greenbacks for payment, to secure the necessary supplies; and in addition fully one half the Sherman notes, issued in payment for silver, have been presented and cashed in gold. The strain would have been less severe had all these notes so cashed been cancelled, or put away for future issue in prosperous days. But the ordinary finances of the country have fallen into confusion, the national expenditure has largely exceeded the national income, and deficit has been followed by deficit, until the total in three years will amount in all probability to thirty millions sterling. Instead of raising this money by increased taxation, or by borrowing on interest-bearing bonds, the notes presented for payment have been made use of, and paid out again in settlement of the ordinary demands on the Treasury, and so the candle has been burned at both ends. If Europe goes on selling its securities, there will not be anything like sufficient gold to pay for them, and the United States themselves will have to be taken in pawn.

There is one other form of currency still to be mentioned—namely, gold certificates. But these are only issued, dollar for dollar, against gold deposited with the Treasury and ear-marked, and they are only comparable to our sovereigns and half-sovereigns. Americans, however, dislike coin, and prefer money in this form, so that these certificates do not really enter into the present controversy at all.

President Cleveland is to be commiserated, and not blamed for the present state of affairs, at any rate in so far as it has not been intensified by his recent message on the Venezuelan question. He has boldly confronted, and sought to solve the difficulty, but has been hampered in every movement by an unsympathetic and adverse Congress, which refuses to adopt any scheme he proposes. The credit of the country, with its immense natural wealth, is practically unimpaired, and money could be borrowed in abundance on easy terms, were repayment guaranteed in gold. But Congress will sanction no gold loans, and the President is compelled to exercise such powers as he possesses, to borrow subject to repayment in coin, which may mean silver. The terms therefore are comparatively onerous, in order to cover the risk, and four and five per cent. has to be paid, where otherwise three would be ample. During the year 1894, loans for one hundred million dollars were made on this basis; at the beginning of 1895, another was issued for sixty-two million dollars; and at the present time, arrangements are in progress for a further sum of one or two hundred million dollars, the fate of which is hanging in the balance as this article is being written. The net result so far, however, is that the debt of the country has been increased by upwards of thirty millions sterling, bearing an annual interest charge of one and a half millions, with the prospect of indefinite addition to both. A heavy price to pay, undoubtedly, for experiments in currency, and an attempt to bolster up silver.

The immediate outlook would be utterly hopeless, were it not that there is much truth in the well-worn saying, 'the darkest hour is that before the dawn.' People on both sides of the Atlantic who have been working for, and confidently predicting an improvement in the situation, now admit that there is no prospect of a settlement until another President and Congress have been elected, and are able to act in harmony, which cannot be until the 1st of March 1897. The settlement of what has become so complicated a matter could certainly not be effected in a day or in a month. Yet it is sometimes asserted that, if resolutely dealt with, the currency question might be a thing of the past ere President Cleveland leaves the White House. Some insist that it could be done without loss to the foreign creditor, and with small loss to the American community, if only the United States would frankly recognise that the amount of gold required to restore confidence and place the finances on a sound basis is actually not to be obtained, and so adopt a silver currency—although it is admitted that most of the methods by which it is proposed to carry out this change are absolutely dishonest. Other authorities are content to fix their hopes on the definitive dispelling of all doubt as to what the financial unit is to be, and on the centralisation of the national banking system—possibly by the development of the existing clearing-house system.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER VI.—IN THE EVENING.

In the evening the other part of the bargain began.

'My turn now,' I said. 'If I can only get this aching out of my shoulders. I am now going to be your coach—a judicious coach. The first point, I am told, that a judicious coach observes, is never to teach more than is wanted. And the next thing is to rub in what he does teach—to rub it in by incessant repetition.'

'It will be labour thrown away,' he grumbled. 'You will never make a fine gentleman of me.'

'My dear cousin, I am not going to try. I am, however, going to make of you a man acquainted with, and accustomed to, the usages of society. You are to belong to the world of society, not of fashion. The House of Commons has still a large majority of men who belong to that world. A knowledge of their habits, I

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have already told you, is absolutely indispensable.'

'Oh! Very good, then, I am ready.' But he was not eager; he was rather glum about the work in hand.

'Yes, but you must be more than ready. You must be as eager to learn this branch of knowledge as any other. Don't grumble over it—like an unwilling schoolboy.'

'Look here, Sir George'——

'Don't call me Sir George to begin with. You are my cousin. Call me George, and I shall call you Robert.'

'Very well. I confess I don't like it. How would you like to be told that you don't know manners? Hang it, the thing sticks.'

'Let us say then, the manners of the West End. Don't let it stick, old man. Now listen. First of all you must have dress-clothes, and you must put them on every evening.'

'What the devil does a man want with dress-clothes?'

'I will tell you when I have time. Meanwhile you must have them. The next thing is that from the moment you leave Wapping till you get home again, you are not to speak one word concerning your projects, or your ambitions, or your opinions.'

'I don't mind that condition. No one but yourself does know my ambitions.'

'Very well, then, that's settled so far. Now let us sit down and consider my scheme.' We had now reached my chambers, and we were in the study where the lathe was. 'I have been making out a little skeleton scheme—in my head.'

'Let us hear it.' We sat down solemnly opposite each other to discuss this question seriously.

'What do we want? To make you a man of the world. Some things you won't want to learn—whist, billiards, lawn-tennis, dancing.'

'No,' he grinned, 'not billiards or dancing—or betting, or gambling.'

'The first thing, the most important thing, is to get the dinner arrangements right. With this view we will begin with a course of restaurants. I don't say that one meets with the very finest manners possible at a restaurant, but still the people who go there have at least got a veneer; they understand the elements. I need not tell you much. You will look about you and observe things and compare and teach yourself.'

'Well? We are to waste time and money over a needless and expensive late dinner, are we? And all because there's a way of holding a fork.'

'It is part of the programme. After a while I shall take you to the theatre, which is sometimes a very good school of manners, and there you will see, on and off the stage, ladies in their evening splendour.'

'Jezebels. Painted Jezebels.'

'Not all of them. A few, perhaps, here and there. Later on you will be able to distinguish Jezebel. But it is best not to think about that lady. Remember that a well-dressed woman has never come within your experience, and it is time for you to make her acquaintance. After a week or two of restaurants I will take you to a club and introduce you to some of our fellows. You can sit quiet at first and listen. Their talk is not exactly intellectual, but it shows a way of looking at things.'

'I know. Like you talk. Just as if nothing mattered, and everything was all right and as it should be.'

'Not dogmatic nor downright. Not as if we were going to fight to the death for our opinions.'

'If the opinion is worth having, it is worth defending. You ought to fight for it.'

'My dear cousin, formerly opinions were distinct and clearly outlined. Nowadays there is so much to be said on the other side that all opinions have grown hazy and blurred. For instance, you want perhaps to pull down the House of Lords.'

'No, I don't. I want to reform the House.'

'Well, if you did you would be astonished to learn what a lot can be said for the peers, and how extremely dangerous it would be to pull down their House, because the House of Commons leans against it, and all the houses in the country lean against the House of Commons. When you have grasped that fact, where is the clearness of your opinion? Gone, sir—gone.'

'You think that you will change me completely, then.'

'Not quite completely. Only in certain points. I shall try to graft upon you the manner of a finished gentleman. No one could possibly look the part better. You might be an earl to look at. Of course, the garb will have to be reconsidered—those boots, for instance.' Robert looked quickly at mine as compared with his own, and blushed. He blushed at his own boots. This was a note of progress. 'But all in good time. You shall not present yourself in a drawing-room until you can enter it, and stand in it, and talk in it, as if you belonged to the world of drawing-rooms.'

Robert entered upon his part of his education with much the same enthusiasm as is shown by a dog of intelligence going off to be washed. It has to be done; he knows that; and he goes, but unwillingly. Nobody has any conception of the numberless little points in which Wapping may differ from Piccadilly. Wapping, you see, has so long been cut off from external influences. The influence of the clergy, beneficent in other respects, is not felt at the Wapping dinner-table. And the Burnikels, by the retirement of the other old families, the aristocracy of the quarter, have remained almost the only substantial people of the place. Therefore, for a great many years, they have lived alone; and their manners, as a natural consequence, have continued to be much the same as the manners of their forefathers.

Take, for instance, the ordinary dinner napkin. It is astonishing to note how many mistakes may be made with a simple dinner napkin, when a man takes one in hand for the first time. There were no dinner napkins at

Wapping. There had been, many years ago, but they went out when forks came in. That is to say, so far as the children were concerned, just about two hundred years ago. The right handling of the dinner napkin can only be acquired by custom. So also with wine and wine-glasses. If you are perfectly ignorant of wine, except that the black kind is port, and the straw colour means sherry, and that either kind, but especially the former, may be exhibited on Sunday, you become bewildered with the amount of wine lore that one is supposed to know.

'You are getting on,' I remarked, after six weeks of almost heart-breaking work, because—I repeat that one would never believe that isolation could make such a difference—everything had to be learned. This young man was steeped in the things he had learned from books—political economy, history, sociology, philosophy, trade questions, practical questions—he was a most learned person; but of the things of which men talk, or men and women talk, he knew nothing, absolutely nothing. Art, poetry, fiction, the theatre, sport, games, things personal—which take up so large a share in the daily talk—on all these things he was mute. He came to the club with me, and sat perfectly silent; disdainful at first, but presently angry with himself for not being able to take a part, and with the fellows for talking on subjects so trifling.

'I'm a rank outsider,' he said. 'I heard one of them call me a rank outsider. Thought I couldn't hear him. If he'd said it in the street, I'd have laid him in the gutter. A rank outsider. Do you think, George, that you will ever make me anything else?'

'What does it matter if you are a rank outsider in some things? Patience, and let us go on.'

At first he grumbled; he could see no use in trifles, such as ceremonials of society. We have simplified these of late years; still, some forms remain.

'You will want to be received,' I told him, 'as a man of culture. These are the outward and visible forms of culture.'

He listened and reflected. Presently I observed that he took greater interest in things—he was realising what things meant. Finally, the recognition of things arrived quite suddenly. Then he grumbled no longer. He looked about him interested and amused. He sat out plays, and talked about the life pictured—a very queer sort of life it is, for the most part. As for the acting, he accepted the finest acting as part of the play, without comment. He was like an intelligent traveller—he wanted to know what it all meant, the complex civilisation of this realm: where the court comes in; what part is played in the daily life by the noble lords, whose House he was so anxious to improve for them, feeling quite capable of adjusting reforms and bringing the peers up-to-date by himself alone and unaided; how the church affects society; what are the powers and the limitations of money? what is the real influence of the press? what is the position of the professions? He wanted to know everything. As for me, I had never before asked myself any of these questions, being quite satisfied with the little narrow world that surrounded me.

I tried to interest him in art. It was impossible: he said that he would rather look at a tree than the picture of a tree. I tried him with fiction. He said that the world of reality was a great deal more interesting than the world of imagination. I tried him with poetry. He said that if a thing had to be said it was best said in prose.

He wanted to survey the whole world, and to understand the whole world. When one assumes the attitude of an impartial inquirer and learns what can be said on the other side, the radical disappears and the reformer succeeds. There is, of course, the danger, if one inquires too long, and with more than a certain amount of sympathy, that the reformer himself may vanish, leaving the philosopher behind.

Robert was passing into the second stage. He snorted at things no longer; he rather walked round them, examined them, and inquired how they came.

'I confess,' he said, 'that I was ignorant when I came here. My knowledge was of books. Men and women I did not take into account. It is worth all the trouble of learning your confounded manners only to have found out the men and women.'

Here was the Reformer.

'The people at this end of the town,' he continued, 'are interesting partly because they have got the best of everything, and partly because they think themselves so important. They are not really important. The people who do nothing can never be important. The only important person is the man who makes and produces.'

Here was the Radical.

'You live in a little corner of the world; you are all living on the labour of others: you are beautifully behaved; you are, generally, I think, amiable; you look so fine and talk so well that we forget that you've no business to exist. It is a pleasure only to watch you. And you take all the luxuries just as if they naturally belonged to you. I like it, George; I am an outsider, but I like it.'

Here was the Philosopher.

'And what about the House?'

'Oh! I've begun to nurse my borough. I address the men every Sunday evening in a music hall. You may come and hear me, if you like.'

'What is your borough?'

'Shadwell, close by, where they know me and the boat-yard. The men come in crowds. Man! There is no doubt! They come, I say, in crowds. They fill the place; and mind you, I can move the people.'

'Good. If you can only move the House as well.'

'These fellows will carry me through. I'm sure of it. They are the pick of the workingmen—Socialists, half of them—chaps, mind you, with a sense of justice.'

Here we had the Radical still.

'That means getting a larger share for themselves, doesn't it?'

'Sometimes. Motives are mixed. Well, I'm going to be Member for Shadwell—Independent Member. A General Election may at any moment be sprung upon us. And Lord! Lord! if I had gone into the House as I was six weeks ago!'

'Patience, my cousin, we have not quite finished yet. There's one influence wanting yet before you are turned out, rounded off, and finished up. Only one thing wanting, but a big thing.—No, I will tell you later on.'

## MAKING RAILWAY TICKETS.

THE railway ticket is quite a modern invention. There were none of them when some of us were boys, for the simple reason that there were no railways. Once introduced into our social system, however, they have multiplied like microbes, and the manufacture, distribution, collection, tabulating, destruction, and remanufacture has become a large and complicated business, employing great numbers of people, requiring enormous quantities of material, calling forth curious feats of mechanical ingenuity, and organising powers of a very high order.

Last year there were issued in the United Kingdom considerably over nine hundred and eleven millions of railway tickets, exclusive of season tickets and workmen's weekly tickets. It is not easy to realise such a number. Roughly speaking, if they had to be conveyed, say, from London to Edinburgh in a mass, it would require a hundred railway trucks, each carrying ten tons. If they were stacked one upon another in a single column, the pile would be nearly five hundred miles high; and if they were laid end to end in a line, it would exceed the length of the equator by about one-third. But no computations of this kind can convey anything like so impressive an idea of the magnitude of the yearly issue of railway tickets as can be gained by a stroll through one or two of the establishments in which they are manufactured.

Up till a few years ago the bulk of our railway tickets came from private factories in London and Manchester. Latterly, the larger railways have been setting up establishments of their own for printing their tickets, which, however, they still buy from outside workers in the form of 'blanks.' It might reasonably be expected that where the numbers required are so vast, the printing would be done in large sheets to be afterwards cut up into tickets. This, however, is not the way it is done. Pasteboard is specially made for the purpose, but it is sliced up into 'blank' tickets, each to be printed and numbered one by one afterwards.

To see the complete process of ticket-making one must go first to the pasteboard factory with its vast storage of paper, its huge caldrons of steaming paste, its hot chambers for rapid drying, and its maze of machinery for pasting, pressing, rolling, colouring, and cutting up the sheets of board when made. Every part of the work is interesting to one who is unfamiliar with it. The process of pasting the sheets of paper to be put together to form the board is one that strikes the novice as a particularly simple and ingenious one. Very thin but very sticky paste is poured into a trough beneath two wooden rollers, one above the other. The bottom one just touches the surface of the paste and thus takes to itself a thin film of the fluid which it transfers in a perfectly smooth, even layer to the roller above it. This in its turn gives a thin coating to the under side of the sheets of paper as they pass swiftly over the top. As each sheet comes out from the pasting machine it is seized by an attendant who puts four of them together to make the 'pasteboard.' These fourfold sheets are now stacked up in a pile, and a screw-press is brought heavily down upon them to squeeze out of them all superfluous paste and to consolidate the paper. They are next dried by passing through heated chambers on an ingenious system of revolving tapes, for three-quarters of an hour, or it may be an hour and a half, according to circumstances. Tremendous hydraulic pressure is now employed to condense the newly formed board into a hard uniform material, and this is still further effected by passing sheet by sheet between steel rollers. If there is any colouring to be done, this is the next proceeding, and the sheets are rapidly passed through a machine which draws along their surface strips of flannel saturated in the proper colours. The cutting up comes next, and for this every sheet passes singly through two machines. One slices it into long strips, and the next cuts the strips into thirteen parts, each part forming a 'blank' ticket. They are now ready for printing either in another department of the same establishment, or in the ticket-printing establishments which, as it has been said, several of the great railways have set up for themselves.

The Great Western Railway was one of the first companies to engage in this business. For many years this company had a queer little factory down by the side of their line at the back of Paddington Station; but they have now a large and specially planned stationery and ticket depot, not far off at Westbourne Terrace. Another large establishment of the kind forms part of Euston Station, from which they turn out about a million tickets a week. From the Great Eastern extensive printing and stationery depot at Stratford they distribute even a larger number, the passengers on this great network of railways being even more numerous, though journeys on the average are not so long. They issue an enormous number of season tickets; nevertheless, they print about fifty-five millions of ordinary tickets in the course of the year. The Midland print their own tickets at Derby. The mechanism and the general system are practically the same in all of these establishments, as well as in the private factories from one or two of which many railways in many distant parts of the world are supplied.

The printing-machines used in all these places vary somewhat in detail as improvements have been made on the earlier ones from time to time, but they are all alike in principle. They are very interesting pieces of mechanism. They will take the 'blanks' one by one, and, at a rate varying perhaps from ten thousand to fourteen thousand an hour, according to the character of the machine, they will print them —some of the machines, back and front—and number them consecutively. It is a curious process to watch. The blanks to be printed are placed in a pile in a sort of perpendicular spout that will hold some hundreds of them. This spout has an opening at the bottom, and when the machine is started, a little slip of metal, of just about the thickness of a ticket, makes a sharp dig at one end of the bottom blank and shoves it out from under the pile above it and starts it on a passage across the under side of a sort of bridge, a few inches long, connecting the two sides of the machine. The instant the blank shows its full length under the bridge, an inky forme pops up from below and prints its face, giving it at the same time a consecutive number, or two numbers if it is a return ticket. Here it would remain if it were not that another blank, pushed out in the same way, comes behind it and moves it on a stage, and a third comes behind the second, and a fourth after the third, and so on with the whole pile, each blank pushing its predecessors before it to receive the impression of the type. As each completed ticket arrives at the end of the bridge, a little metal plate, rather smaller than itself, bobs up beneath it and pushes it up into the bottom of another spout similar to the first, where it is caught by slight projections and held till the following one comes under it and heaves it up a little farther. Number three comes under number two, and number four under number three, and so on, the passage down one spout, across the bridge, and up the other side, being so swift that the eye cannot follow it unless the mechanism is slowed down for the purpose. If you take a perfect blank and tear a piece off it and put it in among the rest, it is curious to see how infallibly the machine will detect the irregularity. The mutilated little pasteboard goes jogging its way down the shoot among the rest, but the instant it comes to its turn to push out to be printed, there is a dead-stop. The mechanism flatly refuses to give its imprimatur to an imperfect blank, and it has to be removed before business can be resumed. It looks almost like a display of conscientious intelligence. The newest machines print back and front simultaneously, and the North Western Company have in addition a little contrivance which clips out a hole in the cardboard to indicate that it is a half-price ticket for a child, that being the plan adopted on this line instead of cutting the ticket in two diagonally as on most others.

This little contrivance, by the way, is the invention of the foreman in charge of the ticket-printing office at Euston, who also hit upon the improvement in the earlier forms of the machines by which the two printings were done at once. The reward of this ingenious device should have been at least an important addition to the inventor's income for many years. He had no sooner got it to work, however, than he found, like Sir Fretful Plagiary, that somebody had appropriated his ideas before him. The thing had already been patented.

The numbering of the tickets, as it has already been said, is done by the machine, but it is so important a matter that it is considered expedient to check the accuracy of the enumerating part of the printing-machine by a second test. The completed tickets on removal from the receiving spout are therefore borne off to a second apparatus and deposited in another receiver, from which they are rushed through a counting mechanism at the rate of about twelve thousand an hour, the machine recording the number with all but infallible accuracy. If the records of the machines correspond with each other, it only remains now to tie the tickets up in convenient numbers. This is done by laying them in a sort of wooden tray with a screw arrangement for squeezing them together while they are tied round with twine ready for despatch to the various stations whose names they bear.

From these large depots of the several companies the new tickets are distributed all over the respective systems, and sooner or later most of them will find their way back again, dated and clipped, not a few of them broken and torn, dirty and disreputable in appearance. They have all of them done duty once, and some of them perhaps have been made to do it more than once. It may be that in the future they are destined, in another state of existence, to do pretty much the same round over and over again ; for the original pulp of which they were made still has a market value, and they are only on their way back, it may be, to the paper-mill from which it is not improbable they have come. But as tickets they must first be so effectually destroyed as to obviate the possibility of further service without reconstruction from the very outset. They have all, of course, gone through the company's most elaborate system of book-keeping, and now they are done with. They are poured into a hopper such as one may see on the top of a mangold slicing-machine, and from the bottom of this they are discharged on to a broad, revolving leather band set with metal studs. By this they are carried forward, and, properly distributed, so as to insure that all shall be effectually destroyed, are tipped over among whirling blades that chop them up in fragments and shoot them down through a spout into a sack, which the machine will fill in a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. As soon as a sack is filled, the mouth of it is tied up, and it is stowed away until a sufficient pile has accumulated, and the paper-maker comes and carries them off to the mill to be pulped and made again into paper, to be very likely used up again into pasteboard, and so to go out on another circular tour. It is an interesting process to follow through, but there is nothing in it half so interesting as the reflection that the whole of the vast system of organisation

and mechanism, of which this is only a very small incidental feature, has been completely evolved within the memory of all who have lived to about middle age.

## THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

### CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

Four days passed, and no answer came from Annie Girdleton. Eltham had not looked for a prompt reply, since his ignorance of her address at Chester had obliged him to write to her at the St John's Wood house; but when the fifth and sixth days came and went without bringing a word, he began to fear that in the bustle preparing for the move to her new residence in Bayswater, Mrs Girdleton must have omitted to forward his letter. He chafed at the delay, for Welks had not come near him again, and he feared that the man had fulfilled his implied threat and sold his invaluable information to some private inquiry agent or detective who would speedily outstrip himself in the race.

The answer came at last, however; Eltham found it on his dinner-table one evening on returning to his lodgings, and pouncing hungrily upon it, threw himself into the arm-chair to luxuriate in the contents. It was plump to the touch: without doubt she had taken advantage of the 'peculiar circumstances' also, to relieve her feelings at the point of the pen. It was disappointing to find that the letter's portly form was due to a blank sheet accidentally enclosed; but no such hint was necessary to prove that the five lines composing the note, which lacked superscription, signature, and punctuation, had been written in great agitation.

'*I did send the letter to the gallery but I cannot tell you anything more I must not I can't and if you care for me don't ask why you would not if you knew how I have suffered since.*'

The sheet fluttered from Eltham's hand. He lay back in his chair, and cold perspiration broke out on his face as something that was more than suspicion seized him. His investigations were at an end; no need to ask why she could not answer his question; her note seemed to have torn a veil from his eyes, and piece by piece the evidence ranged itself to point with unsparing directness at Annie herself. He was almost surprised that he had not seen it before.

It went cruelly against the grain, but he was forced to admit that even without this incoherent note there was a case against her. Mrs Girdleton had spoken of the unpleasantness of their home life latterly. Eltham knew that Annie had bitterly resented the good-humoured contempt with which her father had 'stopped the nonsense' as he phrased it; Mr Girdleton had tactlessly exhibited his disregard of her feelings until their relations grew so strained that Mrs Girdleton had plucked up courage to arrange for her daughter to leave home for a time. The picture had been cut on the day before she left London; and on that day—well, there was the information drawn from Mrs Markham's page. And if this letter was not the confession born of remorse, what could it be? But how should Annie have known that Welks' wife was ill? Eltham clutched at the straw—to find it a straw.

Memory promptly reminded him that on almost the last occasion he dined at his employer's, Mr Girdleton had told his wife, across the table, that 'Peters' children were down with mumps,' and Mrs Girdleton had replied, 'I will see about the soup and things to-morrow morning,' in a tone which showed that she received such news as notice that modest luxuries were expected. Mr Girdleton was a kind master and cared for the wants of his dependents when they or their families were ill. The intimation that Mrs Welks was ill, would have been given as a matter of course, and Annie would have heard of it.

Well, there was an end to the business, anyhow; no offer of reward would produce the missing portion of the Raphael; without doubt Annie had destroyed it for fear of detection, before she realised the extent of the mischief she had done. Poor child; she must have suffered terribly ever since.

'You are looking seedy this morning,' said Mr Girdleton, stopping at Eltham's desk on his way to his own room, next day. He eyed the young man keenly, and his tone was the tone of accusation, not of sympathetic inquiry.

'It's nothing; I slept badly last night.'

Mr Girdleton drummed with his knuckles upon the desk for a minute; then told Eltham to come inside.

'You promised me that you would not hold any communication with my girl,' he said, 'and a couple of days ago a letter addressed to her in your handwriting came to my house. I don't know and don't care what prompted you to break your promise; you chose to do it, and the letter was sent on.'

Eltham could not explain: he stood looking miserable.

'Also I have seen the man Welks hanging about here, and am told by Peters that he comes to see you; that you had given him money, and had promised to try and get him a job. Now, Eltham, this looks bad; it shows a nasty spirit towards myself considering the circumstances under which I turned the man off.'

Eltham coloured, began to say that he had given the man money, remembered himself, and broke off abruptly. Mr Girdleton lay back in his chair, and looked into vacancy tapping his finger-tips.

'You told me, after what passed between us on a certain occasion, Eltham, that you wished to leave. I dissuaded you for your own sake and your mother's; I see now that I made a mistake.' He paused as if expecting an answer; at another time Eltham would have expressed his readiness to take a month's notice; to-day

he was too dull and dispirited to try and save his dignity.

'I think we had better part, Eltham; I don't wish to deal hardly with you, but you have not treated me fairly in the two matters I've referred to, and my faith in you has been badly shaken. You had better look out for something else to do. I'll give you three months' salary or a quarter's notice, which ever you prefer.'

Eltham said he would decide that day, and went out, conscious of a vague sense of injustice.

'I wonder if he thought I wrote asking Annie to bolt with me,' he thought, as he took his seat. 'He must feel bitter against the wretched Welks.'

To clear himself by telling Mr Girdleton the truth, was out of the question: it did occur to him to write again to Annie and tell her how he was placed, when she—if he knew her aright—would surely confess and enable him to clear himself. But the idea of putting any such pressure upon her was repugnant to him; and, after all, when she heard of his dismissal and the reasons, through her mother, she would of course make a clean breast of the matter. Meantime, he would look out for something else to do.

'Pleasant interview?' inquired Dean, the correspondence clerk, with a sympathising grin.

'Sack,' responded Eltham briefly. 'I'll tell you about it presently.'

Mr Girdleton was out of temper that day; this misfortune was plain to every one before he had been in the office an hour. One clerk got a wigging for laughing out loud, another was threatened with dismissal for misdirecting an envelope, and a third was told that if he couldn't copy a letter without missing out half-a-dozen words in each page, he had better go back to school again.

'It's a blessing the old man has to go out to-day,' remarked Dean, 'though I don't envy him a journey to the Surrey side on a morning like this.'

It was more like a January day than one of mid-July, wet, stormy, and raw; the streets were deserted, and the man at the one turnstile in use yawned for lack of occupation; the only visitors were stray country cousins who, Peters said, did each a shilling's worth of harm to the carpets with such muddy boots and dripping waterproofs.

'It's the Bidder meeting-day, isn't it?' said Eltham. 'I had forgotten it.'

Depression reigned within and without; but there was a general clearing of brows when Mr Girdleton came out of his room and sent for a hansom, announcing that he should be back at four o'clock.

'Say half-past five,' remarked Dean, when his employer had gone. 'I never knew the function over earlier.'

When Master Jonas Bidder of the Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights, was gathered to his fathers at the end of the seventeenth century, he bequeathed the rents yielded by a certain piece of land on the Surrey side of the river to trustees, citizens of substance and good repute, who were to administer the same for the benefit of the deserving poor of the parish. The value of Master Bidder's property having increased about three hundredfold since his lamented decease, the trust had attained dimensions involving considerable responsibility, and the trustees fairly earned their fees, and the 'fayre satisfying dinner' to which they were by will entitled once a quarter. This dinner was to be eaten at 'four of the clock,' and Master Bidder had prescribed that all business should be done first—a provision which appears to indicate that the testator understood his kind. Lately, however, three eminent Q.C.s had mercifully given it as their opinion that it would not invalidate the will of Master Bidder if the meal were eaten at 1.30 and called lunch; so the hour had been changed; and as the trust solicitor, the clergy of the parish, and one or two others had to attend, that 'fayre satisfying' dinner was always a very pleasant little gathering indeed.

'It's a ghastly day to drag a man over here to eat his lunch,' said Mr Bent, the senior trustee, as he shook hands with Mr Girdleton.

'A great nuisance for a busy man in any weather,' said Mr Girdleton. It had been the fashion ever since the trust was founded, for the trustees to regard themselves as martyrs.

'I suppose you haven't heard anything from the Scotland Yard people yet?' queried Mr Bent.

'Not a word. They told me the other day, they believed that the piece had been taken abroad.'

'There isn't a detective worthy of the name in London,' said Mr Bent. 'Now, in Paris they'd have laid the rascals by the heels within a week.'

The other trustees arriving in a body at this moment, the solicitor and the vicar produced their accounts for last quarter, and scheme of charity for next; which were rather hastily approved, for lunch had been announced.

It was a very jovial party: the Lion Hotel has an admirable cook, and he always does his best to reconcile the Bidder trustees to that clause in the will which insists that the quarterly meeting and dinner shall be held on the Bidder estate. It was raining hard, and the trustees, conscience-clear, having transacted the business and drawn their fees, were inclined to make the most of the occasion; so after lunch they adjourned to the billiard-room for pool. It was five o'clock when Mr Bent observed that he must be off, and the party broke up.

'This isn't mine, waiter,' exclaimed Mr Girdleton with singular vehemence, returning the hat that functionary offered with his coat, 'That's not mine; find my hat at once; my name's in it.'

'Is it an antique, Girdleton?' inquired a humorous fellow-trustee in surprise at his heat.

Mr Girdleton took no notice of the chaff; for the waiter in all humility was expressing his profound regret. The gentleman who had just gone must have taken Mr Girdleton's hat by mistake. Should he run after——

'No,' snapped Mr Girdleton, 'give me his,

and help me on — quick!' and he ran out of the hotel, his overcoat half-way up his arms.

'Bent will go across Hungerford Bridge,' called the trustee who had made the little joke about antiques.

Mr Girdleton heard, and ran along the street at his best pace; the rain had stopped, but the wind had increased since the morning. It was only a few hundred yards from the hotel to the bridge, and Mr Girdleton ran regardless of the cheers of the little boys, who assured him he 'would win.' Arriving at the bottom of the wooden gangway which runs up to the foot-bridge beside the railway, he saw his friend turn the corner at the top, his hand to the hat which did not belong to him. Mr Girdleton felt the one he wore too large, and the sight of Mr Bent holding on to the misappropriated hat seemed to inspire him afresh. He panted up the slope and raced along the bridge, shouting; Mr Bent heard him at last and stopped.

'You—took my—hat,' gasped Mr Girdleton, breathless with exertion as he came up.

'Now, I *thought* it was small for me,' smiled Mr Bent. 'I'm so sorry'—his hand went up to his head with apologetic haste. Mr Girdleton nearly shrieked aloud; for his friend touched the hat below the brim, the wind caught it, and off it went. It alighted on the rail, hesitated for the fraction of a second, and took a suicidal leap into the river.

'Girdleton, you shouldn't run like that; you look quite pale, man. D'you feel ill?'

'It's gone,' came from Mr Girdleton's lips, as he watched his property dancing seawards on the wavelets.

'I'm awfully sorry for my clumsiness and stupidity.—No, no, keep mine and send it back. And, Girdleton, I must see you into a cab; really you look very ill.'

Mr Girdleton admitted that he felt 'rather giddy,' and allowed himself to be escorted back to the Surrey side, where a cab was soon procured.

'Bond Street,' said Mr Girdleton faintly, as he got in. Mr Bent studied his face for a moment; then gave the cabman Mr Girdleton's private address and got in with him.

'I'll just see you home,' he said; 'it isn't out of my way.' And Mr Girdleton's faint protest only the more strongly convinced his friend that he ought to have somebody with him.

Meantime a peaceful day at the gallery was drawing to its close; five o'clock came bringing no Mr Girdleton, and six, and quarter-past. At half-past six, Dean declared his certainty that 'the old man' would wish them not to wait longer, and the rest agreed. Eltham alone remained to write some letters before going home. It was after seven o'clock when, having finished his correspondence, he stood at the door opening his umbrella in preparation for the walk down the rain-swept street.

'Pardon, gentleman, please,' said a miserable-looking man at his elbow, 'is this 'ere the Girdleton Gall'ry?'

'Yes; but what do you want?'

'Me and my mate picked up this 'ere on the water,' said the man, producing the disreputable remains of a silk hat from under his ragged coat; 'it's got the gen'leman's name in it, and maybe he'd give me a sixpence for my trouble bringing it.'

Eltham glanced at the name to which the man pointed; it was his employer's hat without doubt, but in its present condition it was not worth the sixpence referred to. It was a pure begging errand, but the fellow looked so wet and wretched, that Eltham, bidding him come in out of the rain, searched in his pocket for the coin desired.

'There's a shilling for you,' he said, touched by a hollow cough which instinct told him was not the artistic stroke of the professional beggar. 'You'd better leave the hat,' he added, more as a matter of principle than for any other reason, seeing that the man eyed it with the eye of an appraiser, doubtless with the view of sale at a third-hand clothes-shop.

'Thank'ee, sir; thank'ee kindly,' and he crept out.

'Blown off crossing the bridge, I suppose,' thought Eltham, poking the wreck with his umbrella. 'I'll just put it in his room since it's been brought back.'

He lifted the hat on his umbrella, and it struck him that it was heavier than even a soaked hat ought to be. The lining was torn at the seam, and idle curiosity to see how silk hats are made prompted him to pull it apart. As he did so he started. Surely, surely Lincoln and Bennett never—— He put down his umbrella, shut the office door and lit the gas. Then to the hat again; he turned up the sodden leather lining and pressed back the silk. For fully five minutes he sat staring into the hat he held in both hands. He could not realise what lay before his eyes; amazement, joy, and half-a-dozen conflicting emotions whirled through his brain and stunned him. For there, carefully fitted in between the silk and the outer skin of the hat, was the lost piece of the Raphael!

It was some little time before he recovered from the shock of this astounding discovery; when he did, he got paper and made the hat and its precious contents into a parcel. He was rapidly grasping the value of the find to himself and knew what he was going to do. Before leaving the office, he wrote a line to Annie Girdleton saying that he now understood her note, and respected the feeling which prompted it. And in his heart he hated himself for having suspected her.

'She was his unconscious tool,' he thought, as he walked homewards with that thrice precious parcel under his arm. 'He gave her the note to leave, and followed it up with his knife when the coast was clear. Well, we will have another interview to-morrow morning, and I hope he will enjoy it.'

Eltham was greatly exercised that night to know why Mr Girdleton should have done such an injury to the most valuable work he had ever possessed. He was far too experienced and shrewd to have imagined for a moment that the resultant sensation, no matter how assiduously fanned, would produce results at all commensurate with the damage done. Of course it was a foregone conclusion that he meant to

'discover' the piece himself and enjoy another innings, but even with that addition it was dead loss.

'And really,' thought Eltham, with the careless generosity of power, 'I don't see why he should not have another innings if he likes. I wonder whether he took the detectives into confidence or bamboozled them.'

He was on the best terms with himself next day when he knocked at the door of the Girdletons' new house in Queen's Square; a message had come to the gallery to tell them that Mr Girdleton was confined to the house with a bad cold. Twice a message was sent down that his employer could not see him; but a pencilled note to say 'hat restored and safe with me,' procured him instant admission to Mr Girdleton's bedroom, where, we have it on the highest authority, the pair remained closeted for an hour and a half.

What passed between them during the interview, nobody knows. Mrs Girdleton, happening to intrude without knocking, heard her husband say, 'I'll take Trotter's opinion before closing such a bargain another time,' before he could ask with a snarl if she did not know he was engaged. Mrs Girdleton knew very well what opinion her husband had hitherto entertained of Mr Trotter as a critic, so she was naturally a good deal surprised. Then, a few minutes later, she had occasion to go into the dressing-room, and through the door of communication overheard her spouse say in answer to a question whose purport she did not catch: 'Only safe place I could think of, and had had it there all the week while changing houses,' which was a very odd thing to say, she thought.

What followed the interview, everybody concerned remembers distinctly. Eltham lunched with Mrs Girdleton, and returning to the gallery in course of the afternoon, mentioned casually that he was going to stay on, after all. Annie, next morning, received letters from her mother and from Eltham, couched in a strain which brought her back to London at once; and ten days later, when Mr Girdleton was able to leave his room (it was a bad cold and turned to influenza), Eltham came to dinner and placed on Annie's finger an engagement ring, while her father looked on and smiled. These things happened last July, and important developments are imminent, though Eltham's salary has not been raised (if the gallery pay-sheet is reliable), and the defect of age has been mended by only a twelvemonth.

. . . . . .

Mr Welks has resumed his duties as night-watchman, and his inability to throw any light upon the events of that Sunday is the despair of everybody in the gallery: it is his peculiar humour to refer to Richard Eltham as 'the guv'nor,' though Mr Girdleton has not retired. The more robust section of the press, getting wind of something, winked in paragraphs for a while and let the matter drop; but Scotland Yard preserves an impenetrable reticence. From the circumstance that Mr Girdleton frequently refers with admiration to the wonderful sagacity of the London detective department, and declares he has not yet given up hope, there is reason to suppose that the stolen piece of the Raphael will be publicly discovered before long; perhaps this season, if there be room for a sensation.

## AN OLD GEOGRAPHY.

Some few years ago, a couple of schoolboys were exploring a traditional smugglers' cave under a chalk cliff on the Kentish coast. Shut in by the tide, they climbed to an almost inaccessible ledge near the roof of the cavern, not because there was any danger from the sea, but to while away the time in true boyish fashion. Lying there was an old leather-bound volume, a Geography of the date 1716. Perhaps a studious smuggler, or a colleague of Exciseman Gill, or, possibly, another school-lad of the days of George I., had laid it down, to be found, long years afterwards, a relic of the times when a youngster could still revel in dreams of great undiscovered lands, of buccaneering on the Spanish Main, or of hot brushes with Mounseer in the Channel. Maybe, a tragedy of drowning or of sudden death in fierce conflict on a coast which abounds in memories of bloody frays, was the reason for the book being left in this out-of-the-way spot. Anyhow, there it was, in excellent preservation, and with the name of Thomas Gibbs of Canterbury fairly set forth in good old copy-book style on the first page. On the supposition that every average boy knows more or less what a school geography is, this standard work of 1716 would be interesting to him if only for the maps. As regards the story of our own empire, however, a perusal would be still more so. In glancing at the contents, we must remember that it means not simply a contrast between a text-book of nearly two hundred years ago and one of to-day, but a comparison between our empire of then and now, and a look at the various political changes and geographical discoveries which have come to pass since the adventures of Alexander Selkirk gave birth to *Robinson Crusoe*.

The author, in dedicating his work to the Archbishop of Canterbury, piously expresses an earnest wish for the conversion of the Jews, which prayer would seem to show that the Israelites must have made quick headway here since Cromwell allowed them to enter the country little more than half a century previously. In the maps, California appears as an island; whilst that portion of America lying between Hudson Bay and Behring Strait is a blank. Indeed, the coast from California to Behring Strait is not marked out. Much the same may be said of the interior of Asia, and of course New Holland, or Australia, as we now call it. The strait between Tasmania and the mainland has not yet been discovered by Bass, who was afterwards to languish out the remainder of his existence in the depths of a South American mine. New Zealand

figures as a mere bit of vague shading; and the Sandwich Islands, where Captain Cook had yet to meet his fate, are nowhere. The most curious and interesting thing about the maps, however, is, that two large equatorial lakes are given as the sources of the Nile; and the Niger is made to flow from another great lake situated near where Tchad is now known to be. Thus it seems that the Nyanza lakes and Tchad were known by hearsay early in the last century. Stanley, indeed, has stated that some old Venetian maps indicated their existence.

So much for the progress of discovery; but what about political changes since 1716, especially with regard to our own empire? Canada belonged to France, and England possessed her Plantation colonies, which were by-and-by to become the United States; but the bulk of known America—with the exception of a few islands and a fringe of coast here and there—was ruled by Spain. On the map of Europe, Turkey is credited with sovereignty over Hungary and Greece, although the author remarks that the Hungarians had 'almost recovered from Ottoman slavery by the late successful progress of the Imperial arms'—grim experiences, in which the Elector of Hanover, afterwards to rule over these islands as George I., smelt powder and bore himself in a very soldier-like fashion. Finland and the Baltic Provinces are set down as Swedish territories. Poland has a map to herself, as a powerful and independent nation. Belgium is called a circle of the German empire; Corsica, a Genoese island; and Naples, a Spanish viceroyalty. Greater Britain was indeed in its infancy, for, with the exception of our American colonies, we had then but few foreign possessions—Canada, South Africa, and India being as yet unconquered, and Australia hardly known. We read that 'the king of Sweden is indeed a powerful prince both by sea and land.' The Czar is praised for his late visits to foreign countries, but roundly rated for his recent attempt on his Christian neighbour, Sweden. These were the days of Peter the Great and the birth of modern Russia as a European power, when the Crimea was Turkish, and Caucasia and Central Asia as yet untrodden by victorious Muscovite legionaries. Little did the half-savage champion of civilisation dream in his most ambitious moments that the time would come when Cossack and Red Coat would confront one another as sentinels on the north-west frontier of India!

We read further on that in France 'the present monarch for despotic power may now vie even with the Emperors of Muscovia, China, and Turkey.' '89 and the Terror were still far distant; and Louis XV., who bequeathed the Deluge to his ill-fated successor, had only just begun his long reign of waste and wickedness. The Bastille was in constant use; and Voltaire—whose writings did something to bring about the Revolution—was as yet a young man, unknown to fame. We learn that 'the Dutch have lately advanced themselves to such a height of power and treasure as to become terrible even to crowned heads,' but then men were still living who had heard the Dutch cannon thundering in the Thames. Among the nine Electors of Germany, the Dukes of Bavaria, Saxony, and Brandenburg are mentioned; and the Empire consisted of more than three hundred States. The heroic campaigns of the Great Frederick brought Prussia to the front in the last century; the ruthless invasions of Napoleon smashed up the old multiplicity of petty sovereignties at the beginning of the present; and Bismarck and Moltke in our own times have created the united Germany of to-day. In Spain, all religions other than the Romish were 'expelled by the tyranny of the bloody Inquisition,' a state of things which lasted well into the times of our grandfathers. Italy is described as consisting of half-a-dozen Dukedoms, the territories of the Pope, four Republics, and the Viceroyalty of Naples, 'miserably flayed by those hungry and rapacious vultures the Spaniards.' This is very much the style of expression used by the hero of *Westward Ho!* Italy remained in this chaotic condition until Garibaldi and his fellow-patriots worked out the unity of the youngest of the six great powers. Our geographer was not long in noticing, during his travels in the Levant, that modern Greek differed much from the ancient in the pronunciation. 'The whole of Greece doth now groan under the Turkish yoke.'

The spelling of Scotch names seems to have been somewhat uncertain. For example, we find in the list of counties, Boot, Arren, Argile, and Edenburgh. Scotland gets a good character just after the Union from the patriotic author, Mr Gordon, whether on the score of products, religion, or education. 'No Christian society excels the Scotch for their exact observance of the Sabbath.' Orkney islanders seldom died of the physician, but lived to a great age. The Shetlanders still spoke the Norse tongue. The Icelanders were remarkable for great bodily strength and longevity, and commonly lived in dens or caves 'keeping up their ancient idolatry.'

Formentaria in the Balearics was uninhabited on account of serpents. Malta was governed by the Crusading Knights of St John. The Ionian Islands belonged to Venice, who had just lost Crete, after a bloody and protracted struggle with the Turks. Fancy the Sick Man as a conqueror nowadays! 'At a Greek monastery in Cyprus are a number of cats so nicely bred for the hunting of serpents, that at the first sound of the convent bell they will immediately return home.' This sounds very like the hoax of some mendacious monk.

Turning to Asia, we read that some remarkable volcanoes exist in Tartary, India, and China. In spite of this error, however, the author has a truer idea of the variety of languages, religions, and races in the dominions of the Great Mogul than the average Englishman of to-day has. 'Some Jews dwelling on the shores of the Caspian are thought to be descendants of the lost ten tribes.' Tea is not named among the products of China; but 'taffaties and sattins' are given among those of India. A pillar near Scanderoon Bay is considered by

the writer to mark the exact spot where Jonah was vomited by the whale, 'being nearer to Nineveh than any other place in the Levant.' Noting the deplorable state of Palestine under the Turks, our big cities are bidden, as dens of iniquity, to take warning. The statements that the 'Japanners' are tall, and that Adam's Peak, in Ceylon, is a volcano, are, to say the least of it, inaccuracies.

Coming to Africa, we learn that Algiers and Tunis were two potent Republics, much given to piracy. 'In Loango, it is usual to sell human flesh publicly in the shambles, as other nations do beef and mutton'—a curiously precise anticipation of what was reported of some Congo tribes at the British Association in 1895.

With respect to America, we are told that New Spain, or Mexico, is governed by a Spanish Viceroy. 'California, formerly esteemed a peninsula, is now found to be entirely surrounded with water, a dry, barren, cold country, still in the hands of the natives.' The French of Canada were about six thousand in number, and traded chiefly in furs. 'This is all that is noteworthy about it.' The French also owned a great part of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland; and we are reminded of our fishery dispute with France by the statement that 'after the late tedious war, we are now in full possession of what we formerly enjoyed.'

'In the English colonies, no tax can be imposed without the consent of their assemblies,' a fact which it would have been better had George III. remembered fifty years later. Enthusiasm chiefly prevailed in Pennsylvania, 'that country being stocked with Quakers.' Our author attributes such fierceness to the condor, that he says: 'Chile would not be habitable were that destructive bird less rare.' As for Jamaica, which was then, perhaps, our wealthiest colony, the recent terrible earthquake of 1692 is ascribed 'rather to moral than natural causes, on account of the abominations of the inhabitants calling for judgment from Heaven.' The planters are solemnly warned to care for the despised souls of their negro slaves, and not to believe and be frightened by the vulgar error that baptism of slaves means giving them freedom. We are assured, on the authority of eye-witnesses, 'that the crocodile of Hayti before lying in wait to catch prey, swallows several hundredweight of pebbles, by which additional weight he can the sooner dive with his victim.'

Our geographer appends a very clear table of the five great colonial empires of 1716—namely, the Spanish, English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese. It is impossible to glance at this old book without being struck by the magnitude of the revolutions which have taken place in the last two centuries through scientific progress, geographical discovery, and political changes. In 1716, Sweden, Holland, and Turkey were still regarded as mighty factors in European wars and complications; the Great Mogul was still considered one of the most powerful monarchs of the world; and the empire of the king of Spain might still be described as one on which the sun never set. Australia, New Zealand, and almost the whole interior of Africa, were blanks; and the gigantic Republic of America undreamed of by the most ardent imagination. But the most striking fact of all is, whether under the Union-jack or the Stars and Stripes, the stupendous march of the Anglo-Saxon race.

## A WEST AFRICAN STORY.

By the Author of *Rising of the Brass Men.*

Behind the coast-line of West Africa, from the Gambia to the Congo, lies a wild country of dense forest and dismal swamp intersected here and there by sluggish rivers and shallow lagoons. Although the Portuguese, Dutch, and English have traded along the coast for more than four hundred years, civilisation has but lightly touched the savage inhabitants of the interior, and 'battle, murder, and sudden death,' the 'Ju Ju' or fetich worship, with its horrible rites of human sacrifice, and in many places cannibalism, are prevalent.

In British dominions, a few District Commissioners and other officers in charge of small detachments of Haussas, who are Mohammedan black troops, maintain, or struggle to maintain, some kind of order along the frontier, among many thousands of savages.

Now it happened that one morning in April, Captain Wayne, in command of a dozen Haussas, sat out on the veranda of his house, which was situated near the head-waters of a muddy river on the frontier of the Gold Coast and the Shantee country, and looked across the misty landscape that lay before him. By-and-by as the sun rose the mist gathered itself together into heavy wreaths and rolled away to seek a hiding-place till nightfall among the swamps, leaving open to view mile after mile of dense forest that stretched away to the blue line of distant mountains on the northern horizon, while near at hand three winding rivers and a wide lagoon lay glittering in the early sunshine.

The captain lay wearily back in his chair, haggard and yellow-faced from constant attacks of the malaria fever, the scourge of the land, and oppressed by the intense loneliness, for he had seen no white man for more than a year. Instead of the slight coolness that might have been hoped for in the morning breeze, the air was hot and heavy with the smell of vegetation rotting in the swamps and the river mud.

At this moment, Akoo, sergeant of Haussas, came up the stairway leading to the veranda, and saluting the officer, said: 'Bush man come in, sah, bring little word, say Kasro people chop two men, make Ju Ju.'

'Hang the Kasro people,' said the captain aside. 'I must stop the Ju Ju sacrifice, and yet if there's any bloodshed, it will mean the sending up of an expedition, and unending trouble. Akoo, get ten men ready, rifles and twenty rounds of ammunition.'

The sergeant saluted as he went away, and shortly afterwards a bugle-call rang out and Captain Wayne, weak and trembling from fever, marched into the forest at the head of his men. Tall, splendidly developed negroes from the far north, staunch Mussulmans, lighter in colour and in every way superior to the coast tribes, the Haussas will follow their white officers with a courage and devotion equal to that of any of Her Majesty's troops.

Meantime, in the Shantee town of Kasro, a great Ju Ju feast was being held at which the chief administered justice, and various rites were performed by the fetich men to propitiate their gods. The mud-built, palm-thatched huts lay in rows beneath the shade of feathery palm trees around a great open square. In the centre of this, beneath the shade of a huge tree consecrated to the Ju Ju or fetich gods, sat chief Kasro, attired in a cast-off steamboat officer's uniform and a dragoon's brass helmet. Over his head stretched the spreading arms of the tree from which hung long strings of charms, human skulls, bones, sharks' teeth, leopards' claws, and similar odds and ends, the symbol of the fetich authority, for over native warfare, trade and justice, or rather injustice, the Ju Ju man reigns supreme. Round the king stood rows of native warriors, naked with the exception of a narrow strip of cloth round the loins, while the whole of the square was filled by an excited crowd of men and women, equally scantily attired, singing and dancing in groups round a crouching musician tapping the native skin drum, firing their long flintlock guns in the air, or reeling about hopelessly intoxicated with palm wine. Two stalwart slaves held a large umbrella, the symbol of authority, over the chief's head, while on either side stood a Ju Ju man to act as counsellor, as the chief dismissed one after another the trembling prisoners who awaited his sentence. Lying on the ground bound hand and foot with palm fibre were two men evidently of a different tribe, entirely naked, their black skins shining as the perspiration beads rose upon them, for they were purposely placed in the fierce glare of the sun, and smudged the stripes of white clay with which they were daubed.

When the last criminal was led trembling away, the two Ju Ju priests advanced towards a fire of scented wood, round which lay a number of brass vessels; and as the chief raised his hand a bloodthirsty roar broke from the excited crowd, while the guards dragged forward the white-painted victims, and loosening their bands, placed one on either side of the fire. A huge naked negro with a necklace of bones now advanced, a heavy straight sword in his hand, while the priests threw armfuls of an aromatic wood on the fire, so that the whole square was filled with the odour. The executioner stepped forward and swung his sword round his head, while a fresh howl like that of a pack of hungry wolves burst from the crowd, when the chief rose to his feet and ordered him to desist.

Towards the outside of the square the crowd were shouting, pushing, and struggling, and a few moments later fell away left and right, while down the clear passage came Captain Wayne at the head of ten Haussas with fixed bayonets. His Karki uniform was torn and plastered with mud, and the captain between weakness and fever could scarcely stand erect. But keeping himself in hand by a desperate effort he walked up to the two shivering wretches and laid his hand on the shoulder of the nearest; then turning to the chief, he said in his own tongue: 'I demand these men, in the name of the White Queen.'

There was a roar of fury from the crowd, while the chief, waving his hand for silence, said: 'I wish you no harm, go in peace, for I desire no war with the White Queen; but it is not good to meddle with the gods of the Shantee. Wherefore go while you are safe, before my people tear you limb from limb.'

'Though we are but one white man and ten Haussas, yet for every one of us who die, we will kill ten of your people. Also the arm of the Queen is long, and afterwards the troops will come and burn your town and stamp it flat.'

As he spoke, the captain fixed his eyes on the chief's face, and the latter lowered his head and moved uneasily, then he whispered for a little with his Ju Ju priests. At length he lifted his hand and said: 'Your words are good; take the men and go in peace.'

At the head of his troopers the captain turned and faced the angry crowd, the prisoners, now unbound, standing between two files of Haussas. In front and on every side surged a furious mob shouting and shaking their barbed spears and flintlock guns.

'Fix bayonets, Haussas—march!' called the captain, as he drew his revolver, and the angry negroes fell away on either side before the line of glistening steel and the calm unmoved man. So they passed slowly and deliberately through the village, while the natives howled and shook their spears and guns, none daring to strike the first blow.

The captain's heart thumped, and his breath came in quick gasps through his parched mouth and throat, for he knew that the slightest accident would provoke a bloody encounter, in which every man of the little party would be wiped out, after which the colony would have to undertake a little expedition in punishment, that would cost much money and blood. However, coolness and courage won the day, and they reached the last hut scathless. Here the crowd swept upon them with a rush, but stopped when the bright steel held by the unmoved Haussas lay within an inch of their naked breasts, and one savage, stooping under the line of the bayonets, drove a light spear into the captain's leg. Instantly the latter raised his revolver and moved his arm until the bead of the foresight rested on the centre of the black forehead. Another instant and a fierce fight and the subsequent annihilation of the party would have followed, but the self-control of the officer was equal to the occasion. He lowered the revolver, and stooping down, broke off the haft of the slender spear; then he called out: 'I will come again with more soldiers for that man; Haussas—advance.'

The troopers took a step forward, and as the bayonets pricked their flesh, the crowd opened up on either side and the little band marched out of the village.

With clenched teeth the captain held his place until they were out of sight among the trees, then the reaction from the strain set in, and weak and broken down with fever and the pain of his wound he pitched forward head foremost into a clump of the fragrant African lilies. How he regained the station he never knew, but the faithful Haussas, who would follow an officer they admire down into Hades if he bade them, after much difficulty at last carried him into his room, where he lay for many hours in a troubled sleep.

Awakening, he found himself burning with fever, in a room which had the temperature of an oven, while through the open window little draughts of air like the breath of a furnace played in and out.

Calling Sergeant Akoo, who had faithfully watched every moment while he slept, to raise him, he passed his hand down his wounded thigh till his fingers touched the iron head of the spear. Now there are many kinds of West African spears; a few carry a merciful leaf-shaped head, but many have points covered with cruel barbs and hooks, so that once in the flesh it is impossible to pluck them out. The one that lay cankering in the captain's leg was of a curiously devilish kind, fashioned like a double corkscrew, and, driven in with a twist, could not be drawn out.

'Akoo,' said the captain, 'bring in two privates to hold my hands — and my big hunting-knife.'

When they came, he neither groaned nor lost consciousness till the ghastly operation was over, then his head dropped forward and he swooned away, while his trusty followers stopped the flow of blood. 'By the beard of the prophet,' said Sergeant Akoo, in the vernacular, 'but that is a man.'

Next morning the captain sent a trooper a hundred miles through the forest to ask that a relief might be sent, then he lay day after day in a canvas chair on the veranda, alternately shivering and burning with fever, and unable to move on account of his injured leg, which obstinately refused to heal. One weary week succeeded another, while the captain watched the white mists roll away at dawn, and the sun rise and shine all day with a pitiless heat out of a cloudless sky. The same panorama of solemn forest and glistening river stretched itself before his weary eyes, until his heart was as sick as his fevered body, and he feared his brain would give way. Meanwhile, Sergeant Akoo, who could neither read nor write, patrolled the country, and ruled as supreme monarch many thousands of natives; but the messenger never returned. Then one day a bushman came in by night with a letter from the nearest Government station to say that a wounded Haussa with a handful of cast-iron potleg shot into his body had one day dragged himself to the compound, and after holding out a letter, turned over and died; faithful unto death, for this is the nature of the Mohammedan soldier. The message had been forwarded to headquarters, and the reply now reached the captain.

Calling a trooper to move his pillows and raise him, he broke the seal and read that no relief could be sent for some time, as there was no officer available, but that he had full authority to abandon the post for the time being, if his health necessitated such a course.

Now the captain was a simple man, not given to any heroics, but he had lived so long away from white men, that he had no thought left but the well-being of his district; so he said, for these dwellers in lonely wilds soon learn to think aloud: 'It is a temptation. If I stay here I shall go out before the rains, and if I go, there will be war, gorgeous war, between two or three of the chiefs, and the Government will send up an expedition and the district will be broken up for ever. No—I must stay and keep them in order—and face the fever and mortification. The event is with Allah, as Akoo says.'

He despatched another messenger, begging that an officer from a peaceable district should be sent, as the post could not be left. Then the weary waiting commenced again, and the dreary stifling days had to be faced somehow, with heat and fever, constant suffering from the wound and the dreadful loneliness. Still the captain held on, giving the sergeant fresh orders every morning, and listening to his reports of the day's work in the evening, while he daily grew thinner and more haggard; a miserable handful of bones and feeble flickering life, doing his small share in upholding the supremacy of our great empire.

But no reply arrived from headquarters, and at length Sergeant Akoo paused one morning before he called out his men and said: 'No book (letter) come, sah, bush man chop Haussa and 'teal him letter, but captain send more book and all Haussa fit to go.'

'No,' said the captain, 'I can't have my men cut off one by one, neither can I purchase relief with the death of my troopers. Did not King David say something of the kind about the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is beside the gate—the price of brave men's blood?'

Then he worried and tried experiments to see if his brain was losing its power, while the black sergeant and his troopers represented Her Majesty's Government and maintained the Queen's peace on the frontier.

By-and-by the rains came, and the captain's couch had to be moved inside; for the whole air was filled with the falling water, the rivers overflowed and every swamp was turned into a lake, while the house was filled with a steam that reeked of fever and dysentery. So the commissioner lay through the weary weeks listening to the constant roar of water on the roof, and the murmur of the flooded river, growing weaker and weaker, yet fighting a grim fight against despair and insanity.

At last the long-expected relief arrived, and the incoming officer found a ghastly, fever-worn skeleton that gazed at him with glittering eyes and whispered in a hoarse voice: 'Thank God!

—I've kept the station,' then collapsed, and lay speechless and silent, a wreck of what had once been a man.

Next morning, under command of Sergeant Akoo, eight bearers left the station carrying Captain Wayne in a hammock, and for fourteen days they stumbled along, through great forests of cotton-wood and mahogany trees, wading among dismal swamps, paddling across broad lagoons and down solitary river reaches. Now they journeyed all day by canoe through strange tunnel-like waterways, among the mangrove trees, then by dry land through patches of plumed swamp grass that met above their heads, or through forest glades where the ground lay carpeted by the fragrant African lily.

But the gaunt figure in the hammock saw none of these things, and the glittering eyes only opened when Sergeant Akoo raised the sufferer's head, and poured a few spoonfuls of food or drops of brandy down his throat.

Sixteen days after the captain left the station, three men sat in the long bare room of a trader's house, built on high piles, looking out over the sea at Axim.

The windows were wide open, and through them you could see, beneath the arches of the palm branches, the boundless stretch of the Atlantic, and a long yellow beach where the great blue rollers broke in sheets of snowy foam; while the roar of the surf, and the smell of flowers, burning wood, rotting leaves and mud, which is the breath of the Dark Continent, came in with every passing puff of hot air.

Lying on a canvas couch under the window was the wasted figure of Captain Wayne, who opened his eyes as the doctor leaned over him and smiled as he murmured: 'You are very kind—yes, I'm better already—and I'm going home to-morrow—don't forget to signal for the steamer to call.'

'Then lie down and keep quiet,' said the doctor. 'We'll signal for the steamer'—here he leaned over and called out to the krooboys, 'Hoist the 'teamer flag, Frypan, and fire gun when 'teamer 'live,' then withdrew to a corner, and the three men talked in whispers.

'Has he any chance, doctor?' said the trader.

'He cannot live till they reach Sa Leone, and may die before the steamer arrives here. Think of what the man has gone through; enough to kill ten like me.'

Here they laughed softly, for the doctor had for years waged a grim fight with fever and dysentery, cholera and guinea-worm, to say nothing of pot-shots from Shantees on the frontier.

'Poor fellow,' said the trader, 'he did his best.—Tom, it's Sunday afternoon; see if you can get a tune out of the piano, if it's not rusted to bits and the krooboys haven't stolen the wire.'

The third person rose and sitting down to the broken-down instrument struck a few low chords, then after various snatches of topical songs which had reached the coast, began slowly an old-fashioned tune to the Magnificat. The doctor and his companion at first laughed: church music was new on the coast, but as the player, gaining confidence in the instrument, drew out the solemn music, the smile died away and they took off their hats. Chord after chord the sweet old tune rang out, while the thoughts of the listeners passed over leagues of ocean, and they saw again the sweet English meadows, or purple Scottish moor, with its glory of gorse and heather.

The deep thunder of the surf seemed not a disturbing element but a fitting accompaniment, and as the crimson light of the westing sun shone upon his face, the sick man beckoned the faithful sergeant to raise him on his couch. So he lay, gazing westward, with the light bringing a ruddy glow to the ghastly cheeks, listening, while a tear trickled slowly out of the sunken eyes.

Was he thinking of the distant country he had served so faithfully, and loved so well? No one ever knew, for as the last chord of the 'Amen' died away, the tired head drooped forward and he turned to the wall, and so passed away

To where beyond these voices there is peace.

Then a deep silence fell upon the room, and Sergeant Akoo bent down and drew the sheet over the pallid face, saying as he did so, 'Allah Akbar—God is great—but, by the beard of the prophet, these English be men.' Two days later, when the R.M.S. *Benguela* passed, there was no signal flying for her to stop, and only a low mound and a rough wooden cross showed that another of the brave spirits who daily lay down their lives in lonely forest and fever-haunted swamp had gone to its own place.

## A SONG IN EXILE.

Mine no more! . . . For other eyes
All thy beauties now are spread,
All the rapture of thy skies
When the winds laugh overhead,
All the boundless moorland ways
Purple with the heather bloom,
Dusky woods, and hills ablaze
With the glow of yellow broom.
Careless feet will come and go,
Only I that loved thee so,
Wander on an alien shore—
Oh, my country, mine no more!
Mine no more!

Still I see in haunting dreams
Loch and glen and valley fair,
Hear the roar of mountain streams,
Feel the rush of moorland air;
Every northern wind that blows,
To my heart some message brings;
Every bird that northward goes
Bears my greeting on its wings.
Happy winds and wild birds free!
Would that I, like you, could flee
To that land beloved of yore—
Oh, my country, mine no more!
Mine no more!

MARY MACLEOD.

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## THAMES WATERMEN.

At one time—now a century or more ago—the Thames was recognised as the only great London thoroughfare. Its banks on either side were studded with the 'stairs' of the nobility; its waters were covered with every kind of craft, from the gilded barge of royalty to the nutshell skiff or wherry. In those days the river was pure and undefiled; and those who lived upon its banks never hesitated to bathe there in balmy weather. In those days there was no spot in London so picturesque as the Strand, with its broad gardens, its shady trees extending to the water's edge, where 'the river glideth at its own sweet will,' and where the embattled turrets of many a palace, such as the Savoy, towered artistically in the background. Flocks of swans sailed to and fro in spite of the traffic: they ventured unmolested even below bridge; and the sight of them and their quaint 'song' must have been vastly agreeable to the Thames watermen and their fares. 'Pray, did you come with oars or scullers?' was an every-day question. Citizens spoke of 'taking the water' very much as we now speak of taking an omnibus or cab. The watermen's fares were regulated by the company's printed scale of charges; the Hall of the Watermen's Company, where all their business was transacted, being then situated at Cold-harbour, near the Vintry. Some forty thousand watermen were upon the rolls of the company, those of the King's Court and the nobility being no doubt included in this number; and the company was in a position to furnish the navy with as many as twenty thousand men.

The aquatic sports, still to be seen among the boatmen of the Seine and of the Rhine, were once the delight of the London watermen during their Easter holidays. One famous sport consisted in two wherries, each rowed by a couple of watermen, running against each other with staves in hand—a recreation much in vogue among the gondoliers of Venice. Another sport among the watermen was to hang a shield on a pole in mid-stream; while in a boat without oars stood a waterman, lance in hand, ready to charge at the shield when carried swiftly towards it by the force of the tide. If he broke his lance against the shield without going overboard, he was thought to have performed a valiant deed. But it more frequently happened that he went head over heels into the water. He was instantly recovered, however, by 'watermen in waiting,' amidst the derisive shouts of the crowd upon London Bridge, on the wharfs, and from the houses and grounds by the river-side.

Then there came in later days the sport of winning Doggett's far-famed prize. It is rowed for—and has been for nearly two hundred years—by six young watermen, whose apprenticeship has expired the year before. To have endowed the river with an annual coat and silver badge was a brilliant thought on the part of the actor. It has helped to keep up the famous traditions of the old Thames watermen; and besides, did it not inspire Dibdin to create his immortal 'Tom Tug?'

> And did you ne'er hear of a jolly young waterman,
> Who at Blackfriars Bridge used for to ply?
> He feathered his oars with such skill and dexterity,
> Winning each heart and delighting each eye.

In his despair, however, of winning Wilelmina, he resolves at last to give up the life of a waterman and take himself off to sea:

> Then, farewell, my trim-built wherry,
> Oars and coat, and badge, farewell!
> Never more at Chelsea ferry
> Shall your Thomas take a spell.

But Tom changes his mind, and determines to row for the coat and badge, after all, in order to win his love if possible by winning the prize. Wilelmina watches the race from the Swan Inn, Chelsea, and applauds the winner before she discovers him to be her persistent suitor, Thomas. A blush was her 'answer to

his wooing tale;' and so it all ended happily. This old Swan Inn was swept away some twenty years ago to make room for the Thames Embankment; and the coat and badge is now rowed for from Cadogan Pier to Chelsea. It is worthy of note that Garrick selected *The Waterman* to follow the comedy of *The Wonder* on the night of his last appearance on the stage, so popular was the character of Tom Tug at that time.

It is interesting to glance for a moment at the watermen's table of charges before the days of the penny steamboats. A 'fare' could then be carried 'with oars' for a shilling from London Bridge to Limehouse, or Shadwell. Eightpence was the charge from the Temple Stairs, or Blackfriars, to Lambeth: while sixpence would frank a fare from London Bridge or Tooley Street, on the opposite side of the river, to 'Wapping Old Stairs.' The cost for being ferried 'over the water' at any Stairs between Vauxhall and Limehouse was fourpence. For longer journeys the rates were proportionately higher. For instance, to Gravesend the fare was four and sixpence; to Windsor it was fourteen shillings. These latter places were the extreme limits denoted in the watermen's printed tables.

They were a rough, saucy, and independent class, these old Thames watermen. One is constrained to draw this conclusion from the constant allusions to them in old comedies and popular songs of the last century. They were notorious for their water dialect or mob language: they accosted each other as they rowed by in the most abusive language they could invent. But at the same time it is only fair to record, they put as much satirical humour into their repartee as they were capable of. Their questionable phraseology led to innumerable complaints. Fielding speaks quite touchingly about it in his *Voyage to Lisbon;* while Sir Roger de Coverley expresses in the *Spectator* his sense of repugnance at the language with which he was assailed while taking boat on the Thames; and so it came about at last that, by order of the Watermen's Company, this extemporaneous 'satire' was prohibited. Any waterman or apprentice convicted of using bad language was fined half-a-crown for each offence.

They had an ear for music, though, these uncouth 'hearts of oak,' and kept time with their oars to many a lively ditty. Their songs were less sentimental, of course, than those of the gondolier; there was a manly ring in them —something of the brine and the breeze, to which these men of the Thames had a certain kinship. The famous river song, 'Row the Boat, Norman,' was sung on the Thames for many a year. Its origin can be told in two words. Before Sir John Norman was elected in 1453 Lord Mayor of London, it was usual for the chief magistrate and his train to go to Westminster Hall on horseback. But he, to the watermen's unbounded delight, elected to go there by river; and he accordingly built a magnificent barge to be used during his mayoralty. The officials connected with this water-pageant included the water-bailiff, one of his lordship's esquires, a shallop and eight men; and in the suite were a barge-master and thirty-two city watermen. The City companies followed Norman's example, and constructed gilded barges to accompany their mayors. The watermen still take part in the Lord Mayor's show: the trumpeters who formerly heralded, from the prow of his barge, his lordship's approach to Westminster, now precede on foot, in all civic State ceremonies, his lordship's State carriage.

Although the river was so great a thoroughfare in the old days, it was by no means safe at all places and at all seasons. Loss of life was not an infrequent occurrence while accomplishing the feat of passing under Old London Bridge, owing to the narrowness of the arches. There was no embankment of any note; and the river was therefore broader in many parts than in the present day, and ferrying across was not always an easy matter. It was all very well in summer-time for watermen to row their fares, with the tide in their favour, under the 'chequered shades of Millbank willows.' But on rough, wintry nights it was as risky to ferry across the river as it is to cross from Dover to Calais in a steamer of the present day. Indeed, before the building of Westminster Bridge, the only communication between Westminster and Lambeth was by ferry-boat; and there were two considerable inns for the reception of travellers who, arriving after dark, dreaded to take the water in the face of a high wind or strong tide.

The most conspicuous among the old Thames watermen was John Taylor, the Water-poet. He literally gained his livelihood by plying on the river. The 'gentlemanlike sculler,' as a contemporary dubbed him, lived in a poetical atmosphere; for he plied off Bankside, within sight of the Globe Theatre; and doubtless he ferried Shakespeare—for he lived in his time—from Paris Garden to Whitehall more than once. This Water-poet had taken up his position in a spot where there were plenty of fares, which showed him to be possessed of an eye to the main chance; for Bankside was the landing-place to which citizens thronged in those days of Shakespearean glory. Besides, there were other places of amusement on the Bank side—the Rose and the Hope playhouses. With no bridge except Old London Bridge, and with Southwark, the chosen ground of summer theatres and 'bear-houses,' there is little wonder that John Taylor sang the praises of the river with all his heart and soul:

> But noble Thames, whilst I can hold a pen,
> I will divulge thy glory unto men:
> Thou in the morning, when my coin is scant,
> Before the evening doth supply my want.

But at last the halcyon days of the Thames watermen came to an end. The nobility following in the footsteps of royalty, laid aside their gilded barges. Even the busy Inns of Court, whose practitioners and students had hitherto patronised the river for business and pleasure alike, took to the hackney-coach. The streets, as Taylor tells us,

> Are choked outright,
> Where men can hardly pass, from morn till night,
> Whilst watermen want work.

The Water-poet then drops into prose, and goes forth to attack the coaches with great

vehemence: he maintains that their swarm of 'trade-spillers'—as he styles them—have so overrun the land that there is no getting a living upon the water.

It must indeed have been a terrible blow, this irruption of coaches, for John Taylor and his fraternity; as terrible as the railway to the postmaster and postillion of a later age. But Taylor never lost heart, though coaches at last drove him off the river. He rented a tavern in Long Acre at the sign of the Poet's Head; and he supplied his own portrait with the following inscription:

> There 's many a head stands for a sign,
> Then, gentle Reader, why not mine?

Here, at the Poet's Head, he died in 1645, and was buried in the watermen's churchyard. This burial-ground stood on the south side of St Martin's-in-the-Field; and watermen were as ambitious to be placed here when they died, as any naval hero for a tomb in St Paul's.

The Thames, no longer the great highway, now became little more than a water conveyance, in the absence of bridges, between the City and the Borough. The Watermen's Company opposed the building of Westminster and Blackfriars Bridges as long as they could; but they were compelled to yield at last. And now even the ferrymen ceased to linger at the different Stairs, looking out hungrily for a chance 'fare.' It was a thing of the past. 'Boat, your honour! boat! boat!' was heard no more.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER VII.—THE CHURCHYARD.

I PASS over as irrelevant, or at least superfluous, the very disagreeable interview in which I revealed my plans to Frances. She had found a new opening for me—I was to be appointed Commissioner for Tobago, or President of Turk's Island, or Lieutenant-governor of the Gold Coast: she could obtain the post for me: it was an excellent opening: I was to spend two or three years in the endeavour to escape fever, and five or six years of sick leave at intervals. I should then have a clear claim to the gratitude of the Colonial Office and should be appointed Governor of some colony with a salary of many thousands. What more could any man desire?

Nothing, truly. And, as Frances observed, no creeping: no wriggling: no backstairs: also there is no examination for these appointments. And they are obtained in the good old way, by interest alone.

Why not, then, accept? Because, unfortunately, I was now a craftsman, and I really desired no other kind of life.

It was then that Frances spoke with conviction of demoniac possession—I never before thought she believed in it—and of the extreme madness which sometimes seizes on men; and of the follies unspeakable which they commit. She was very angry—very angry indeed. She also declared her disgustful surprise at the bad, low, grovelling taste which made it possible for me to leave the ranks of gentlehood, and to go down—down—down—to live among beery, tobacco-smoking, ill-bred, uncultivated boors and bourgeois. She displayed on this subject quite an unexpected flow of language and command of adjectives. To be sure I had never seen her in a real rage before. And she looked very handsome indeed, marching about the room with flushed cheeks and angry eyes while she declaimed and denounced and lamented. I never admired her so much. She became so unexpected that I very nearly fell in love with her.

When she had quite finished by throwing such words as 'insensate,' 'clod,' and 'stock and stone' at my head, and by saying that she had now done with me for ever: and when she had flung herself into a chair and held her handkerchief to her eyes—I had never seen her cry before—and—indeed it was so unexpected that I very nearly, as I said before—and when I had said a few brotherly words and uttered a few assurances: and when we had shaken hands again—I kissed her hand if I remember aright—we sat down opposite to each other and close together, and had a pleasant talk quite in the old style, though it was understood that I was henceforth only a plain boat-builder.

It was then that I told her first about my cousin. She listened without much interest. The man was a mere tradesman.

'You want a recruit, Frances, for the Party? Of course you do. Well, then, I tell you that you could not do better than look after this man.'

'A man 's a man, of course. Otherwise, George, the working-men members do not always turn out worth much. Still there are one or two—and—well—tell me more about this man.'

'He is not exactly a working-man. He is a master craftsman.'

'Oh!' She shrugged her shoulders impatiently. Such distinctions she knew not. And then I told her about his attainments and his boundless ambitions and everything, till at last I succeeded in making her believe that here really was a man who might be worth considering—the only fault which Frances then possessed was that she underrated the powers of everybody outside a certain circle. I told her about Robert at first, I believe, in order to divert her mind from the distressing spectacle of my decline and fall, and next in order to show her that we were not all beery boors and bourgeois at Wapping-on-the-Wall, and, lastly, it came into my head that if she should peradventure take an interest in his parliamentary career it might be very useful to him.

After a bit she began to understand a little. Her imagination was at last fired by the picture of this young man resolving, while yet a boy, on entering the House of Commons, and learning to speak at a sham Parliament, working at home on history, politics, social economy, all the questions of the day, reading Mill, Herbert, Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, Lecky, Froude, Freeman, Green, Seeley, and all the rest of them, becoming a learned man, denying himself the joys of youth, all for the sake of his ambition; and all the time remaining strong and masterful as one born to command. Because I am a dull person in narrative, or because

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she was prejudiced generally against trade, it was a long time before I succeeded in awakening her interest in the man. 'Do you know,' she said at last, 'that you seem to have got a very remarkable creature down there! Of course I cannot really believe that he will really come to anything. A man living all by himself, and ignorant of all the world outside his trade, cannot come to any good. In the House one must know men, not books only.'

'I wonder if you would like to hear him speak? He speaks every Sunday evening. If you like we will go.'

So it was arranged. Frances would like to see the kind of people who formed that constituency: she would like to hear the kind of speech that pleased them: she would go, subject to one condition, that she was not to see the boat-yard. 'I could not, George,' she said. 'It is bad enough that you should descend into that horrid place—when you might become Colonial Governor. I could not actually see the chips and shavings. Oh! George, you are very wilful—but I must always forgive you. Yes, I will go with you to see this wonderful person of Wapping. You only try to excuse your abominable alacrity in sinking by pretending that you have got a Prophet down there.'

So I came away forgiven and reconciled, but for ever fallen in her esteem, and I returned to my river-side work with greater heart now that the worst was over.

It was natural that one should take an interest in the people of the place—especially in the people of the house. I spent every day an hour—the dinner hour—with Robert's household. Sometimes, too, another half-hour over a cup of tea. Therefore, of course, one thought a good deal about the people. The captain I found an honest, hearty old fellow who liked his meals, took a cheerful glass after his dinner and supper, and slept away most of the remaining time. He had a room at the back called the captain's cabin, where there was a narrow bed and an easy-chair; a hob with a kettle; a table with a tobacco-jar, and other conveniences. There I sometimes visited him and heard experiences.

But the person of real interest was Isabel. I thought her, at first, inanimate and perhaps stupid. I discovered first, that she had a very beautiful head—the poets do not seem to understand the charm of a well-shaped head—but it was nearly always drooping. Then I observed that her hair was quite wonderful—there was such a lot of it, and it was of such a lovely light colour, looking as if it held the sunshine even in that dark 'parlour'—it was, however, only rolled up without any coquettish display—was the girl quite ignorant of her charms? Her eyes were generally down, dropped as in shyness or humility—once she lifted them with some strange wonder because I made some frivolous remark—there was never any frivolity about this house before I went into it; why, they were large and limpid, of a deep blue, like the dark blue of a pansy. And then I discovered that her features were straight and regular, and that though her cheek was pale, and her manner was listless and drooping, the girl was full of beauty in face and head and figure. And Robert, like a thing of wood, had no eyes for the loveliness that was his by engagement! Wonderful!

I could not, at first, get the girl to talk to me. She sat at table, carving in silence, or pouring out the tea in silence. When it was over, she spread out her books and began to work again. And week after week passed by; I was an old shipmate with the captain; I was on the most confidential terms, as you have seen, with Robert. But Isabel remained a stranger.

Then the opportunity came.

It was a Saturday afternoon. I had been spending an hour after dinner talking with the captain in his den. Then, as he showed signs of going to sleep, I left him, and bent my steps westward. It was a bright, sunny afternoon in May. The street was deserted; the warehouses were shut up; the sunshine increased, and set off, the dreariness of the tall places on either side.

I came to the mouth of the dock. As once before, the gates were open for the passing of a ship, and I had to wait. I leaned against the rail and watched. On the right was the dock, with the masts of the ships; on the left was the river. I looked at the river and looked at the dock. Then I became aware of a most unexpected fact—on the right hand, besides the dock, there were trees—green trees! 'Anything green in Wapping?' I asked. 'Trees and green leaves. Do they grow out of the water?'

I then perceived that there was a street leading north—I thought that there was nothing north of the High Street except the dock.

At the corner was a substantial modern house, the vestry house of the parish, with its brass plate and clean windows. Next, I observed a lovely eighteenth-century house—sober, square, built of red brick, having an ample portal, and in the wall two effigies of boy and girl. This was the parish school. The figures looked more demure than one could believe possible in human boy and human girl. And then I came to the church, a plain and unaffected preaching house of brick, with pillars and portico of stone; beside it on the south side was a narrow churchyard, adorned with old tombstones, headstones and altar stones, the sepulchres of bygone captains, past owners, sailors, and boat-builders. I observed with some pride the name of Burnikel on one of them, the nearest to the street—my ancestor. Perhaps all the important tombs belonged to Burnikels, if I could only climb over the rails to see. The church was shut, yet it might have been more useful in the week when Wapping is full than on the Sunday when Wapping is empty. Had it been open, I might have gratified my family pride still more by observing the tablets and reading of the incomparable virtues of other Burnikels belonging to this fine old stock. There was part of the churchyard on the north side; its houses had been recently cleared away and the space turned into a recreation ground. So liberal was the County Council that they swept away half the remnant of Wapping that had been spared by the docks, and now there are not enough people left in the town to populate the recreation ground. Children were recreating in it, however, and there was a gymnasium for

them in one corner, and a stand for the summer band in another corner. A picturesque row of 'backs' showed the character of the streets that had been cleared away.

I noted these things. I observed also that there were still remaining, beyond the recreation ground, other streets of small houses—not beautiful, not clean, perhaps squalid, if one were inclined to harshness—and beyond these streets tall masts which told of another dock. Wapping, then, did not, as I had fondly imagined, consist of one street only with a river on one side and docks on the other, and no living person in it at night except the Burnikels. Wapping is a collection of human beings; it is a hamlet, a township, a town complete.

Here was the parish church, here were the endowed schools, here was the vestry hall, here was the playground. I turned back, and then—a thing which I had passed over before—I perceived before me, fenced round, a peaceful, beautiful burying-ground, lying opposite the parish church on the other side of the road. A more peaceful spot one would not expect in the most secluded village. It was filled with tombs and headstones; it was planted with a thick coppice of limes, lilacs, laburnums, and all kinds of flowering trees and shrubs growing among the tombs. I looked through the bars. Wapping, then, had this one garden left, and since the greater part of Wapping was dead and gone, buried deep below the docks, a churchyard seemed the fittest place in which to maintain a garden. Wherever industries spread, and trade increases, we find the past beside the present. In the midst of the noise and hurry of Manchester there stands the ancient college; in the midst of Hull rises the ancient church; in the midst of the smoke and grime of Newcastle there is its ancient fortress; and beside the modern docks of Wapping stands the old church with its burying-ground and its schools. Let me never live where there is nothing ancient, nothing to connect me with my forefathers, nothing to remind me of death, nothing to preach to me on the continuous life in which the living are but links, and the past is neither lost nor forgotten.

The gate was unlocked. I gently pushed it open and stepped within, reverently, yet with the sense of ownership. Why not? Before me stood a headstone—the name had been recently cleaned and restored—'Sacred to the memory of John Burnikel, Master Mariner, died March 16, 1808, aged ninety-four years.' That must have been the man with the diamonds. I stooped down and pushed aside the grass to read the text with which his pious cousins had decorated the tomb. 'Of whom the world was not worthy' I read. Astonishing! Of whom the world was not worthy! This must have been written while they still expected to find the diamonds. Then I plunged, so to speak, into the recesses of this coppice. And there I found, to my amazement, sitting on a tomb with folded hands, and hanging head, in an attitude of the most profound dejection, the girl Isabel.

She lifted her head when she heard my step. She had been crying; the tears, like dewdrops, lay still upon her cheeks.

'You here, Isabel?' I cried. 'What are you doing in the place of tombs?'

'I am sitting here.' But she rose as if she was tired of sitting there and should now go home.

'Yes, I see. But'——

'It is a pretty place. There are not too many pretty places in Wapping.'

'No. Do you often come here?'

'In spring and summer, sometimes, when I can get away. On Saturday afternoons. It is quiet. Nobody else ever comes. I have it all to myself.'

'Why are you crying, Isabel? Don't cry. It makes me miserable to see a girl crying. Are you unhappy?'

She turned away her head and made no reply.

'Sit down again where you were, Isabel. It is a pretty place. The lilacs are bursting into blossom and the laburnums are beginning. It is a very pretty place. The dead sleep well and the living you do not see. Can you tell me, Isabel, why you are unhappy?'

She shook her head, but she obeyed in sitting down again.

'Of course I have seen all along that you are not happy. You work too hard for one thing. Is it the work?'

'Oh no!—no!—no! I must do what Robert tells me to do.'

'You are too much confined to the house. Is it the want of change?'

'No, no. I want no change. I do what I have to do.'

'You will not tell me.'

'I cannot.'

'Of course I have no right to ask. Still, I am Robert's cousin, and I see you every day, and you can't wonder if I take an interest in you. Will you be offended if I speak just a little of my mind?'

'I offended? Does that matter?' A strange thing for a girl to say, as if she was of no importance at all; as if surprised that any one should regard her at all.

'Well, Isabel, in that part of the world where I have chiefly lived the girls are treated with consideration: they are princesses: they are filled with the consciousness of their own power: their words are received with respect and their wishes are studied. It matters very much indeed whether one offends them or not. So I hope not to offend your ladyship.'

'You will not offend me.'

'Well, then. Listen. You work too hard; you get no society; you have no change; you take too little exercise; you are growing nervous and shy; you shirk from seeing people.'

'I live the life that is assigned to me.'

'You are so young, Isabel, that you ought to sing in the house; you ought to walk as if you had wings; you ought to laugh all day; you ought to rebel and revolt and mutiny'——

She did laugh, but not with merriment.

'All these things belong to your age and your sex and—your beauty.'

'My beauty!' she repeated, with a kind of wonder. 'My beauty! Oh no! You must not talk nonsense.'

'Your beauty. You should be a very beauti-

ful girl if the cloud would lift. Come now. May I lift that cloud for you? May I try, at least?'

I held out my hand. She hesitated a moment. Then she gave me her own timidly.

I did not suspect the real cause of her unhappiness. I did, however, feel a most profound pity for a young girl who could find no better amusement than to sit among the tombs on a fine afternoon in spring. Even those who are nearing the time when they will be put to lie there do not generally like to sit among them.

'You will tell me some other time,' I said, 'why you are so sad. Meantime, let me be your friend; and, look here, Isabel, I am a great physician. You must believe that I have cured countless cases of Languishing Lady and Doleful Damsel. I am thousands of years old, although I am apparently only five-and-twenty; that is because I am such a great physician.' Well, at this nonsense she actually smiled. 'And now, I will prescribe for you. Not so much work; not so much house; not so much monotony.'

'The work has to be done.'

'Robert is so busy himself that he does not observe. I shall speak to him.'

'Oh! But what he says'——

'Yes, yes, I know. I will speak to him. Now, come with me. I will take you out upon the river. That will do you more good than sitting among the tombs—even the tombs of the Burnikels.'

There are still boats and 'first oars' at Wapping Old Stairs. In five minutes I was sitting beside her in the stern of a wherry—Burnikel built—with a couple of stout fellows pulling us down stream. And I brought her back with colour in her cheeks and brightness in her eyes. 'My medicine works already,' I said. 'Robert will say that I have done wonders.'

Alas! Robert observed no change at all; and during the half-hour of tea the poor girl sat as usual with hanging head and down-dropped eyes. But it was a beginning.

(*To be continued.*)

## TRANSVAAL PRISONS FROM THE INSIDE.

When knocking about South Africa lately, in a wild mood, heart three-quarters broken, I had occasion to use a couple of times Paul Kruger's prison-houses of detention as hotels, and this is what I saw and thought. Anyhow, come, please, with me kindly to Johannesburg jail, the largest and most important in Africa. It is an enormous solid mass of buildings of huge blocks of stone with iron roofing, and looks down on its own pet city from the most commanding of the hills around—namely, Hospital Hill. Rome's glory was reflected by her similarly situated capitol: and now, by a *fin de siècle* chance replica, the innate genius of Johannesburg is embodied in her palace-jail. For Johannesburgers, it is slily hinted by those who have met them in business or otherwise, are composed of three classes—namely, (1) those who have been in jail; (2) those who are now in; (3) those who still have to go there; but have been up to now fortunate enough to escape.

On entering the jail, you are—or are not, according to Boer caprice—supplied with its home necessaries authorised by law. Anyhow you are entitled to a plate, mug, and spoon, all of tin, a towel, a bit of soap once a fortnight, and, if lucky, a tin bucket, which you can keep clean for drinking water; also three rugs for bed-clothes, and if your cell happens to have a stone floor, a straw mattress, if you can get one. Half a pound of mealie-meal, boiled to a 'pap,' served at daybreak, and ditto at night, and at mid-day one pound loaf of bread and one pound of rough meat, which can be exchanged for Transvaal tobacco with the Kaffir prisoners. Now you have a regular and simple life which will put that of any ordinary hydropathic to the blush, if only the patient can stand it.

Here comes S——, bright and whistling, an Austrian of thirty, vain of his good looks and earrings, who at Fiume stabbed a fellow-countryman to death in a row for badly beating his mate. Only the night before the execution should have taken place, he learnt that he was reprieved, and a life's imprisonment substituted. From seven years of age, when he ran away from his father to escape a thrashing, he wandered the world in independence; and after many coasting experiences in the Mediterranean, and long voyages to the Americas and England, at all of which places he was in a chronic state of deserting his ship, he found himself ashore at Capetown. Seal-hunting, diamond-digging, bar-keeping, mining, contracting for work on railways with gangs of blacks (who could in the earlier days be shot like dogs, buried in the railway-track, and no questions asked), he has now become the leading pillar in the jail Salvation Army meetings, where he reads the Bible in broken English, and leads in loud notes the hymns he has chosen, chorused to by all the Kaffir prisoners, who sing the tune only, and do not know the words. The stabbing affrays he has been mixed up in are too numerous to recall, but his forte is lying on his back on his bed, or in the sun, telling and inventing highly graphic and poetical children's stories to a knot of prisoners. He is doctor's orderly, giving out medicines and being held responsible for the cleanliness of the jail, whereby he escapes hard labour, and finds time to make and dispose of canvas water-bottles in exchange for tea, sugar, tobacco, and little luxuries. In the present unsettled state of politics he may be at large again soon, for no one knows when or on what system prisoners are released, or will be.

Henry S——, Dutch on the mother's side, but son of an English father, is a typical Dutch free-

booter. He is a trader, with ox-wagons and calicoes, boots, guns, &c., knowing the country—roads and routes—from Natal to Namaqualand; and has lost every trace of the Englishman, save a knowledge of the English language, and good animal courage, which, combined with Dutch cunning, has made him a formidable desperado. Wherever he went, cattle disappeared, and, as attendant Kaffirs died or disappeared as a rule very suddenly, and were replaced by others, none but himself knew exactly how his flocks and herds increased. Being paid by farmers and Kaffirs mainly in cattle, he formed centres at which to collect them, and made it worth while for smart natives to steal others. He was once surprised in the act of hanging one of his boys to a high projection of his wagon, but as he explained that he was only tying him up to prevent his running away, the Dutch police did not press the question further. A very powerful, thick-set, black-bearded man; he helped to steal hundreds of cattle—principally looted beasts belonging to the expedition—in the Malaboch and kindred campaigns. He fought for England in the Zulu war, against her in the Boer war, and has been in nearly every South African affair of note, except the Matabele, fighting always with the irregulars, and from behind cover.

Here he is at last in jail for stealing a miserable cow only worth a pound or two; and his black boy, who stole it for him, and on whose evidence S—— was convicted, lies in the same jail suffering for another offence. He now waits on his old master in jail, and will undoubtedly, poor fool, go back instinctively to him when released. The prison warders and Dutch police are S——'s best friends; he is not made to work, or only as much as he likes, and receives presents from the easy-going, rough, and ignorant officials, who look upon him as a safe rifle-shot, and a safe Dutchman.

We had Lord Randolph Churchill's cook—with him in his South African tour—in for stealing a bicycle. He told quaint stories of Lord Randolph's detestation of Dutch names and Dutch Boers. 'Oh Lord!' he gasped convulsively, when paying a formal call on a local landrost, as, on driving up, the huge unkempt head of the 'vrouw' was poked out of the front-door on the stoep, or cemented veranda, to know who wanted her goodman, as she struggled into her typical old calico dress; and his lordship right-abouted his horses, returning to camp quicker than he came.

There sits in heavy irons a Belgian of middle age, and in figure best described as a block four feet six inches square, one of the most desperate robbers and jovial rascals in the country. He is ironed, as the Dutchmen cannot otherwise prevent his trying to escape, except by keeping him constantly locked up. His last escape was in full mounted-policeman's uniform and on horseback, with revolver drawn and cocked, right through the other prisoners and guards, and laughing at them. He had his things left for him by some friend near where the gang was marched to work, his horse tethered behind a hillock, obtained a couple of minutes' excuse, changed his clothes, and was off: and was not recaptured till the next offence. Then he nearly shook the teeth out of his jailer, who had run up and shaken him first on hearing him demur at obeying some order of a warder. The prisoner's objection from the dock to his jailer's giving evidence of the assault on the ground that he was already a forsworn man, having broken the oath he took to Queen Victoria when he deserted to the Boers, was comically pathetic.

Then comes young ——, the scion of a well-known gang of bushrangers, who some years ago stuck up several Australian banks. Young, handsome, with fair moustache, he is not allowed by the prison authorities to go out to work at all as they fear his escaping, and confine him to jail, frequently changing him from one jail to another. Twice, returning from his trial at the court-house, he was nearly off: once jumping out of a cab, wherein he sat handcuffed to a brother-offender, having opened the handcuffs with a piece of string; when just out-distancing the police he was upset by an officious civilian, and retaken. His pal stepped coolly from the cab, the police being in pursuit of Kelly, walked slowly through the crowd, and was never heard of more. Another time, in an organised stampede of the prisoners near the railway station, he escaped the police revolver bullets, and being too drunk to steer properly, tripped up over some loose wires and could not rise again before being retaken. He had entered the Standard Bank well dressed, with an accomplice carrying a bag an exact copy of one then lying on the bank counter, in which the balance due between that bank and another was carried across the street in gold, notes, &c., by a messenger on fixed dates. The time for closing was at hand, few were about, and the bank official was accosted by 'Hullo, Brown, my dear old fellow, how are you? &c. What? You don't know me? Impossible! &c. Why, we lodged together in the same rooms for six weeks in Port Elizabeth. If I don't know you, I don't know myself, &c.' The official is embarrassed, his attention distracted, mutual explanations and mutual regrets follow, the bags are exchanged, the valuable one has gone, and some time elapses before at the neighbouring bank the bag substituted for it is found to contain, not gold and notes, but bits of old lead, old iron, old newspapers. Some thousands were taken, some £900 were found on ——, a curious question subsequently arising as to whether it belonged to the bank, or whether ——'s counsel had a right to be paid out of it, he being, of course, employed previous to the conviction which proved to whom the money belonged.

—— had commenced bribing the officials in jail before attempting to escape, and had cabs in his pay nightly waiting for him outside the jail. A good deal of money was smuggled through to him, including, I am sorry to say, a great many shillings gold-coated to pass as sovereigns. He was transferred to another jail for better security, but has, no doubt, ere now escaped.

A cell is usually occupied by four whites or twenty blacks, the latter reposing much like

sardines. Flogging, one can see, is necessary to keep Kaffirs in order, but, poor souls, such lashings as they at times get at the hands of the Dutch are simply hideous. Some Kaffirs, long-time men, told us through the bars separating 'white' from 'black' yards, that two had lately died after such flogging, and one recently operated on was believed to be dying whilst they were talking to us. The blacks are placed against a sort of leaning ladder, their arms stretched up, and their wrists and ankles firmly strapped. It is wonderful how callous one Kaffir is to another Kaffir's suffering. The doctor is bound to be present. He of Johannesburg has black blood in his veins. He got the post for services rendered in the Boer war against the English, as did the majority of those now in Transvaal Government pay.

That man is one of three who went up to a farmer who was driving a valuable lot of sheep, who had outspanned with his Kaffirs and was at dinner. They asked him for something, shot him first, then shot his Kaffirs, threw the bodies into a disused mine-shaft, burnt the wagon and drove off the oxen and sheep. Some casual traveller stumbling on the shaft, the murders stood revealed, and an attempt to dispose of some of the sheep on which a distinctive brand had not been properly obliterated, led to the arrest and conviction of two of them. A very clever defence placed the chief guilt on the third, who escaped.

The couple of burglars talking yonder are 'in' for a quick job. When they had got entrance through the window of a jeweller's shop from the street, a charge of dynamite had been poked in through the keyhole of the safe, the fuse was exploded, the front-door of the safe blown out, and all its contents, watches, chains, stones, rings, &c. swept anyhow into a couple of large bags; and they were off before any who heard the noise had recovered from the shock, or had presence of mind to appear upon the scene. They were afterwards split upon by a pawnbroker, and convicted. The jailer at Klerksdorp is a tiny Dutchman of Portuguese extraction, and small and fat as Portuguese are generally made. He looked very funny when I first saw him, ordering his motley myrmidons to put a huge English soldier-deserter into the stocks for laughing at and not saluting him. I do not think they ever got the 'ryneck' there, for they were falling thick as autumn leaves when I last looked back. 'Ryneck,' or 'red neck,' with adjective prefixed, is the Dutchman's epithet for the Englishman, since he saw the red-coats in the Boer war. Neither this Dutch jailer nor any of his staff are of a literary turn. I have seen him tear up half-a-dozen attempts, and take half an hour to address an envelope. Consequently his official jail returns could not be made to his government at all, did not the jail nearly always contain amongst its prisoners some one able to write Dutch fairly. In return the scribe is excused from his hard labour.

Prisoners of good conduct are allowed to send one letter, and receive one every month, to be read *en route* by the jailer. This little man will promise to post for you, but the more important the letter the greater is the relish of the joke against the Uitlander in not posting it. To complain of a Dutch official to his Dutch superior is mere waste of breath.

Dick is a fine, well-shaped, handsome Basuto. He assisted some others in a burglary, and escaping with some bed-clothes and trifles, found when on the veldt that there was a white baby amongst the blankets. It was left where found in a bed-sheet, and survived; a blanket being 'too much worth' to leave for the baby, said Dick, with a grin. 'Sixpence,' 'Ketchie,' 'Loben,' 'Shilling,' 'Ticky,' very funny names the Kaffirs have, every second one being a 'Jan' or 'John.' The Kaffir yard is similar to, but separate from, the white man's yard. The Kaffirs are fed alternately on mealie pap or the Indian corn boiled whole, and one pound of meat twice a week. For meat they would barter their souls, and you can for a bit of abominable meat always get from them a bit of Transvaal tobacco of the same size, and good too. The ordinary Dutch warder is too brutal and stupid to require description; he only says No! to any request, and when he is not eating his dinner out of an old basin, spends his time half dozing, and, Kaffir guards loving rest also, escapes are frequent. Here is a Scotchman under whose special tutelage I lost whatever valuable personal property I took in. A clean-shaved, clean, smart little gray man of sixty, after years of tramping in absolute want, promoted from driving a baker's cart, he has just married and commenced life as a teetotaler and warder, having at last found an opening in life for the first time. He is already high in command, knowing how to get on. Speak or whistle and you are in the stocks, and no appeal; resist, and you will get three months more, possibly in irons, and twenty-five lashes; so your Uitlander does his thinking to himself. As regards taking prisoners' property, I have no hesitation in saying that the Dutch police are amongst the biggest thieves in Johannesburg; and this, after making full allowance for much exaggeration and falsehood which may be expected from prisoners' own accounts. Quite recently, after a large fire at certain grocery stores, a huge amount of groceries of all sorts were stolen and traced to the stations and houses of the fire-brigade and police, the latter being in charge of the burning buildings, keeping the crowd out, and helping themselves lavishly. Again, the head warder of the jail, a huge Dutchman, was sentenced the other day to some small inadequate punishment for stealing many hundred pounds' worth of money and property from prisoners in the course of a year or two. It is easy enough to take the money of a prisoner who is inside, safe for a long term of years—some are arrested with very large sums on their persons—and also in cases where the prisoner is too drunk to remember what he ought to have had with him when arrested.

Jovial tramps—'on the wallaby' is the classical term in South Africa—these there always are, mostly Irish, who put in their winters in jail, and in summer beg and steal their way for hundreds of miles, working a little here and there at the farms they pass, but, poor

fellows, knowing no trade, and happy with a blanket, some mealie-meal, and a 'billy' for cooking or drinking water. They are worse off than Kaffirs, who know roots and fruits good to eat on the veldt as they pass. Reckless, broken-down gentlemen, too, are not infrequent, and may be met scores of miles from any house, striding on in a few rags, two-thirds of a pair of boots, and a 'Hallo, comrade, whither away?' to any one they meet in similar case. Desperate and successful criminals these make when they get into congenial society, or capital fighters in any small native war, should occasion arise. The Kaffirs are daily arrested by scores for being in town without a proper pass, or written authority, good for a month, value one shilling. Now the blacks cannot read, and the Zarps themselves (ZARP, on their tunic, stands for South African Republic Police) in many cases can make only a very poor attempt at it; so as the revenue accruing from the fines is very great, and the black prison labour from those who cannot pay is very valuable, it can be imagined that the poor Kaffir has a bad time. Complaints are frequent of the sapient Zarps trying to read passes upside down, tearing and throwing away valid passes and swearing the bearer had none (for a Kaffir's word is taken as nothing against a policeman's), &c. Your Dutch policeman is simply a raw illiterate Boer taken from a backward farm, scarcely able to read and write his mother-tongue, and speaking usually just a smattering of English. He is drilled a little in a back-yard, and placed on beat duty, but his knowledge of police duties is 'nil,' and miserably paid; and he is constantly striking to get pay which has been long since due to him from his lethargic superiors, a curious anomaly altogether in an up-to-date English-speaking city like Johannesburg. A few Englishmen, however, have been taken into the detective department, by whom all the important duty in the repression of crime is done.

The jail at Pretoria cannot be better described than as being a smaller edition of the one at Johannesburg. Black and white men's yards lie to the right and left, and a small separate yard is kept for the untried prisoners —white and Kaffir—who are not sent out to work before convicted, whites and Kaffirs merely occupying separate cells, and the white men keeping the blacks to their own allotted corner in the yard itself. Hither came Dr Jameson and his comrades ('Dr Jim' in South African parlance from Cape to Zambesi) after their one hundred and fifty mile hand-gallop dart for Johannesburg; thither, too, came the Johannesburgers who were subsequently imprisoned. The cells are some eighteen feet by twelve feet, and stone-flagged—three prison blankets for a covering, and one for a pillow: the régime in every other respect the same as at Johannesburg. To do the Boers justice, they allow untried prisoners to have in what they want and can pay for, if they can also pay them for passing it in. For a sovereign or less, had they not been political prisoners, admission could have been procured for anything in the world, provided it were not too large to go through the prison doors.

Pretoria itself is a pretty town with graceful houses and gardens and good public buildings; its most striking feature is fine old fir and other avenues of trees, some seventy or eighty feet high, and fine broad roads.

## VANISHED!

By J. S. Fletcher.

### I.

I had worked hard at my art for years without more recognition than artists get from publishers or editors who want designs for title-pages and book illustrations, and more than once I had felt half tempted to throw the whole thing aside and emigrate, or enlist, or do something that would have been equally foolish. But the thought of Helen Tresham had kept me going, and had made me brave when my own natural inclination would have led me to mere cowardice. While I was working in London she was toiling away at her governess work in St Petersburg, saving all that she could towards the home which we had set our minds upon making in England. At that time she used to write me the most cheery of letters—always bidding me hope and trust—the kind, sympathetic, helping sort of letters that good women do write to the men they love. Sometimes she used to blame herself for living in such luxury as she did (she was governess to the family of a Russian prince who lived in a palace), while I was slaving away in dreary London chambers. But then she would naïvely add, her salary was so good that she could save a great deal of money out of it, and every pound saved brought nearer the happy time. After I read one of her letters, I used to work feverishly, for I wanted her to come back to me, and I had made up my mind that I would never ask her to do that until I felt sure of success.

At last—what a long time it had been, and yet how quickly we forgot it when it was once over!—the time of waiting came to an end and our happiness began. At last my success was assured, and the people who had flouted or scorned me began to speak of me respectfully as a rising artist. There was no more need to execute pot-boilers—nay, there was no longer necessity to work more like a slave than a man. Success became a certainty—it was no longer a matter of speculation, but rather a question of degree. I had both feet firmly planted on the ladder—the only problem now was how far I should climb towards the top. And so Helen and I were married and settled down in a South Kensington flat, I to work at my art, and she to direct, counsel, and inspire —all of which womanly duties came to her with natural lavishness. What children we were in those first happy days, and what a paradise our small establishment seemed to our eyes, blinded by love's roseate tints! I think we played at life for the first few weeks, but

after that we woke up to realise that life is a matter of variety, and so came sober reflection and steady work in its train. It was at that period of my career that I painted my picture of the balcony scene in 'Romeo and Juliet.' Helen sat to me for Juliet—I had never seen a woman's face that so adequately realised my own conception of Shakespeare's girl-heroine. I selected the moment when Juliet bends from the balcony to tell Romeo why she would have back her love:

> But to be frank and give it thee again,
> And yet I wish but for the thing I have;
> My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
> My love as deep; the more I give to thee
> The more I have!

There were people who objected to my picture when it was finished because Romeo's face was not seen. He stood with his back to the foreground, showing no more than the contour of an olive-tinted cheek. But there was design in that, for I wanted Juliet's face to dominate and light the whole picture, even as its original had lighted my own life. So, though it was entitled 'Romeo and Juliet,' it was really Juliet and no more. I had never a doubt of its success. It seemed to me, as I worked at it with Helen's face bending towards me from the improvised balcony which I had built up in my studio, that the people would crowd about it and wonder, and at last understand and go away pleased. And so it was no surprise to me, when the hanging committee of the Royal Academy gave the picture a place on the line, and the first visitors began to crowd round it with eyes and voices expressive of admiration.

Had that picture never been painted, it is possible that Helen and I had escaped a long year of sickening anguish.

I was strolling through the rooms of the Royal Academy one afternoon, some weeks after the exhibition opened, and went round to my own picture with a vague curiosity to see whether people still clustered about it. It had been so popular that the authorities had placed a policeman before it, and on this particular afternoon he stood there looking intensely bored, for there was absolutely nothing to occupy him. Only one person stood before the picture—a man, evidently a foreigner, clad in garments that were presentable and no more. It was, I think, his evident poverty that first attracted me to the man, but presently my interest transferred itself from his general appearance to the look in his eyes. He stood a little distance away from the picture, his arms folded over his tightly buttoned frock-coat, his whole body rigid and motionless, his eyes concentrated on Juliet's face. They were strange eyes—wild, fiery, keen—and just then they seemed to fasten themselves on the picture with a devouring interest.

The policeman on duty knew me, and saluted me with respect as a man who could make people feel an interest in mere pictures. I nodded and passed on. At the door of the room I turned and looked back. The man with the strange eyes was talking to the policeman, and just as I glanced at them I saw the officer nod his head in my direction. The stranger turned and looked at me, and it seemed to me that our eyes met across the long room. I caught, at any rate, a peculiar glitter from them; then I turned away and professed to be intent on a picture close by. When I looked round again the man had gone—there was no one in the room but the policeman and myself. I sauntered round the room again, and stopped near my own picture. The policeman was looking at something which he held in his hand. He glanced at me and saluted me confidentially—almost appealingly. 'Beg pardon, sir,' he said, 'but what might this here be? It's money o' some sort, but I don't know what 'tis. That foreign cove that's just gone out dropped it into my hand as he went—I reckon it's not worth much—looks like a bit o' dirty brass.'

I took the coin in my hand and examined it carefully. It was dirty, and a little worn, but it was a Russian imperial rouble for all that. 'That's a very nice tip, my man,' said I, handing the coin back. 'It's a Russian gold coin, and its English value is about thirty-two shillings.'

The policeman turned more colours than one. He stared from the coin to me, and from me to the coin.

'It must ha' been a mistake,' he gasped. 'And yet—why, he took out a reg'lar handful of 'em, and just picked that out as if 'twas a penny!'

'I suppose the man thought he was only rewarding you in accordance with your deserts,' I said.

'Lor'!' he answered. 'I told him next to nothing, sir. Just the artist's name, and as you were in the gallery I pointed you out—no offence, I hope, sir?—it's the usual thing. But thirty-two shillings—you ain't mistaken, sir? And 'im dressed like a pauper!'

I observed, with the air of one uttering an absolutely original remark, that one cannot always judge by appearances; and having advised the policeman to take his imperial rouble to a money-changer, passed on and went home. I believe I had dismissed the whole incident from my mind before I reached the end of Piccadilly—certainly I had forgotten it by the time I reached home, for I made no mention of it to Helen. I often wondered in the days that came after and brought so much anxiety in their train, if anything of our sorrow would have been avoided if I had told her. But the thing seemed slight and inconsequential—an odd-looking foreigner staring at my picture and giving its custodian a gold rouble—there was nothing in that to suggest the first step in an ugly dream—and so I let the incident pass unheeded.

II.

It was about a month later that Helen came to me one afternoon dressed for walking, and asked if I would go out with her for a while. I was busy at my easel, for the light was good and I was absorbed in a new conception. I looked at her, and wanted to go, and then at my picture, and wanted to stop. She saw my hesitation and retreated, laughing, to the door.

'Oh, irresolute lover!' she said. 'Is it so

hard to make up your mind as to the charms of your two mistresses? Never mind, dear, I'll give place to art for an hour. I have some shopping to do, and you hate shopping, don't you, poor darling? Go on with your work and be ready for my return in an hour, and then we'll have a walk in the park before darkness comes on. So *au revoir!*'

She threw me a kiss with her dainty finger-tips and laughed and ran away. I heard the door close and the patter of her feet upon the stairs outside, and then I turned to my picture and worked steadily again.

An hour passed and still I worked and Helen had not returned. At the end of another half-hour I laid aside palette and brushes and made myself ready for our walk. Still she came not. I sat down and smoked, but at the end of two hours I went down-stairs, and standing at the door of our house looked along the road hoping to catch sight of her advancing figure. Once I thought that I saw her in the distance, and I went to meet her only to find myself mistaken. I went back to the house and waited a while at the door. Ten minutes passed and there was no sign of her coming. I went up-stairs to our rooms and sat down to smoke in my studio. It was then nearly three hours since she had left me, and the afternoon was rapidly fading into twilight. Still I did not feel uneasy; it struck me that she had met some friend or other and made a call. She knew that I was busily intent on my picture and should not object to being left alone with it. So I sat there smoking and reading, expectant of her voice on the stairs at any moment. I had no thought whatever of wrong—how could I have?

I think I had worked longer and harder that day than usual—anyhow, something induced me to sleep. The book which I was reading dropped from my hand and I slumbered. While I slept I dreamed that Helen was in danger. I heard her voice crying to me for help. I had a momentary glimpse of her face, full of pain and fear. I woke with a start and looked about me. The studio was in darkness, there was no gleam of light save the faint rays of a gas lamp in the street outside. Something seemed to suggest coming sorrow and trouble: the air felt charged with it. I struck a match and lighted the gas, and at that moment the door opened to admit the parlour-maid, carrying my reading-lamp. I wanted to ask her if Helen had returned, and could find no words to do so. She set down the lamp and looked at me.

'My mistress has not come in yet, sir,' she said. 'Will you dine?—cook says that dinner will be spoiled—it's nearly seven o'clock, sir.'

Our usual dinner-hour was six, a convenient one for us because it was neither too early nor too late. I glanced at my watch; it was five minutes to seven. Where could Helen be? It was nearly four hours since she left home, and wherever she might have gone I felt sure that had all been well she would have returned to dinner. Then I remembered with a sickening sense of fear that we had promised to accompany some friends to the theatre that evening, and had arranged to call for them at a quarter to eight. Even as I remembered that, a ray of hope flashed upon me: it might be that Helen had gone there. It was an improbable thing, but drowning men catch at straws, and I was by that time most seriously concerned at my wife's absence. I told the girl to keep dinner waiting, and snatching up my hat ran out to our friend's house. One word there sent me away again; Helen had not been there. But as I turned away a voice called me back: one of the daughters of the house had seen her at half-past three in Piccadilly. She was just going into Hatchard's book-shop, and had stayed a moment at the door to speak to her friend and to confirm our engagement for the evening.

There are, I think, few sensations more horrible than that of a man who loses wife or child in a great city and feels himself hopelessly at sea at the very outset of his search. I realised this sensation to the full as I walked away from my friend's house. I was by that time certain that something had befallen Helen. She might at that moment be calling on me for help as she did in my dream. And yet I was helpless, powerless. Which way should I turn amidst that awful labyrinth of streets? She had been more easy to find in the desert of Sahara than in that vast city.

I went home hoping to find her there. I looked into the dining-room. There was the cheery table spread for dinner with its two vacant places, and the shaded lamp-light falling on the polished glass and silver. But the room was empty, and so was the whole house, empty, at any rate, of her presence. I roamed from room to room for a while, too full of a sickening fear to think or speculate, but at last I could bear the suspense no longer. I left the house and drove to the nearest police-station and gave information.

There is a certain monotonous regularity about the ways and doings and thoughts of our police which is exasperating at times like that of which I am writing, but in spite of it their help is valuable, and it gave me some further hope to see how promptly their intricate machinery was put in motion. Perhaps I chafed somewhat under the cold, official questions of the inspector. He was full of motive and cause, I was concerned only with result and effect. I laughed when he asked me if there were any reason why my wife should leave her home, but I answered all his interrogations calmly, only begging him when they were finished to use his best endeavours as rapidly as possible.

I shall not relate in detail the history of the next twenty-four hours. My wife did not return. We found that after leaving home she had walked to Piccadilly and had purchased two new books at Hatchard's. After that there was no trace of her. But later in the day the police took me to a lonely spot in Kensington Gardens where they had discovered traces of a struggle. The wheel of a conveyance had impinged on the grass, and near it were the marks of feet. Close by lay a parcel in brown paper which proved to contain the two books purchased by Helen at Hatchard's. It turned

my heart to ice when I saw those books, for their discovery seemed to suggest a tragedy. But there was worse in store.

'Here's something else,' said an inspector. 'It lay close by the books, but whether it has anything to do with the case or not I don't know. Look at it.'

He held up a carte-de-visite portrait as he spoke. I snatched it from him—merciful heavens! It was a photograph of the man whom I had found gazing at my picture in the academy!

III.

A year passed by. It seemed like a century to me, for as the long days lengthened into longer weeks they brought me no news of Helen. I had spared no time and had spent every available penny in my efforts to trace her, but without result. She had vanished as completely as though something had snatched her away from earth. The ordinary methods of the police were absolutely futile, they resulted in mere nothingness. After a time I discarded them and turned inquiry-agent on my own account. It seemed to me that the clue to the mystery of Helen's disappearance lay in the strange man who had shown so keen an interest in my 'Juliet.' I secured the portrait of him which the police picked up and began to look for him diligently. I hunted the foreign quarters of London, I spent hours, days, aye, weeks in the cafés and restaurants frequented by foreigners, always seeking a face, the face of the man whose counterfeit presentment I carried in my breast-pocket. I had other copies made of that photograph, and gave them to friends of mine whose occupation or tastes took them into the haunts of foreigners. It seemed the best clue that we had. And yet it was hopelessly weak, I felt that from the first. There was no name on the card, no address, nothing to show where or by whom the photograph was taken.

I do not think that I ever gave up hope altogether, but at the end of the year there came upon me that awful sickness of heart which only hope deferred and disappointed can cause. For me it had been a terrible year. I had lost my wife with all the horror of uncertainty as to her fate. Had I found her dead it had been better than to know that she had disappeared from me in a fashion that suggested all manner of nameless horrors. I had searched for her and found no trace of her. Now it seemed to me that it was utterly useless to do more. My resources were almost exhausted, for I had earned no money during that twelve months of sickening suspense, and all that I had previously saved had been spent in my efforts to find Helen. And I was no nearer finding her at the end of the year than at the beginning.

I sat in my studio one afternoon, staring vacantly at a canvas that stood upon the easel near the window. It had its back turned to me; I had turned it that way months before, for it was the picture upon which I had been working when Helen left me, and I had never felt able to look at it after realising her loss. I wondered if I should ever paint again, if years would heal my wound, if time would soothe the gnawing agitation that still possessed me. I got up and began to pace up and down the room, all the bitterness of the past year welling up afresh within my heart, and it was while I was thus sorrowfully engaged that I heard a hesitating knock at the door. It was so faint that at first I paid no heed to it, but when it was repeated in a louder though still curiously hesitating fashion, I went over and opened the door and looked out.

The landing was dim with shadows and at first I saw no one. But presently I caught sight of the figure of a man standing within the gloom. He breathed my name in a low voice.

'Mr Vincent—the painter?' he whispered, questioningly.

'Yes,' I replied. 'Who are you? Come in; I can't see you there.'

'Are you alone?' he asked. 'Quite alone?'

'I am quite alone. Come in; why do you stand there?'

I drew back and motioned him to enter. The man stepped out of the gloomy shadows and followed me. A tall, black-haired, black-bearded man with a great cloak and slouched hat. He put the door to behind him, and at the same instant looked round my studio as I have seen captive wild beasts look round a cage. And there was something in the glitter of his eyes that made my heart suddenly leap in my side and then begin to beat with an awful sense of fear or hope, I knew not which.

'Ah!' I cried. 'It is you, the man whom I saw before my picture?' He turned and looked at me, and as he looked he put up his hand and pulled off wig and beard. Then of course I recognised him perfectly. Those were the same eyes that had haunted me, but the face was changed. It spoke of suffering, privation; there was a nameless horror in it.

'Yes,' he said, 'yes, it was I that you saw there. I saw you too. I was looking at your "Juliet." The picture of your wife.'

He walked slowly across the room, and then I noticed that he limped and shuffled in his walk. He dropped wearily into a chair and faced me again. I went up to him with a curious feeling at my heart.

'Why have you come here?' I cried. 'Do you know that I have been searching for you for a year? Why have you come? Is it'——

'To tell you of your wife,' he said. 'Yes, that is it. I have endured much to do that. But I promised her.'

I nerved myself with an effort and tried to speak, but my tongue had grown dry.

'Go on!' I said at last, the words rattling in my mouth. 'Where'——

'She is in the fortress of St Peter and Paul,' he answered. 'I was there, too, until they sent me off to Siberia. I escaped *en route*, you understand?'

I understood nothing. I sank into the nearest chair and stared at him.

'I am Ivanovitch,' he said. 'Stepan Ivanovitch. It may be that she never mentioned me, why should she? I was also an artist;

we met in St Petersburg; it is now a long time ago.'

Still I continued to stare at him. Was it a dream? Was this great, gaunt, hollow-cheeked man with the half-mad eyes the figment of a vision? I put out my hand mechanically and touched his sleeve. He looked at me curiously. Yet I could not believe. My wife, my Helen, a prisoner in St Peter and Paul! Impossible! impossible!

I rose and tottered rather than walked across the room to a little cabinet in which I kept a spirit-case. I poured out some brandy and drank it at a gulp. The strong spirit revived me. I turned to the man and felt prepared to hear him. He looked wistfully at the spirit-case, and I filled a glass and handed it to him.

'Now speak,' I said. 'Tell me all. I don't understand; make it plain to me.'

'Da!' he said, 'but it is so plain, when one knows how these things are done. So plain—oh yes, so very plain. Your wife and I were arrested in Kensington Gardens—it must be a year ago—by the agents of the Russian police. We had met there—it was accident, that—and we were talking, for we knew many people in Petersburg, and then they were upon us, for they had been on the outlook for me and her too, and all was quiet just there, and they had their conveyance waiting and we were aboard their ship in the Thames, oh, so quick! It is this way,' he said, glancing at me; 'they work quietly, but surely. Da! what can you expect?'

'But their motive?' I cried. 'What motive had they in arresting my wife?'

The man shrugged his shoulders. 'Nu! as if one should know that! But she and I, we were both members of a little circle in Petersburg—it was literary, artistic, you understand? and some of us afterwards—well, we were not well seen of the Government. Not she, you know, not she at all! But her name was on the rolls, and when they decided on arresting us, of course they included her amongst the rest.'

I stared at him in sheer amazement. 'Do you mean to say,' I asked, 'that the Russian police track people down like that?'

He sipped the brandy in his glass, and glanced at me curiously.

'I mean to say,' he answered, 'that if they are on the lookout for you they will find you, even though you retreat to the uttermost corners of the earth.'

'But their evidence?' I cried; 'their evidence against my wife? What have they to bring against her?'

'Nothing, but that she was member of a circle, other members of which are known as the most implacable Nihilists of the day. Ah, that circle! Alexis—they killed him—and Olga—she is in Siberia—and so, too, are Lyof, and Anna, and Stiva, and there was Sonya—she has disappeared—Da! it is curious how unfortunate we have all been.'

'And my wife?'

'She is in St Peter and Paul; I know she is there, though I never saw her. I never saw her after they had us in the carriage together, but she knew what had happened, and she said two words to me and I two to her, and they meant that I would escape if I could and find you. And I did—we were on the way to Siberia; she was not in the gang, I made sure of that. She is there, they will keep her there, oh, perhaps a very long time.'

'And may they release her in the end?'

'Da!' he spat contemptuously on the floor. 'Release an Englishwoman? To tell her story here in England? You are mad to think of that.'

'Then what am I to do?'

He shrugged his shoulders with a hopeless gesture. 'There are means,' he said. 'Something may be done; we will take counsel.'

So at last I knew where my wife was. But the knowledge brought me no peace. I was rather stirred up to a fever of horrible revolt at my powerlessness to help her. What could I do? My resources were drained, I had few friends, and there was the awful, adamantine Russian police system to attack, singlehanded. I felt sick at heart, broken down, as I thought of my own weakness and of the strength of those whom I must fight. It was so hard to feel myself there in London, moneyless, and unable, because of my great anxiety, to work, while she, my wife, was a prisoner in that terrible fortress—or on the way to Siberia. For a while Stepan Ivanovitch's news seemed to paralyse me. But desperation set me to work. I began to seek out ways and means. A brilliant idea struck me—the purchaser of my picture 'Romeo and Juliet' was no less a person than Lord A——, the then Foreign Secretary! I would go to him; surely he would help me. And there was the Prince Z——, in whose family Helen had been governess; he, too, would not refuse his aid. I thought of these things and took courage. That evening I spent in drawing up a statement of my case. The next morning I called upon Lord A——, and saw him personally. And when I left him it was with new hope, and yet he had told me kindly enough not to be too sure of success, for the matter bristled with difficulties and obstacles. A week later I saw Lord A—— again. He told me that the matter must now pass entirely out of my hands. I was to leave it with him and with Prince Z——, who happened to be in London at the time. All that I could do was to wait for the result. There was a kindly pressure in his hand as he dismissed me that gave me new confidence. Nor was that confidence misplaced. A month later Lord A—— sent for me one morning, and after giving me a hearty greeting that made my heart beat with expectant hope, showed me into a small cabinet adjoining his room. He pushed me in and closed the door quickly after me, and I turned and found—my wife!

I am afraid it was some time before we left the room, for we forgot everything but ourselves. But at last we came out to thank Lord A—— for all he had done for us.

'No more flirtations with the disaffected, you know, Mrs Vincent,' he said as he bade us farewell.

'But it was so innocent!' said Helen. 'We

were just half-a-dozen young people who met to discuss'——

'Never discuss!' said his lordship laughingly. 'At any rate unless you are safe in South Kensington. Good-bye!'

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Much excitement has been caused by the report of certain experiments by Professor Röntgen of Würzburg with Crookes's radiant-matter-tubes. Such a tube, when electrically excited, gives off not only light waves, but radiations of a totally distinct character, the nature of which has not yet been determined. These radiations will penetrate wood, ebonite, leather, and other opaque substances, including most of the metals; but glass, which is so transparent to ordinary light, is opaque to them. It therefore becomes possible to affect a photographic plate shut up in a wooden box, and the shadows of different articles placed on that box are permanently impressed upon the plate. The most curious result yet attained is by placing the living hand above such a box, when it is found that the radiations are stopped by the bony structures but not by the flesh. The result is a photograph, or rather shadow of a skeleton hand. These experiments have lately been repeated in this country, and specimens were reproduced in *Nature* of January 23d. They may be regarded as a further development of the researches of Crookes, Hertz, Lenard and others, put in such a form as to excite the interest and curiosity of a wonder-loving public.

As our readers know, constant war has been waged during the past fifteen years upon the rabbits of Australia. In 1881 a member of the New South Wales legislature expressed his disappointment that the Government programme did not include any scheme for dealing with what he regarded as a most important question. But he was laughed at for his pains and told that a bill might as reasonably be introduced for the extermination of the lively flea. But now the laugh is on the wrong side, for the rabbits have increased and multiplied to such an extent that the loss to the colonies concerned, by their depredations, amounts to millions of pounds sterling. Every remedy has been tried: poisons, stoats, weasels, cats, armies of men, and hundreds of miles of rabbit-proof netting. Millions of rabbits have been destroyed by these various agencies, but the animals are so prolific that if a district be almost cleared of them, in twelve months they are as numerous as ever. It is now agreed that the evil has been battled with too late, and that the winners in the war are the rabbits.

As might have been expected, the cheapening of electric glow-lamps, owing to the expiration of patent rights, has led to a serious deterioration in the quality of the articles supplied. Of course this does not apply to the best firms who make such things, but to others who have rushed into the business without the experience which successful manufacture of such delicate articles demands. In Germany the mischief is so great that a committee has been appointed to inquire into the whole matter, and it is stated that the result will be a system of standardising which will lead to the rejection of hundreds of faulty lamps. It is probable that these latter may be thrown upon the English market, so that users in this country will do well to be on their guard. In the meantime, Mr Preece, the post-office electrician, who has some 50,000 glow-lamps under his control, is making experiments, the results of which, it is hoped, may assume such a practical form that it will become possible by noting the behaviour of a filament during one hour of incandescence, to estimate its probable longevity.

Professor McKendrick's series of six lectures at the Royal Institution (London) on 'Sound, Speech, and Hearing' came to a conclusion last month. Perhaps the most interesting lecture was the concluding one, when the professor explained the mechanism by which insects, birds, and mammals produced the varied sounds peculiar to them. It was shown, experimentally, that the tones in the human voice came from the vibrations of the elastic folds connected with the larynx which are known as the vocal chords, and a model of the parts, in which the chords were represented by thin india-rubber capable of being tightened and relaxed by attached mechanism, was made to sing the diatonic scale with accuracy. The model could also say 'Papa' and 'Mamma,' but here its vocal efforts ceased. We are reminded, by these experiments, that a talking machine which employed india-rubber chords, lips, palate, &c., was exhibited in London about twenty years ago. It was most ingenious in construction and was worked by a keyboard. Unfortunately it took almost a life-time to learn how to manage it, and then the results were not very satisfactory. It was of course totally eclipsed by the phonograph.

One of the most curious agricultural products known, if it can be placed in such a category, is cochineal, the chief seat of which industry has for many years been the Canary Islands. The story of the establishment of cochineal culture in the islands is a curious one. In 1835 a native gentleman became acquainted with the methods pursued for producing this dye in Honduras, and brought with him from that place specimens of the cochineal insect and the cactus upon which it thrives. At that time the wine growers at the Canaries were flourishing, and no other kind of industry was believed in. The culture of the cochineal was regarded as a mad freak, and its introducer met with opposition on all sides. Then the dreaded phylloxera made its appearance in the vineyards and ruin faced the wine growers. They were glad indeed to take up the despised cochineal, and the old vineyards were given up to the new industry with such success that in one year the value of the exported dye reached not far short of one million sterling. The introduction of aniline dyes changed all this, and it is feared that the cochineal industry can never regain its former position in the Canary Islands. We gather

the above facts from an interesting article in the *Produce World*.

It would seem from the statistics given in a recent bulletin of the ministry of agriculture, that France will in a few years be as destitute of wolves as Britain has been for some centuries. For a long time the French Government has put a price on the heads of these ferocious animals, and the figures given represent the number of premiums demanded rather than the number of slain. Last year the figures published were two hundred and forty-five, as against two hundred and sixty-one in the previous year, the total having decreased during the last thirteen years, although the reward has been made greater. In 1884 the wolves accounted for numbered thirteen hundred and sixteen, but in many departments where they were formerly numerous they are now quite extinct. The majority of those now killed are in the central region of France, and in contiguous departments. The eastern departments of the country used to furnish the greatest number of wolves, but the animals are now rarely found in those districts.

The number of railway servants injured or killed during the operation of shunting and coupling up vehicles is terribly large, and some hundreds of patents have been taken out with the object of making the dangerous operation of coupling so far automatic that men need not get between the trucks or carriages. At a trial of these inventions about ten years ago, prizes were awarded to some of the best, and since then many other contrivances have been devised. Among these, the automatic coupling patented by Mr A. B. Ibbotson has recently been shown in London. It is so arranged that when two vehicles come together they are immediately locked, unless, that is, it is desired that they should merely push one another without joining together, when the turn of a handle, which can be worked from either side of the carriage, prevents the automatic arrangement from acting. A vehicle having the patent attachment can be coupled up to another furnished with the ordinary link, and the amount of slack between any two vehicles can be easily regulated. The new invention seems to promise well.

We are glad to see that it is proposed to erect a monument, in the town of Dôle (Jura), where he was born, to the memory of the late Louis Pasteur, who may justly be regarded as one of the greatest men France has produced. A committee, at the head of which is M. Felix Faure, President of the Republic, has been formed to carry out the work, and subscriptions are invited from all. The work to which Pasteur devoted his life would require a volume to describe in anything like detail, and we can only name here one of his achievements. He was the first to demonstrate that certain tiny rod-like bodies (bacteria) were the sole exciting cause of anthrax, or splenic fever in cattle, and to point the way to its prevention by inoculation. Three years ago it was stated that two and a half million sheep, three hundred and twenty thousand horned cattle, and two thousand eight hundred and sixty-one horses had been inoculated from the Institute Pasteur —and material had been sent to India for the inoculation of one thousand elephants. It is not too much to say that by Pasteur's researches splenic fever has been conquered as effectually as Jenner vanquished smallpox; moreover, he pointed the way by which it may be reasonably hoped that many of the dire diseases which affect man may be successfully grappled with.

The increase in the number of electric mains in our streets during the past year has been very marked, and has been brought unpleasantly before the notice of wayfarers by excavated roads and upturned footpaths. With increased facilities for obtaining the electric current, many new applications of it have been brought forward, and among these is its adaptation to the purposes of projection in the optical or magic lantern, and its use in theatres as a substitute for the lime light. The latter form of light requires the presence of oxygen and hydrogen gases under pressure, and although of late years the apparatus employed has been greatly simplified, it is still cumbrous and possesses drawbacks which make it compare very unfavourably with the two simple wires which form the only visible agents of the far more brilliant electric arc-light. A new form of lamp, or regulator, to furnish an electric arc-light for the purposes just indicated, has recently been patented by Mr C. M. Hepworth, and has been introduced under the name of the Ross-Hepworth projection lamp by Messrs Ross, the well-known opticians of London. This apparatus gives a steady, brilliant light, and has all the necessary movements to fit it for the purpose for which it is designed.

A new kind of nozzle for fire-hose has recently been introduced into this country from the United States, where it is said to have met with much favour. The nozzle is bell shaped, and within it is a ball which causes the jet of water, as it proceeds from the nozzle, to form a cone shape, which is found very effective in quenching fire, without causing the mechanical injury to fittings which accompanies the use of the ordinary jet. A good deal of wonder has been excited by the circumstance that, although the ball is perfectly free, it keeps its position in a stream of water at one hundred pounds pressure without flying off into space. The same surprise was excited many years back, when it was found that egg-shells, india-rubber balls, &c. could be made to hang in mid-air, by the action of a jet of steam, and experiments have more recently been made in connection with compressed air, which give precisely the same results. Faraday long ago gave the true explanation when he showed that the issuing jet of steam under pressure causes induced currents of air to press upon it from all sides, and it is these which are able to support solid bodies submitted to its influence. The action of the ball in the water-nozzle may doubtless be explained in the same way.

The cheapened production of the metal aluminum, which has led of recent years to its greatly extended use for so many purposes, has tempted many to start factories for its reduction from the earths with which it is combined, and the process most generally adopted is electrolysis. The great drawback to the use of the metal is the ease with which it

loses its lustre, unless well lacquered, and the deterioration is known as rusting. An explanation of the cause of this tarnishing has been offered to the Paris Academy of Sciences by M. Henry Moissan, who has shown that aluminum produced by electrolysis contains from one to three per cent. of sodium, a metal which shows a tarnished surface half a minute after a clean face has been exposed to the atmosphere. It is easy to see how the presence of such an easily oxidisable component can lead to the rusting of the aluminum, and now that the evil has been traced to its source, a remedy for it should not be difficult to find.

It is not often that the inhabitants of Britain have a chance of beholding a total eclipse of the sun; however, such a chance will come in August next to those who possess the leisure and means to take a trip across the North Sea to Norway. It is such a common holiday trip that hundreds will probably avail themselves of the facilities offered by the different steamship companies for viewing the eclipse. It was in 1851 that a small band of scientific men observed a solar eclipse from Bue Island, Norway. But in half a century the world has learnt many things, and among them the art of carrying sightseers to all parts of the world with speed, safety, and in comfort. The crowds of holiday makers who will proceed to Norway to see the eclipse on August 9th, have only one thing to fear, and that is, that at the critical moment the sky may be overcast and the sun hidden from view.

The President of the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, Sir B. W. Richardson, in delivering his annual address to that body, touched upon many things which are of interest to the community at large. It was the duty of sanitary inspectors to teach cleanliness in dress, food, and drink; in the home, and even in the air we breathed. Man was rather given towards gluttony than starvation, and he was in favour of the vegetarian system of feeding, although it was not a perfect system, while with regard to drinking, water was the only liquid required. Work did not often kill, but labour of one kind should not be prolonged more than eight or nine hours, and when the time of recreation came, the mind should have such change of pursuit as would cultivate muscular effort, and bring into play the various senses. Good sanitation would do much for the working classes, and although it was sometimes difficult to combine cleanliness with poverty, still it could be done, especially if we recognised on what few ministrations health depended.

At Edinburgh recently, Mr J. R. Cameron lectured on the 'Bacterial Constituents of Milk,' and alluded to the practice (discussed in *Chambers's Journal* for 19th October 1895) of adding boracic acid to milk as a preservative, which he condemned. The usual dose was one ounce of acid to ten gallons of milk, an addition which was especially injurious to children, and had a bad effect generally upon the mucous membrane and upon the kidneys. Another danger arose from the circumstance that milk might have a preservative added to it before being sent to the retail dealer, and the latter being ignorant of the fact added some more, thus doubling the injurious action to the prejudice of the unfortunate consumer. Several cases of illness have been reported from the use of boracic acid, and in the German navy it has been prohibited as a preservative for meat. Salicylic acid is another injurious antiseptic, and this has already been forbidden in France as a food preservative. There are other antiseptics which are equally objectionable, benzoic acid, for example, which produces a peculiar irritation in the throat, and formaline, which is a powerful irritant to the eyes and mucous membrane. All these drugs are used in milk with impunity, a prosecution being almost unknown, and there is reason to believe that they are also commonly used in cream and butter.

It is well known that prospectors have often had to turn back from promising gold districts for want of water, for without water little mining can be done. The dry process, as applied to gold-mining, which has been introduced by Messrs Harvey & Co., 11 Queen Victoria Street, London, will therefore be regarded with interest. The ore is first submitted to a stone-breaker, which reduces the pieces to the size of an egg; it is then screened and submitted to another breaker, and finally to crushing rollers, which reduce the rock to fine powder. It is then ready for leaching by the cyanide or other process. Manual labour is almost entirely dispensed with, from the time the rough quartz is fed into the machine, until it is delivered in a finished condition.

## PRIÈRE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF SULLY PRUDHOMME.

If you knew the heart is sore,
That dwells apart without a home;
At times before my lonely door,
Your steps might roam.

If you knew how thoughts are bright,
When sad souls feel a tender glance;
Your eyes would seek my window-light,
As if by chance.

If you knew the healing cheer,
A heart can to another bring;
You sure would, like a sister dear,
Sit near and sing.

If you knew I love you so,
If you knew your soul's true place;
You e'en might enter, soft and low,
In simple grace!

WALTER GURNER.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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# BILLY BINKS—HERO.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

## CHAPTER I.

It was at the close of the hottest day, of the hottest week, of the hottest month, of the hottest year, that ever I remember in a fairly long colonial experience, that I made the acquaintance of that precocious ragamuffin, William Binks, since called—Hero.

So hot indeed was it that summer on the great plains that stretch away across Queensland, from the Dividing Range to the Never-Never country on the other side of the border, that even the oldest blacks agreed in saying that they could not remember such another in the whole course of their lives.

I was managing a frontier station in Queensland at the time, the western boundary of which extended almost up to the South Australian border. On one side of the fence was grass, grass, interminable grass, and on the other only sandy wastes and spinifex. Perhaps because there was nowhere to go when you *had* passed it, we never met a stranger to the westward of the head station, and for the same reason but few to the eastward. If you would properly understand what I am about to tell you, you must be sure always to bear this fact in mind.

When first I met the subject of my narrative I was out with two companions looking for lost horses in our back country, and our search had already lasted three days longer than we had expected it would do. No man who has not experienced a summer in that part of the world could have any possible conception of what having to do work in it means. Imagine overhead a cloudless sky; underfoot a dry, cracked, unwholesome-looking earth, that quivers and seems to rise and fall before one as if set on carriage springs. On either hand mirages may be observed: exquisite pools of water, where moisture there is none, surrounded by thickly foliaged trees and backed by mountain-ranges, when there are not a thousand trees in five hundred square miles, and scarcely a hillock over ten feet high in more than twice that area.

It was nearly dusk, and according to custom we were beginning to look about us for a place where we might pitch our camp. As I have said, our party consisted of three men, myself, a station hand, and a small blackboy named Rocca. We had four animals, three saddle-horses and one pack-horse, and I can safely assure you we were all sick to death of the business that had occasioned our absence from home.

Behind us, and on either hand, stretched the plain as far as the eye could reach, flat and unbroken as a billiard table, but ahead we could just distinguish the presence of a small watercourse, flanked as is usual in that part of Queensland by a fringe of dull green coolabahs and ti-trees. Towards it we made our way, hoping almost against hope that when we reached it we should find a little water left in some hole for our tired animals. For ourselves we had no need to be anxious as the pack-horse still carried an untouched bag.

We were scarcely a hundred yards distant from the creek when I saw the station hand, Wilson, who was riding a short distance in front, hoist himself up in his stirrups and look under his hand towards the thickest part of the clump of trees ahead. A moment later he beckoned the blackboy to his side, and, when he arrived, pointed to the ground. The boy gesticulated in answer, and then both pulled

their horses to a standstill and waited for me to come up.

'What do you see?' I asked, as I ranged alongside.

'Nothing much,' said the man, who in spite of having spent the first fifteen years of his life in a Queensland coast town was nearly as good a tracker as the blackboy. 'Only there's been somebody along here not a great while since, and by his tracks I should say he was riding a police horse.'

'But what could a policeman be doing out on this side of the head station?' I inquired, knowing as he also did that it was a most unlikely place for a limb of the law to be.

'My word—look there!' interrupted the blackboy, at the same time pointing to the trees ahead. 'Me think it that chap make one track longa here.'

I followed the direction of his hand, and there, sure enough, standing in the shade watching us, was a tiny figure. Simultaneously we stuck our spurs in our horses' sides, and cantered forward, the figure disappearing as we approached.

When we drew up at the pool, it was to discover a tragic incident. On the right bank of the little watercourse lay the dead body of a horse, with a considerable portion of his flesh missing, while under a ti-tree, on the left, was an elderly man, in the last stage of collapse. The atom who had watched our approach from the bank was, however, nowhere to be seen.

I sprang off my horse and approached the man. As I did so he looked up at me in a dazed fashion.

'So you've got me after all, have you?' he said huskily. 'Don't be too sure, though, for I may slip you yet!'

'What's the matter with you?' I inquired, disregarding his speech. 'Who are you, and how does it come about that you are here in this plight?'

'You ain't a trap, then?' he replied, meaning a police officer. 'Well—that's all right! I guess I'll be able to bilk 'em after all!'

He said this with an air of considerable cunning, and as he spoke I made a new discovery. His hands, which were crossed upon his breast, had hitherto been covered with a bit of saddle-cloth. Lifting this, I found that his wrists were manacled together.

'Hullo!' I cried in astonishment. 'You've got the darbies on. Come, I say, this won't do at all, you know. You've been up to some mischief.'

'Not much,' he answered, 'and, what's more I don't mind tellin' you about it. You see I was accused of duffin' a horse at Blakeley's place, out Binburi Creek way, a fortnight or so ago, an' the sergeant and a trooper was takin' me into Barcaldine on 'orseback for trial, when I lit out with the boy, an' made my way west, thinkin' of trying to cross the border into South Australia and so give 'em the slip!'

'And why didn't you do it?'

''Cause my 'ealth broke down!'

'What's the matter with you, then?'

'I dunno myself! I've been like this 'ere a week now, and some'ow I reckon I won't get much better this side o' Kingdom Come.'

'But how have you lived? Where's your flour, and how have you managed for other rations?'

'Haven't had none—not these three days past. We've lived on that there horse ever since he died, and the water in the hole yonder to wash it down. But somehow I reckon I'll not want much more. I believe I'm tuckered out.'

'You say "*we*." Is there somebody else with you, then?'

'Only the boy. Call the young dog; he's hidin' somewhere.'

'What's his name?'

'Billy. Call Billy Binks.'

I lifted my voice, and in lusty tones demanded that Billy Binks should forthwith make his appearance. In answer a weak little voice piped out from the tree above me, 'Hullo, you there! What d'yer want o' me?'

I looked up, and there sure enough, his head protruding from among the leaves, was Billy, gazing down at me in evident apprehension.

'Come down!' I said sternly.

'No jolly fear,' Billy promptly replied; 'I ain't coming down to be copped by no traps, not if I know it. If you want me, you'd best climb arter me!'

'I'm not a trap,' I answered reassuringly. 'And if you will come down I will promise you that you shan't be hurt.'

'True as wax, so help you never?' asked Billy suspiciously, only he requested me to affirm my assertion with a much stronger, and possibly a more appropriate, oath.

'True as wax,' I answered, trying my best to refrain from smiling, 'so help me never!'

Thereupon he clambered solemnly down and stood before me.

Such a boy, or rather such a queer little atom of a man, I had never seen before, and probably never shall see again. He was then about—well, at the very most, he could not have been more than eight years old; he was dressed in a red Crimean shirt, much torn, and a pair of man's trousers, rolled up at the bottom. The tops of the latter garments reached to within an inch or so of his armpits, and gave him a most extraordinary appearance. On his head he wore an almost crownless cabbage-tree hat, and from under its brim poured a tangled wealth of nut-brown hair. He had not one regular feature in his face, and such as he had were as ugly as it would be possible for a boy's to be. Indeed, his twinkling little brown eyes were his only redeeming point, and they were not in any way remarkable. I stared at him with a little embarrassment; he, on the contrary, was not in the least abashed by my gaze, but stood attentively regarding me with all the assurance of a man of fifty, his hands meanwhile thrust deep down into his enormous pockets. Possibly my candour had convinced him of the sincerity of my motives; at any rate in less than an hour we were on sufficiently intimate terms for him to borrow a stick of my excellent tobacco, and to forget to return what he did not use.

We camped that night at the waterhole, and with every hour the sick man's condition became more and more hopeless. What was the

matter with him I could not imagine; one thing, however, was very certain; it was quite out of the question to think of trying to move him to the station. The distance was fully twenty miles, and he would not have lived to get half-way.

Towards midnight he began to wander in his talk, and when day dawned, there could be no possible doubt that the end was very near. Shortly before six o'clock he regained consciousness, and his first act was to call Billy to his side. The urchin went up and stood before him.

'Billy,' said this parent, looking steadfastly at him, 'I've got something to say to you. You just go along with this gentleman, and don't you get up to mischief. But the first time you come across that red-headed sergeant out Barcaldine way, you just give him one for his nob for me. And don't you forget it!'

Billy sealed his promise with an oath of such remarkable scope and atrocity, that I could hardly believe I heard aright, and five minutes later, in spite of our efforts to detain it, the life of his parent departed from him.

We buried him beneath the coolabah under which we had found him, and after breakfast started back for the station, taking Billy with us. The urchin, who seemed in no wise to sorrow for the author of his being, rode the fourth horse, balancing himself like a monkey upon the packs.

When we reached home and I had dismissed the men at the store, I ordered Billy to follow me, and made my way across the horse paddock to my own residence.

My wife was sitting in the veranda sewing, but as soon as I appeared in the garden she rose and came down the steps to greet me.

'What on earth have you brought with you?' she asked, after she had kissed me.

I followed the direction of her eyes to where Billy was standing in his favourite attitude, his hat on the back of his head, and his hands in his pockets. He was not in the least shy, but regarded my wife steadfastly for upwards of half a minute, then the house and garden. Being apparently satisfied that what he saw was worthy of his consideration, he spat over his left shoulder, tilted his hat forward on to his eyes, and began to whistle softly.

Having furnished my wife with an account of my finding the youth, I suggested that she should take him into the house, give him a bath, and endeavour to make him look as much like a human being as possible. This she consented to do, and Billy was led reluctantly away.

Ten minutes later she came out of the bathroom, which was at the end of the veranda, and passed by where I sat perusing my letters.

'How does he take to the water?' I asked, a little curiously.

'Better than to the soap,' she answered, with a laugh. 'I've left him by himself to splash about while I hunt for some clean things to put him into; those he owns at present are only held together by their dirt.'

Having found what she wanted she returned to the bathroom. Her stay there, however, was of short duration. In less than a minute she was standing before me again.

'Have you seen the boy?' she cried. 'He's not in there!'

'He must be,' I answered; 'he hasn't come out this way. Are you sure he isn't hiding?'

'Quite sure!' she replied. 'Come and see for yourself.'

I followed her into the room, but there was no sign of Billy there.

'He's gone and taken all his old rags with him,' she said. 'How annoying!'

'Don't be angry with him, dear,' I replied. 'Remember he's only half civilised. He can't be very far away, so while you're getting his things together I'll endeavour to find him.'

But though I searched every conceivable spot in and around the house, it was without success. The boy was not to be found. It was almost dark before I *did* discover him, and then he was *curled up in the loft of the fowl-house fast asleep.* To induce him to come down, I had to promise that he should not again be bathed by a woman. His pride had received a shock, and it was some considerable time before he got over the indignity to which he had been subjected.

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## MORE ABOUT THE GOLD QUESTION.

In March 1894 (*Journal*, No. 535) we set forth the position of the gold question as it then existed, and explained the conditions of the monetary revolution through which the world is passing. An enormous increase has since been made to the world's supply of the yellow metal, and the revolution is still in progress. The silver-using countries have not yet abandoned the silver standard; bimetallists still advocate the dual standard; and the United States still preserve the appearance of a currency based on silver which is really backed by gold. But with the large increase in the supply of gold, the chances of what are called the 'rehabilitation' of silver are more remote than ever.

In our last article we stated the probability that the output of gold in 1894, when fully reckoned up, would be found to have considerably exceeded thirty millions sterling. It actually amounted to £35,993,000 sterling, according to the valuation of the director of the United States Mint. In his opinion the increase indicates the groundlessness of the Silver Party's contention that not enough gold is or can be produced to supply the demand if that metal is to be the sole standard of value of all the nations. Beyond question the increase is not merely temporary, but will continue for some, possibly many, years to come at an increasing ratio; for in none of the important gold-fields are there yet any symptoms of exhaustion, while the new fields are becoming more and more productive as they are being developed. Before we examine the condition and prospects of production, however, let us briefly review the position of gold in the economic world.

The function of a metallic currency is to fulfil the duty of every civilised community, to settle the terms in which commercial transactions shall be carried on. Just as a State determines what measures of weight and volume shall be used within its jurisdiction, so it determines the quality and character of the coins which shall be used in the mercantile exchanges of its citizens. To these coins it gives the stamp of authority which makes them 'current coin of the realm,' and 'legal tender' for the prescribed amounts, but to its coinage no State can give a higher intrinsic value than that possessed by the metal of which it is composed. In selecting metals for coinage, however, nations have selected those which, being most precious, vary in the smallest degree in relation to other commodities. A given quantity of one or other of these metals is the standard by which the value of all other things is measured. Thus it is that gold and silver have been adopted for coined money, and thus it is that gold and silver coins became not only media of exchange, but also standards of value. The two functions, however, are quite separate and distinct. As Lord Liverpool wrote: 'Civilised nations have generally adopted gold and silver as the material of their money, because these metals are costly and difficult to procure, little subject to variation in value, durable, divisible, and easily stamped or marked.' Now in this country gold became the actual standard of value, when in the second half of the seventeenth century the guinea began to be coined, although it was not legislatively proclaimed the standard until later; in fact, the history of the guinea is one of the most important and interesting chapters in the history of currency. What, however, has always to be remembered is that the establishment of the gold standard was not by measures expressly designed for that end, but under the influence of commercial and economic forces altogether independent of any theory as to the material out of which metallic money ought to be made. Gold is the most precious and durable of all metals, and gold is practically the money of ultimate settlement of all the world, because it is the only recognised standard in London, which is the centre of the world's exchanges and finances. Bimetallists would have it otherwise, but meanwhile gold is king.

Nothing more remarkable in the history of economics has occurred than the discovery and rapid development of the African gold-fields. Not only has it been demonstrated that the mineral wealth of the Dark Continent, south of the Zambesi, is enormous, but an enormous amount of wealth and enterprise has been directed to the winning of it. The rapidity with which an immense mining industry has sprung up in South Africa is unprecedented, and one reason for that is the unique regularity of the geological formation in which the auriferous beds are found. The richest field, as yet at anyrate, is that of the Witwatersrandt district of the Transvaal, in which republic in the early seventies gold began to be worked, in spite of the prejudices and opposition of the Boers. It was not, however, until 1884 that the famous De Kaap deposits were found, nor until 1885 that the renowned Sheba mine was floated into a company, and it was towards the end of 1886 before the present prosperous city of Johannesburg began to rise out of the Veldt. The story of the 'golden joys' of Africa (*Journal*, December 14, 1895) is thus one of ten years, but here is a curious and even startling fact. The Stock Exchange of Johannesburg sprang into existence in 1887, and before the end of that year some sixty-eight mining companies were on its list, with an aggregate nominal capital of £3,000,000. During the late 'boom' in the market for mining shares in London and Paris, the market value of the shares of the group of South African companies was in the aggregate over £300,000,000! It is true that these are not all gold-mining shares, but the great majority are of companies either for or in connection with gold-mining. In 1887 the Transvaal produced only about 25,000 ounces of gold; in 1894 the output was 2,024,159 ounces; in 1895 it was 2,277,633 ounces.

Just before the Californian discoveries, namely, in 1849, the world's annual output of gold was only about £6,000,000. Then came the American and Australian booms, raising the quantity produced in 1853 to the value of £30,000,000. After 1853 there was a gradual decline to less than £20,000,000 in 1883. This was the lowest period, and then the De Kaap and other discoveries in Africa began to raise the total slowly again. Between 1883 and 1887 the El Callao mine in South America and the Mount Morgan in Australia helped greatly to enlarge the output, and then in 1887 the 'Randt' began to yield of its riches. The following are the estimates of a mining expert of the world's gold production during the five years 1890–94—namely, 1890, £23,700,000; 1891, £26,130,000; 1892, £29,260,000; 1893, £31,110,000; 1894, £36,000,000. In these estimates no distinction seems to have been made between mine valuations and mint valuations; but it will be observed that the estimate for 1894 corresponds with that of the United States mint authorities.

As to the future of the South African sources of supply, it is estimated by Messrs Hatch and Chalmers, mining engineers, who have lately published an exhaustive work on the subject, that before the end of the present century the Witwatersrandt mines alone will be yielding gold to the value of £20,000,000 annually; that early next century they will turn out £26,000,000 annually; and that the known resources of the district are equal to a total production within the next half century of £700,000,000, of which, probably, £200,000,000 will be clear profit over the cost of mining.

These estimates are considered excessive by some authorities; nevertheless it is to be remembered that the productivity of deep-level mining has not yet been properly tested, that even the Transvaal itself has not yet been thoroughly exploited, and that there is every reason to believe that Matabeleland and Mashonaland are also rich in gold. As the

gold production of the world in the present year (1896) will probably foot up to double that of ten years ago, it is certainly not an extravagant expectation that other twenty millions per annum will be added to the total within the next ten years. For we have not to look to Africa alone. In Australia, besides the regular sources of supply which are being industriously developed, new deposits are being opened up in Western Australia at such a rate that some people predict that the 'Cinderella of the Colonies' will soon become the richest, or one of the richest, members of the family.

The following shows the contributions towards the world's gold supply on the basis of 1894:

| | |
|---|---|
| United States | £7,950,000 |
| Australasia | 8,352,000 |
| South Africa | 8,054,000 |
| British Columbia and South America | 2,000,000 |
| Russia | 4,827,000 |
| Other countries | 4,807,000 |
| | £35,990,000 |

What will be observed here is the curious approximation in the totals of the three greatest producers. The Australian output had increased by over two millions in five years, owing partly to improved methods of mining and treatment of ores, but chiefly to the new mines in West Australia. ('Westralia,' which produced but 59,548 ounces in 1892, raised 207,131 ounces in 1894, and 231,112 ounces in 1895.) And within the same period the Russian and American supplies had each increased about a million owing to better methods of working. The South African supply had grown up from one and a half millions in the same period entirely from new developments. If the expectations of West Australia are realised, Australasia will be found to have kept the lead in the order of production, but in 1896 South Africa will probably exceed them all and continue to head the poll for many a year to come. In fact, when the totals for 1895 are made up, it is not improbable that South Africa will be found at the top.

Now, in former articles we have dealt with the effect of the gold supply on the prices of commodities, and have shown how, with the appreciation of gold, the purchasing power of the sovereign increased. Why, it may be asked, if gold is now so plentiful—the golden stream nearly doubling in volume within ten years, and likely to be even more plentiful in the near future—is there not a reversal of the conditions which have become so familiar of late years, and a return to a higher level of prices? We shall endeavour to explain this, but must at the same time dispute the popular fallacy that high prices are synonymous with prosperity, and that cheapness necessarily means depression of trade.

In the first place then, prices *have* risen and are rising, although so gradually and sectionally, that the general public have not marked the fact. Wool, cotton, iron, copper, and leather, among leading staples, are all now considerably above the lowest prices which they recently touched. Even silver itself has recovered part of its value in relation to gold, though, of course, as yet a long way below its old ratio, and that to which the bimetallists would like to restore it by legislation. We would recall that when treating of the prospective effect of the new African discoveries, we said that the immense increase in the surplus of gold available for money (allowing always for what is annually required in the arts) would bring about a considerable fall in the value of the metal measured in commodities, and that what happened after the Australian discoveries might be expected to happen again. But, at the same time, we said that the change would be neither so rapid nor so tremendous in extent, because there were many gaps in the world's gold currencies to be filled up before the oversupply could be felt, and also because the world is now larger and the area of distribution of gold for money purposes is much greater.

Events have proved the correctness of our forecast early in 1894. The supply of gold has increased enormously, as we have just shown, but the effect of it is only being gradually made apparent. The tremendous oversupply of silver has been a factor in the problem, but that does not fall for consideration just now, having been already discussed. What is to be pointed out, however, is the new field for coined money which is created by the very developments which increase our supply of the yellow metal. Thus, some people look at the enormous amount of gold that Africa is sending us, and try to measure its effect upon the currencies of the world, as they existed before this new source of supply was opened. But this is a radical error, for South Africa is taking back from us in coins two-thirds of the gold she is sending us in bullion. To put it into figures, in the first eleven months of 1895 we received from the Cape £7,420,000 in uncoined gold, and in the same period we sent back to the Cape £5,270,000 in gold coins. Thus, on balance, South Africa is not adding so much as might be supposed to the available stock of gold in the general markets of the world. A similar position exists in Western Australia, to which we are sending back sovereigns while receiving the metal from her.

For, after all, gold-mining is only an industry, like coal-mining, or any other pursuit in which rough labour is allied with scientific knowledge and technical skill. Every ounce of the glittering yellow metal taken out of African quartz does not represent so much clear profit. It represents a large amount of expenditure of capital and energy, and the actual margin of profit on the ounce of gold so won is small. It is not like picking up nuggets and diamonds in the bed of a stream. Now the development of this industry develops in turn other industries—the construction of railways, the erection and transport of machinery, the building of roads and bridges, and the rapid creation of towns. A large population gathers not for gold-mining alone, but also for the supply of the wants of the gold-miners. The necessities of the new communities have to be met at first by the importation of almost every item—in itself a large business—but those necessities also compel attention to local resources, the

cultivation of the soil, the provision of water, the supply of heat and lighting, &c. And so a new world springs up in the desert, every day developing new industries, giving employment to a growing population whose wants also continue to grow, both for the appliances which can, as yet, only be obtained from Europe, and for coined money, to employ in wages and purposes of trade.

It is in this way that South Africa and West Australia are helping and will help European trade and commerce, and will help to relieve Europe of some portion of its surplus capital and labour. It is not the money represented by the shares in the 'Kaffir Circus' that is working the industrial and monetary evolution, but the persistent industry which is likely to bring us the newest of the new things Africa has been reputedly producing for centuries—a solution of the great currency problem.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By Sir Walter Besant.

### CHAPTER VIII.—A POLITICAL MEETING.

They were nearly all men: working men. A river-side music hall, crammed with people; the stage empty. Lady Frances in a stage-box with me—looking out upon the people. The faces she gazed upon shone white and shiny in the glare of the gas; they were serious faces; they were hard faces; the impression produced by the collective face was one of honesty and slow powers of perception, but with determination. Most of them sat in silence, leaning back contentedly and in no hurry; the men who work actively with the bodily limbs all day for their wage are never in a hurry so long as they can wait sitting. When they talked, it was seriously and with earnestness, conducting their argument on the approved lines, in which one man advances an array of alleged facts which he cannot prove, and the other contradicts the allegations, though he cannot disprove them. This is the argument of the tap-room, the bar-parlour, and the smoking-room. The more carefully we adhere to the old-fashioned, well-tried method, the more animated, spirited, and convincing is the conversation. Imperfect knowledge is most clearly indicated by frequent interruptions and noisy denials. Now these men were arguing on the constitution of the country, being ignorant of what it is, how it has grown, whence it came, or what it means. And they wanted to change it, being ignorant of what these changes would mean, or how they were to be effected, and how other members of the community would receive them. There were Socialists among them, men who look forward to the time when every man, for the sake of every other man, and not for himself at all, will gladly do a hard day's work and get no payment or profit but only the equal ration, the same garb, the same warmth, and the same roof; and they think that the levelling up or down to the same unbroken plane will create, for the first time in history, happiness complete. 'When Adam delved and Eve span, where was then the gentleman?' Alas! It is the same old, old story. There was then no gentleman, but in the third or fourth generation after Adam, there was founded the first family of gentle folk—they were, I believe, Welsh. There were also in the crowd, Anarchists, a kindly race who want to sweep away all laws, with the police and the lawyers, and the judges and the prisons, and to leave everybody to work out his own redemption for himself. And there was among them the common Radical who desires nothing more than the abolition of the Crown, the Church, and the Lords, after which no one certainly can expect or desire anything more. And there were many of that numerous class, the Wobblers, who incline this way and that, being unable to balance the advantages of any one plan against any other. Mostly, however, being poor and dependent, they desire change. Some of the women came with their husbands, and brought their work with them, the business of the evening being quite below their own attention. The British matron, who is a practical and keen-eyed person, is seldom able to understand that the abolition of the House of Lords will give her husband better pay or herself more housekeeping money. Here and there one saw a woman's white face, with set lips and furrowed brow. She was that rare woman who can see the wickedness of things, and the imperfection of things, and the injustice and cruelty and uncertainty of things; until she ceases to believe in the powers that be, or in the doctrines of church, of teacher, and of preacher, and longs to shuffle the cards and try a new deal if haply that may bring a remedy to the evils of the time.

Lady Frances looked down upon this crowd watching and wondering, interested merely by the sight of the lines of faces below her, line behind line, row behind row; while I told her the things that are written above.

'I am glad I came,' she murmured. 'Oh! I am very glad I came. George, I like to see them. Give me, I say, men and women. I say it again—men and women.'

'It is seven o'clock,' I said. 'Time's up. The man you are going to hear to-night, Frances, is the strong man—the man who has ambitions such as you would like me to have.'

'I never thought you would become a local demagogue, George.'

'He is coming out immediately. He knows the people pretty well, and they know him. This evening he will pronounce one of a series of orations he has delivered on the questions of the day. The captain tells me that he has set the people thinking and talking in a very surprising way. You see how they are discussing

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things. All these discussions are on the text of his last address.'

'The Wonderful Person of Wapping. I await him with interest.'

Then the orator appeared, stepping out from the wings, and walked quietly to his place beside a small table, which, with a decanter and tumbler, formed the only furniture of the stage.

There was no chairman. At the outset one had been proposed, but the lecturer scoffed at the suggestion, said that he could very well introduce himself, and propose for himself a vote of thanks. He, therefore, stood alone. In his hand he bore a bundle of papers, which he carefully placed in order on the table for reference.

Then he stood upright, facing his audience, and bowed slightly to the round of applause which greeted him.

Lady Frances saw a tall, broad-shouldered, and singularly handsome young man, with a broad square forehead—the light fell full upon it—clear eyes—hair in very short brown curls, such curls as denote strength—a serious face—too serious for his time of life—but then it is only your light comedian, your touch-and-go comic man who can face an audience with a grin, and it is only a ballet-girl who can appear with a smile. There was not, however, the slightest touch of embarrassment or stage fright about him. He stood easily, in an assured attitude standing well apart from the table, so that his figure was practically the only thing to be seen upon the stage. He was dressed in faultless evening clothes, with a white flower in his button-hole. This was the man who, a few weeks before, scoffed at the observance of evening dress, and sneered at the niminy-piminy ways of the fine gentleman.

'Why,' whispered Lady Frances, 'the man is dressed like a gentleman. What does he do that for? He is only talking to work-people. Look at his face, George; it says as plain as if he were speaking, "I am not afraid—I am a better man than anybody here."'

The orator held up his hand. Everybody settled in his place; everybody adjusted his feet—mostly under the benches; every other person cleared his throat; the women who had come with their husbands looked up at the orator and round the room; then they took up their knitting again and abstracted their thoughts into some useful line, such as boots and the acquisition of boots. The people on the stairs loudly besought those within to make room for them; one might as well implore the sardines to lie a little closer in their box. So they wailed aloud, like the foolish virgins, because they could not enter. And then the orator began.

I am profoundly sorry that I cannot, in this place, give you even the heads of this discourse; because his words and his facts were forcible and convincing, and I am sure, dear reader, you would like to be hammered with facts and convinced with reasons. I cannot, however, do so, for the simple reason that the laws of copyright forbid. The orations are now published, and everybody can get them and read them.

He began, however, with a personal point.

'I told you,' he said, 'at the outset, that I am here because I propose to represent this borough at the next general election. The reason why I have taken the trouble to address you is that you will be my constituents, and it is always best when a man has got opinions of his own that he should instruct his constituents upon them. Mine are not opinions: they are convictions; and my convictions, as I have shown you so far, are simple truths. You are all the better, I am quite sure, for having learned those truths: you will talk much less nonsense, and you will advocate much more sensible measures. So much, of course, you will acknowledge. Now the next general election is said to be close upon us. No one can possibly know for certain how close it is, but we may expect it any day. Therefore it is well that I have educated you to support my candidature.

'I also told you at the outset that I mean to enter the House as an Independent member. I am informed that no Independent member is of any importance in the House; that he cannot influence votes, which belong to this party or that party; that the House is divided into this flock of sheep and that flock of sheep, which follow their leaders when the bell rings. Very good. My friend, I don't want to influence votes in the House. I want to influence you—you—you—not the House at all. I care nothing about the House. It is through the House that one speaks to the country, nay, to the world, if one is strong enough. Very well. Now remember that when I am elected I am not going to call myself your servant, nor shall I have the hypocrisy to pretend that I am sent to the House with a mandate from you. Why, you don't think I am going to accept any instructions from anybody here, do you? You to give me—Me—instructions? My dear people, understand that your collective wisdom is no more than the wisdom of the best man among you, and your best man isn't a tenth part of the man that I am in knowledge, or in ability either. Do not make any mistake. You may be my servants, if you please; it is the best thing in the world for you to learn of me, to question me, to elect me, but I shall never be your servant. You can teach me nothing, but I can teach you a great deal. Understand, then, I shall be an Independent member in every sense—free of interference of party, free of interference of constituents. So you had better make up your mind at once to turn out one of your present members—I do not in the least care which—and to put me in his place. But, by the Lord, I tell you, I promise you, I will make you proud of your member!'

He stopped. This was only the prologue—the fore-words. He drank a little water and took up his papers.

The people, so far from resenting this plainness of speech, clapped and applauded mightily.

'His assurance becomes him,' said Lady Frances. 'A more arrogant speech I never heard. After that, they are bound to elect him.'

And then he turned to his subject. He had

at least the gift of oratory, and the first and the most important part of this gift is the power of clear and orderly arrangement; he knew how to select his points and to present them so that a child might understand; he knew how to repeat them; to present them again in another form, yet still so as to be intelligible to all; he knew how to present them a third time, so that there should be no chance of forgetting them. He had a flexible, rich, and musical voice, which rolled in thunder in the roof, or dropped to the soft strains of a silver flute. He knew when to stir the people's hearts, and when to make them follow to a cold chain of reason: when to make them laugh, and when to make them cry. The man played with his audience; and if you watched him, as Lady Frances did, you would observe that he rejoiced in his power; there were moments when he used this power wantonly—for his own pleasure when it was not wanted. Now and then, when he trampled upon some pet prejudice and exposed some cherished illusion, there were sounds of disagreement but faintly expressed and quickly hushed. Thus he spoke of Socialism:

'Do not,' he said, 'be led away by theories of what may be or might be. We are concerned with what is not, not what may be. Man is born alone—absolutely alone in the world—he grows up alone; he learns alone; he works alone; he has his diseases alone; he thinks alone; he lives alone; he dies alone. The only thing that seems to take away his loneliness is his marriage. Then, because he has another person always in the house with him, he feels perhaps that he is not quite so lonely as he thought. It is illusion, but it cheers him up. Every man is quite alone. Remember that. Everything that he has is his alone; he cannot give it away if he wishes. His face belongs to himself alone—there is no other face like his in the whole world, and there never has been. In the resurrection of the millions and millions of the long-forgotten dead there will be no face like any other face: no man like any other man. Quite alone. He cannot part with his gifts, his hereditary powers and weaknesses, his learning, his skill of hand and eye; his thoughts, his memory, his history, his doings, his follies—nothing that he has can he impart to any other living creature. It all belongs to him. He is alone in the world.

'Quite alone—he and his property. Remember this, and when you hear men talk of things equal and things equally divided, ask how the most important property of all is to be divided—a man's strength and skill and ability. For you are not equal: there is no equality.'

This was only a bit out of the middle of the oration. You will find plenty of pages in the printed book as strong as this passage.

He concluded at last, amid a storm of cheers and shouting.

At the door, as they went out, we met Captain Dering. I introduced him briefly.

'I saw you in the private box,' said the Captain, taking off his hat to Lady Frances. 'What did I tell you? He winds 'em about like a bit o' string; he does what he likes with 'em.'

'And will they vote for him?' asked Lady Frances.

'They will. To a man. Because he isn't afraid to have a mind of his own, and to speak it out, and to let 'em know what he thinks about their collective wisdom. Lord! their wisdom! Look here, now. With permission, madam' (the Captain was courtesy itself with a lady passenger); 'it's the same all the world over. And if you want to see what all the world wants, go and look for it aboard ship, because a ship is a world by itself. Very good. What do the sailors want? A man who palavers and pretends to take their advice? Not a bit of it. A man who talks about their wisdom? Not a bit of it. They know they've got no wisdom. They can't even pretend to navigate a ship. They want a man to take the command: a skipper who will say, "Go there; do this, —— you!" begging your pardon, madam. Ask their advice? I'd like to see a sailor's face if his captain asked his advice.'

'You like a strong man everywhere, Captain Dering,' said Lady Frances. 'So do I.'

'George,' said she, as we drove away, 'I have had a most delightful evening. Thank you, ever so much, for bringing me here. Your orator is a very strong man indeed. He speaks like a gentleman, yet he called himself a Master Craftsman—I suppose from some proud humility. "We are all working-men," I heard an archbishop say once. I thought it was rather humbug.'

'This man is, indeed, a Master Craftsman. He understands honest work with his hands as well as any working-man present. In fact, better.'

'He appeared in evening dress. Do Master Craftsmen habitually wear evening dress?'

'The garb proclaimed the difference between his audience and himself. He does not appear before them as a workman, but as their master in every sense. The evening clothes are an allegory, you see. He told them pretty plainly that he is their master.'

'He did indeed.'

'Seeking election, not in order to carry out any views of theirs, you see, but to advance his own views. I think he was quite right to put on the dress-coat.'

'He certainly speaks like a man who knows things.'

'The things that man knows, Frances, would sink a three-decker. And the things he does not know couldn't float a canoe.'

'Your metaphors are mixed, George, but you mean well.'

'You perceived, of course, that he is not a scholar. These self-taught men never are. He lacks the literary phrase, except, perhaps, when he comes to personal appeal. But the literary phrase may come. He acquires everything with amazing ease the moment he learns that it is necessary.'

'And he is—your cousin! I had forgotten that. Why, it accounts for the strange resemblance. I was haunted all the time by his likeness. I could not think what likeness. It is you, George; he is strangely like you. Only bigger, I think.'

'Yes. Bigger all over. And more ambitious, Frances.'

'Oh! and he is teaching you his trade. And what have you taught him, George?'

'Nothing worth speaking of. You see, a man brought up at Wapping, which is only a little isolated slip of ground between dock and river—a kind of island—has very few chances of acquiring the air of society.'

'George, you have taught your cousin manners—I know you have. Do you think that he will not betray himself?'

'I hope he will, because there will be no pretence. But in all essentials he will be fit for presentation in your own drawing-room, Frances, where I hope to bring him with your permission.'

'Bring him by all means. It is always a happiness to meet a strong and clever man. I think your cousin, to look at him and to listen to him, must be as clever as he is strong. George, give him if you can a lighter style. It is all very well to be intensely earnest at certain points—especially the weakest in an address—but he must not be intensely earnest all through. Teach him to laugh a little and to smile sometimes.'

## ROME AFTER THIRTY YEARS.

Few cities, ancient or modern, have seen so many changes as Rome. From a small beginning she grew until she became mistress of the world. Then she fell before the barbarian hordes, and great was the fall. Again she became the centre of the papal power, but under that government made little progress. Now she is the capital of United Italy, and is rapidly rising from her ruins. Early in the century Mrs Hemans wrote:

Rome! Rome! thou art no more
As thou hast been!
On thy seven hills of yore
Thou satst a queen;
Thou hadst thy triumphs then
Purpling the street;
Leaders and sceptred men
Bowed at thy feet.

Rome! thine imperial brow
Never shall rise.
What hast thou left thee now?
Thou hast thy skies!
Thou hast the sunset's glow,
Rome, for thy dower,
Flushing tall cypress bough,
Temple and tower.

When the 'Roman Girl's Song' was written, it seemed safe to prophesy that the Imperial City would never again rise, and that nothing of it would descend to posterity except its glorious sky and the memories of the past. But time works wonders; it would astonish the tourists who, in ever-increasing numbers, annually visit Rome, could they realise the changes which have taken place, not since the days of the kings or emperors, but within the last thirty years.

Our first visit to Rome was in 1863. At this time the Pope was a temporal as well as a spiritual prince, and things were in a rather primitive condition. To get into Rome then, or being in, to get out of it, was troublesome. Passports were absolutely necessary, and these required the papal *visa*. They were delivered to the police, and retained during the traveller's sojourn in the Papal States. In exchange, a permission to reside, and on leaving, another to depart were given, and these permits were exchanged for the passport at the frontier town as the traveller left. All this cost a good deal of money, and was extremely irritating. Even to reach Rome in those days was not so very easy. There was on this side only one railway to it, the short line from the port of Civita Vecchia; and if travellers objected to the sea, and wished to go by land, either the public diligence or a *vettura* became necessary. The journey from Florence to Rome occupied thirty-six hours, and from Bologna fifty-two hours; the diligences started three times a week.

Having got into Rome, what did the traveller find? Apart from the ruins, and unless his visit was at Easter or during some great church festival, he found himself in an extremely quiet and intensely dull city. There seemed to be no trade, and little traffic of any kind. The streets swarmed with priests and monks in all kinds of dresses, but with little else. A stray cart here and there, with a barrel of wine on it, might occasionally be seen, but no omnibuses or public conveyances except cabs. At night the city was not, or at least sparsely, lighted. In the leading street, the Corso, there were three or four lamps hung across it, but most parts were in total darkness after the shops closed. We lodged in one of the streets running out of the Piazza di Spagna, and in going home after dark it was necessary to grope along the wall and count the doors until we arrived at our own.

The Jews' quarter or Ghetto—then usually visited by travellers—was close to the Tiber; so close, indeed, that when the river overflowed its banks, the Ghetto was partially inundated. The street itself was composed of miserable houses and dark shops. At all the shop doors quantities of old clothes were exhibited for sale. Packed like herrings in a barrel, the Jews of Rome lived here; indeed they were allowed to live nowhere else. At one time no less than four thousand inhabited the Ghetto. On the Saturday before Easter, every year the Roman Church baptised into the Christian faith a recanting Jew from the Ghetto. The ceremony was performed with great pomp and parade in the church of San Giovanni in Laterano, and it occasionally cost the authorities a good deal of money to induce a Jew to undergo it. If fair means did not procure the Jew, others were tried. The permanent results were extremely doubtful.

When Pio Nono came to the papal throne, the walls of the Ghetto were levelled, and the Jews were allowed to live and trade beyond its precincts. These boons were afterwards to some extent withdrawn, and at the time of which we are writing, an American writer, then living in Rome, described the treatment of the Jews as 'shameful, intolerant, and unchristian.'

In the Corso there were annually horse-races —literally horse-races, there being no riders. The horses, having on their backs and attached to their sides iron balls with sharp spikes, were turned loose at the Piazza del Popolo, and rushed, maddened by their unusual harness, along the Corso to the Piazza di Venezia, where the race ended. The owner of the winning horse there received the prize, contributed by the Jews.

Another feature of Rome thirty years ago was the group of artists—a somewhat Bohemian colony, now merged and lost amidst the largely increased population of the present day, but then very distinct. At the Lepre at dinner-time, and in the Café del Greco in the evening, they were inevitably to be met. The Lepre and the Café del Greco were both in the Via Condotti. Across the Piazza di Spagna, the steps leading up to the Pincian Hill were the favourite lounge of artists' models.

The Carnival, and the numerous festivals of the church presided over by the Pope in person, were then celebrated in the city with great pomp, and attracted crowds of visitors from all lands. On one occasion we had the privilege of seeing and sharing in the blessing of the people by the Pope Pio Nono. The sight was most impressive. After celebrating Pontifical High Mass in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, assisted by his famous choir, his Holiness, clothed in a magnificent dress of white and gold, and wearing the triple crown, was carried in a sort of palanquin to the roof of the church. A priest then knelt before the Pope and held open a book, out of which the blessing was read. We never heard a finer or more powerful voice than that of the old Pope; and at the conclusion, when he rose, spread out his arms and pronounced the blessing, notwithstanding that the military band in the square began to play, the crowd to cheer, and the guns of St Angelo to fire, yet loud above all the din, the voice of the Pope was distinctly heard rolling out the words of blessing over his people. At the same time an indulgence on paper was cast out from the balcony and floated down to the ground. We joined in the scramble for it, but unfortunately did not succeed in capturing it. As we walked down towards the Quirinal, the Pope and his cardinals—one of them the famous Cardinal Antonelli —passed us. His Holiness must have known that we were heretics, as we merely lifted our hats and bowed, and did not do as the Romans did—kneel in the street. But he gave us a benevolent smile and the usual benediction, made by raising the right hand with the thumb and two fingers erect.

The great place of resort for the beauty and fashion of Rome was—then as now— the Pincian Hill; and here every afternoon there was an endless stream of carriages driving round and round, while the band played in the gardens at the top. The cardinals were almost always to be seen, not seldom the Pope himself, and very frequently Bomba, the ex-king of Naples.

Passing along the almost deserted streets at night, the ears of the visitor were frequently assailed by fierce shouts, and if a stranger, he had no doubt that a deadly quarrel was going on; but he was quite wrong. It was only the Romans playing their favourite game of morra —a game which was well known to the ancient Egyptians as well as the old Romans, and is popular still, not merely in Italian lands, but in China and the South Sea Islands. Two people stood opposite each other with the right hands closed before them. Then simultaneously and quickly each threw out the hand, some of the fingers extended, others closed, and called out loudly the number of fingers he supposed he and the other player had exhibited. Any one guessing the true number scored a point, and five points generally constituted the game.

In addition to this intellectual game, there were the cafés and the theatres. The theatrical entertainments were very good, and the cost of attending them was exceeding small. While in the leading theatres of London or Paris there is usually one great actor or singer who overshadows the rest of the company, in Italy all the actors were more nearly on the same level. Many an evening we have enjoyed an Italian play or opera at the modest cost of a lira (ninepence-halfpenny). In the summer-time, when the Apollo and the Valle were closed, the Correa was opened in the Mausoleum of Augustus; there was no roof to it but the sky. The performance began at five, and ended at eight or half-past. The price of a chair in the pit was a lira, and there was no objection to a cigar. The last time we were there the play was Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The acting was excellent, and the text of Shakespeare translated into Italian was closely followed. In the Italian theatres then you could for a lira have seen Ristori and Salvini in the same plays as they performed in London, where gold had to be paid for entrance.

There was only one cemetery in Rome, excepting of course the English one, and the curious charnel-house under the church of the Cappuccini. The public cemetery was outside the Porta San Lorenzo, and a more repulsive place it is difficult to conceive. Death was viewed with such horror by the Italians, that, when it entered a house, the whole family, if they could afford it, left the dead to the care of the priests, and took their departure. They did not return till the funeral was over (which they did not attend) and the house was fumigated. At nightfall a procession of Frati conveyed the corpse to the church. These Frati were enveloped in dark cloaks which

covered even the face, two slits being cut for the eyes, and they carried lighted tapers. It was an eerie sight one of these funeral processions. The coffin was taken to a church and left there in charge of the priests till midnight. At that hour the Frati came again, and the coffin was placed in a public carriage, along with others, for conveyance to the cemetery of San Lorenzo. This cemetery was about a mile beyond the Porta San Lorenzo, and for many years it was a disgrace, not only to Rome, but to civilisation. It consisted of a large walled-in space containing a number of great wells or underground tombs of stonework, each closed in by a block of travertine stone. Daily two of these were opened, one for the bodies of men, the other for those of women, and into one or other of these all the contents of the carriage were emptied. The scandal was so great that the Pope, Pius IX., set himself to reform matters, and he did so. A great contrast to this was and is the beautiful English Protestant cemetery on the Ostian Way outside the city.

In 1863 the population of the city was 180,000. In 1895 it was much more than doubled, the commune containing then over 451,000. Necessarily, this increase required a corresponding increase of house accommodation, and that has been supplied to an extent that makes it scarcely possible to recognise in the gay modern city the Rome of the Papacy. This reformation, as some call it, the desecration, according to others, commenced when the Italian troops entered Rome and it became the capital of United Italy. In the reign of Pope Gregory XVI., the predecessor of Pio Nono, a scheme was devised for the opening up of a waterway to the sea by utilising the Tiber; and for the establishment of a line of steamers to Ostia. No doubt was entertained that the pontiff would hail a proposal so clearly for the benefit of his capital, but a difficulty arose. What would become of the draymen and of their teams of bullocks which conveyed the goods slowly and laboriously to Rome? Clearly the new steam-power would end all that, and this must not be. The Pope refused his consent, and the scheme had to be abandoned. It was amiable, but it was not business, and under such a government the stagnation of the city life can well be understood. We understand the old project is now being revived. This is but one illustration of the intolerable load which then weighed upon all enterprise, and kept Rome the sleepy, dead-alive place that somewhat elderly travellers remember so well.

But Rome being freed from the papal yoke, the work of reconstruction went on with leaps and bounds. The old wooden shed, two miles away from anywhere, which formed the only station of the Roman railways, disappeared, and a large handsome station took its place. Instead of the solitary line to Civita Vecchia, Rome soon became united by the Ferrovie with all Italy. The line to Naples, opened in the last days of the Papacy, was vigorously worked. A new line connected the capital with Florence, Bologna, Milan, and Venice. The Civita Vecchia line was carried on to Pisa, Leghorn, and Genoa, and there connected with the line to Turin. So that one could go by rail from Rome to any part of Italy, and the produce of the country and of other lands flowed into it.

Thirty years ago, where the railway station now stands there was only a desert; now round it has grown up a populous city. A handsome new street leading to it, the Via Nazionale, has been opened up from the Corso, at the Piazza di Venezia; and the buildings in that street and beyond it, even to the walls of Rome, are public buildings, shops, and dwelling-houses of the most palatial kind. The wonder is where the money came from to erect them. The kingdom of Italy is generally supposed to be *vergens ad inopiam*, but truly in Rome there is no appearance of this. Go where we will, change meets us at every turn. Cross the Tiber, and in Trastevere the work goes on; and the new buildings approach the castle of St Angelo and the Vatican. Massive quays line the Tiber, as in Paris the Seine is lined; and along the course of the river handsome streets and squares are being erected. Even around the majestic ruins space is being utilised, although the ruins themselves are kept sacred as yet.

No greater change could be conceived than that exhibited in the streets of Rome of to-day, which now are full of life and bustle. At night they are brilliantly lighted with gas and electric light. In the piazzas, military bands usually play in the evenings. The swarms of priests and monks have disappeared. Omnibuses and tramcars run in every direction.

Probably the greatest street change has been the removal of the Ghetto—not merely the restrictions, but the thing itself. All is swept away, and wide streets and squares occupy its site. Being in Rome last year, we directed our steps to the place where the old Jews' quarter stood. The police knew of it historically, but when you asked them to point out the spot, you received vague general directions; all the old landmarks were gone. Peace be with its ashes! Though antiquaries may regret it, humanity must rejoice over its fall.

Another thing we missed was the gathering of the artists in the Condotti. The Lepre has disappeared, and the Café del Greco is nearly as much changed as the city around it. No doubt, there are still artists in Rome, probably more of them now than formerly, but the city has so extended, that they are lost in the crowd, and cannot be recognised. The models, too, are gone from the Piazza di Spagna, and except at the church doors, few beggars are to be met.

From a pictorial point of view, many will regret the loss of the imposing festivals of the church in which the Pope and cardinals took part. The Pope is now, or says he is, a prisoner; he never leaves the walls of the Vatican, and the grand ceremonials in the city are seen no more. In the churches the festas are still observed, but wofully shorn of their lustre. And though the Pincian Hill is still as of old delightful for its view, and is still thronged, the personnel of the crowd is very different. Year by year the number of tourists increases. There is no trouble now in either entering or leaving Rome; passports are never inquired

after, and it is as easy to visit Rome as London.

With the modernising of Rome the coinage also has been changed. The scudo, paolo, and bajocco have disappeared, to be replaced by the lira (the Italian franc) and the centesimi. A good deal of the currency is paper, and the value fluctuates. Only at leaving, and on paying your fare to Paris, paper money is refused, except for the proportion of the fare to the frontier.

The quality of the water, formerly delicious, has sadly deteriorated. We asked the *cameriere* of the Café del Greco the reason, and he replied that the large increase of the population had compelled the authorities to bring in to the city supplies from other sources. The blend does not improve it.

Rome got a bad name for unhealthiness long ago, and it sticks to it still. Wise people, who know nothing about it, shake their heads and declare that it is tempting Providence to go to Rome, that malaria abounds, especially in the summer, and that it is a most unhealthy place. The Romans laugh at the idea; they never hear of malaria at their own doors. Rome, in summer or winter, is as healthy a capital as they can find. Let the croakers compare the death-rate of Rome with that of any of the capitals in Europe, and thereafter they will be silent. We have frequently visited Rome in the summer. The weather was perhaps a little warm, but not more so than in Florence, Milan, or Turin. In the evening it was delightful. No doubt, spring is cooler; but those who only go abroad during the summer holidays need not be deterred either by heat or malaria. The one is, but is quite endurable; the other is not, for judicious travellers.

In April and May 1862, Dr William Chambers visited Italy, and in *Something about Italy*, he says: 'After perambulating the Campagna in different directions, my conviction is, that, with some insignificant exceptions, it might be brought into the condition of sound arable land, and freed from its alleged noxious influence; and such being accomplished, it is difficult to see from what quarter Rome is to be rendered insalubrious. The unwholesomeness of Rome during summer, even as it stands, is, so far as I could hear, nearly an idle fancy; injury to health being caused much more by methods of living, and indiscreet exposure to heats and cold draughts, than to any insalubrity inherent in the atmosphere.'

Notwithstanding the prophecy of Mrs Hemans, the imperial brow of Rome has risen and is rising. Whether travellers would prefer the old regime or the new depends upon taste. The ruins are still there to speak for themselves; and in one respect at least, the visitors of to-day see them to advantage—the debris has been cleared away under which many of them were in whole or in part concealed. No doubt, modern buildings are rapidly hemming them in, and we may fear that, as space within the walls becomes increasingly valuable, the relics of the past may give place to the necessities of the present. Meanwhile there are no signs of this dire calamity. The number of old travellers is rapidly diminishing, and those who never saw Rome as it was, will view with wonder and delight the mingling of the past and the present in the new Rome, that, phœnix-like, has risen from the ashes of the old.

## THE ENGLISHMAN IN THE COLONIES.

Although the reading portion of the British public are willing enough to concede that travel expands a man's ideas and increases his general knowledge, yet there still seems to be a prevalent notion amongst residents in Great Britain—as apart from Greater Britain—that colonists, and especially those *born* in a colony, are people who, if not of a weaker mental type, are, from their surroundings, ignorant of many things pertaining to civilised life, and of the conventionalities so essential to the existence of the 'upper crust' of society.

These people forget that steam and electricity, the enormous circulation of all kinds of literary matter, the rapidity with which the cable transmits news to and from almost all parts of the earth, and a thousand other conveniences of modern life, all tend to bring the colonist into direct touch with matters taking place in the great centres of civilisation and progress. Doubtless, multitudes of Britishers have learned and are learning that we are becoming one great human family, even as the members of the human body are all essential the one to the other; but it only requires a few minutes' conversation with a 'new arrival' to find that he left his native land with a firm persuasion that he was about to come in contact with an inferior order of beings. Of course, locality, position in life, and surroundings (now known by the modern term of 'environment') have much to do with the formation of character and with the habits of the human race all the world over; but the Anglo-Saxon retains the stamp of the Englishman, wherever he dwells. The British colonies contain large numbers of continental Europeans and Americans, but substantially English habits and British modes of government, as well as the English tongue, prevail throughout.

The writer has frequently put the question to a person recently landed in a colony—'Well, is it anything like what you expected to find?' and the reply is almost always, 'Much better.' Some express astonishment that the English language is spoken, that the accent is pure, and the ideas those of educated people; that we sit down to table, and eat with knives, forks, and spoons; that an attentive coloured servant, dressed in snowy white, is at hand to change plates and remove courses; that the food is well cooked, and cleanliness prevails; that many unheard-of dishes are, on trial, found extremely palatable; that tropical fruits and vegetables are provided in profusion; and owing to contact with travellers, and especially with the ubiquitous 'Press,' conversation is carried on with animation—wit, repartee, and one anecdote following another. But perhaps nowhere is surprise more apparent—though many new arrivals in the colonies have the good taste and good sense to suppress it—than in the drawing-room. The colonial girls

are in many cases exceedingly good musicians, with well-trained voices, and the latest music is played with taste and without error. In the towns, churches, and schools, halls for theatrical, musical, and other entertainments are to be found, capable of accommodating *future* increases in the respective population. For instance, the Cape Town Houses of Parliament cost about a quarter of a million. At Port Elizabeth, Durban, and Maritzburg, the town-halls recently erected are more spacious and costly than in English towns whose population is ten, or perhaps twenty, times as numerous as in the colonial towns. Many of the public buildings in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Christchurch (Canterbury, N.Z.), are magnificent pieces of architecture.

In the country colonial districts, much progress is visible, though vast tracts of land are still unoccupied, or at least are not yet made available by the labour of the agriculturist to one tithe of the land's capacity. The new-comer—we can scarcely call him an immigrant nowadays—is, perhaps, most pleased and gratified with the almost invariable kindness and hospitality which he receives from the farmers and settlers in the colonies. Even for the loafer class there is often an outhouse, as well as food, provided; but a respectable person is almost sure of a hospitable reception, whether from English, Irish, Scotch, or Scandinavian settler, wherever he may travel. And if the new-comer's intention be farming, he will do well to make careful observation of the methods pursued in the colony; for if he attempts methods of cultivation in the thirtieth parallel of latitude which he pursued in the fiftieth, he will assuredly come to grief. Loss and disaster will teach him that the 'colonial' idea, which at the time he pooh-poohed, was the correct thing. Still, it must be admitted, large numbers of colonial farmers are behind the time in efficient and economical working of the land, especially in colonies where 'native' labour is largely employed. The tendency is—and the writer is sorry that the urgency of the case compels him to repeat it—to level down, rather than to insist on the best methods of cultivating the farm and caring for the live-stock. In social life, the Englishman abroad speedily accommodates himself to colonial customs, and the colonist in turn is benefited by his intercourse with folks fresh from the great centres of civilisation. The vast majority of immigrants *make their home* in the colonies, although nearly every one of them 'came out' with the *intention* of making a rapid fortune, and returning in a few years' time to 'Old England.' The 'few years' pass by, the 'fortune' is still to 'make,' but the settler is becoming accustomed to colonial life. He may be fortunate enough to be able to take a trip to his native land, but he *returns* to colonial life. The 'old country' conventionalisms and restraints are too much for one who has tasted the sweets of liberty; the climate is too rough; a living, indeed a competence, is easier made in the colony; the associations and family ties are continually deepening and strengthening in the colony; and thus 'Greater Britain' is populated, and a race of true Britons, with British habits of industry, pluck, and perseverance, are 'subduing the earth,' and 'the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose.' The rising generations grow up tall and athletic, sending from time to time crack teams of cricketers or riflemen to the old country; and better still, they send to the European colleges and seats of learning, youths who do credit to the education already imparted to them in colonial schools. Speaking about schools, the writer must be excused if he compares a *country* school in a colony with an English school, and gives the palm to the *former*. He will give one instance; and he has no hesitation in saying that the English school-children would vote for the *colony*—nay, even the parents would vote with them, on being guaranteed for their offspring a good sound education. The scene is laid in Griqualand East, a dependency of the Cape of Good Hope. The place, a country school-house, situate in a wide open plain, with 'bush' and 'dongas'* or gullies in the distance. The master receives a Government grant; the parents also pay him a small fee monthly. Number of pupils, eighteen; farms being three and six thousand acres each, and only very partially fenced. The boys and girls all come to school on ponies; these graze about until the joyful signal is given and the school is out. Saddles for *both* sexes consist generally of sheepskins, and bridle reins are probably made of 'reims'—that is, untanned strips of hide.

Time two P.M. There are always natives about who assist in catching and 'saddling up' the ponies. Ten or twelve of the youngsters have to travel in the same direction. Hurrah! now for a hurdle-race. There are two water-jumps on the homeward-bound 'course.' It is a grand helter-skelter. The ponies enter into the fun. Any youngster who quits his or her sheepskin, must catch the pony and scramble up as best they can. The winner is generally a *girl* who has taught her brothers to ride. These children would feel the restraints of English life terribly. The mothers in the old country lift their hands in horror, and exclaim, 'Surely these children will break their necks!' And what does this heathenish writer mean by 'water-jumps?' Bless your anxious hearts, the children are *not* hurt; they tumble on the turf quite comfortably; and those ponies that don't jump the brook, go through it. As to a wetting, that matters but little with a Griqualand temperature, and perhaps a thunder-storm gives them wetting No. 2. But these clever ponies can generally make the shelter before the storm overtakes them.

We are forgetting the Englishman abroad, in describing the colonist at home. Every day, every new steamship launched, every additional mile of cable laid, bring both nearer together. The young colonials of to-day listen with wonder to the true tales told by their grandparents, the pioneers. Where are the wild animals? Where are the huts, the shanties, the tumble-down dwellings of the past? Gone!

* A 'donga' is a chasm or gully; near one such the Prince Imperial of France was killed during the Zulu war.

Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotsmen, Welshmen, Germans, Dutch, French, Norwegians—all the civilised nations of Europe are bringing their energies to bear on new lands. Gold-fields have opened out the colonies during the last forty-five years in a wonderful manner. The 'Randt' in the Transvaal is eclipsing the far-famed Diamond-fields beyond the Orange River; and now that dry country, Western Australia, till of late one of the most unprogressive colonies, is year by year increasing its output of gold, and gold will construct their dams and waterworks. The sun never sets on British possessions, and work never ceases. What a pity it is that a certain proportion of the human race never *will* work! Hence the 'submerged tenth' and the 'slums,' with all their horrors; while the colonies of England provide bread for all, and work for the *working* man. 'Clerks and shopmen,' we repeat, can only obtain work in *limited* numbers; but men to handle pick and shovel, plane and chisel, trowel and forge, are always in demand. Unhappily, some of the older colonies already contain a pauper population, so surely do whisky and laziness produce their natural crop, 'want, vice, and misery.'

## TOAD LORE.

ARE toads poisonous? This is a question which has caused much shedding of ink. The popular idea has always been that they are poisonous; but, on the other hand, this has often been denounced as a vulgar error. The Rev. Rowland Hill, who was fond of the creatures, and even started in his garden a place of abode and refuge for them, which he called a 'toadery,' declared that they were quite harmless, and indeed useful. 'They are even capable,' he says, 'of the knowledge of our attention and humanity. It is wanton cruelty to destroy them.' We may agree with the latter assertion, but it is more difficult to admit the truth of the former. Gilbert White of Selborne regarded the question as still in doubt, and remarked that it was strange that the matter with regard to the venom of toads had not yet been settled. Some animals were able to eat them with impunity, and, says the naturalist: 'I well remember the time, but was not an eyewitness to the fact (although numbers of persons were), when a quack at this village ate a toad, to make the country people stare; afterwards he drank oil.' If the feat were actually performed, the performer's experiences were probably more strange than pleasant. But, taking into consideration the facts that the story is given at second-hand, and that the hero thereof was a quack, it may not be unreasonable to come to the conclusion that a slight trick of legerdemain was performed, and that the toad was not consumed in the horrible manner described. At least, we may hope so, for the sake of the enterprising quack.

Goldsmith, in his *Animated Nature*, takes up the cudgels still more emphatically on behalf of the maligned toad. He declares that the stories of its possessing poison, and being able to eject its venom, are all fables, and roundly asserts that 'it is a harmless, defenceless creature, torpid and unvenomous, and seeking the darkest retreats, not from the malignity of its nature, but the multitude of its enemies.' But notwithstanding these and other defences of the toad, there is really no doubt that popular prejudice is on the whole justified; for the toad does possess poison or venom, which, when it likes, it can eject, with very painful and sometimes fatal consequences to the animal or person upon whom it alights.

The 'vulgar error,' like most of its more genuine brethren, can lay claim to considerable antiquity. There are several allusions in Pliny to the poison of toads. Juvenal tells us, as translated by Dryden, of the lady

> Who squeez'd a toad into her husband's wine,

with no friendly intentions towards her spouse; and similar testimony could be adduced from various other classic writers. In England the belief has been almost universally held, despite the scepticism of Sir Thomas Browne, Goldsmith, and a few other writers. The description of the toad by the duke, in *As You Like It*, as 'ugly and venomous,' exactly describes the general feeling towards the unfortunate reptile; although 'ugly,' according to some judges, is not strictly correct. Sir Thomas Browne wondered why a toad should be called ugly, while a writer in the *Lancet*, some years ago, declared that no creature on earth was in his opinion so perfectly beautiful as a toad, except a beautiful woman. Perhaps it was on æsthetic grounds that the toad was accorded divine honours by various tribes of South American Indians, in Guiana and on the banks of the Orinoco. However, its beauty is not precisely of a kind to take the ordinary eye; and the toad, having received a bad name, became a fair mark for uncomplimentary adjectives and attributes.

Spitefulness is an amiable trait with which it is generally credited, as in the absurd story of the centipede who was happy until the toad, in spite, asked which leg went after which, and after that the centipede never knew which to put first. In *Richard III.*, Crookback is styled by Queen Margaret—'that poisonous hunch-back'd toad.' 'Foul' is a common epithet. The animal was the first of the horrible ingredients which the witches in *Macbeth* threw into their devilish caldron:

> Toad, that under coldest stone,
> Days and nights hast thirty-one
> Sweltered venom sleeping got,
> Boil thou first i' the charmed pot!

And in another hellish mixture described in Middleton's *Witch*, we find mentioned, with other ingredients:

> The juice of toad, the oil of adder,
> Those will make the younker madder.

The creature was even supposed to be able to poison the plants among which it lurked. One of Boccaccio's tales turns on the supposition that a toad had poisoned, by its venom, a cluster of sage plants, which became the cause of death to human beings. The life of James VI. of Scotland was once attempted by a woman named Agnes Sampson, who confessed, on her trial, that in order to compass the

king's death, she had hung up a black toad for nine days, and collected the juice that fell from it. If she had been able to procure a piece of the king's linen, she declared that she would have killed him with this venom, 'causing him such extraordinarie paines as if he had beene lying upon sharp thornes, or endis of needles.'

Dekker, an Elizabethan writer, writes of the jaws of a toad 'sweating and foaming out poison;' but this is quite as incorrect as the common notion, which exists all over the country at the present time, that the toad, when maltreated or disturbed in its lurking-place, *spits* out venom upon its assailants. The toad's 'poison' is a white, highly-acid fluid, which is secreted by the glands of the skin of its back; and through two small eminences just behind its head (not from its mouth), the animal can eject the venom. This white fluid is alluded to in the Galloway ballad of 'Robin a Rie:'

> The milk on the Taed's back I wad prefer
> To the poisons in his words that be.

The secretion, no doubt, helps to protect the toad from many of its natural enemies—birds, lizards, and so forth, but not from all; both hedgehogs and snakes devour toads with impunity. A dog will always refuse to take a toad into its mouth, because the secretion from the creature's glands burns its mouth and lips. If the venom be injected beneath the skin of a dog, it will cause great local inflammation, with repeated vomiting and convulsions, which sometimes end in death.

The effect of the poison on human beings is much the same. Frank Buckland has a story, related to him by an Oxfordshire surgeon, of a man who once made a wager, when half drunk in a village ale-house, that he would bite a toad's head off. He performed the feat, but soon his lips, tongue, and throat began to swell most alarmingly, and he was for some time dangerously ill. 'He had probably bitten,' says Mr Buckland, 'right through the centre of the glands behind the head, and had got a dose of the poison.' This genuine and painful experience of the tipsy braggart may serve to increase our scepticism as to the quack's performance, as reported by Gilbert White.

In the Life of Pope Leo IX., who flourished about the middle of the eleventh century, there is related a curious incident, about certain parts of which some may be sceptical, but which is worth relating in this connection. The future Pope, when a boy at school, is said to have gone to visit his parents on one occasion, when, during his sleep, a toad climbed on his face, sucked his breath, and injected its venom into his mouth. In the morning the boy's face, throat, and breast were extraordinarily swollen. Remedies seemed unavailing, and for two months the child was most dangerously ill. Then, suddenly, St Benedict appeared to him, holding a crucifix, with which he touched the parts affected by the poison. As soon as this was done the swellings began to diminish, and the pain to decrease. In a few days large quantities of bad matter were discharged from gatherings behind the ears, and in a comparatively short space of time, the boy was completely restored to health. Such is the history, or legend, of St Leo IX. and the toad.

Another old-world belief about toads, which is altogether fabulous, is mentioned in the well-known passage of *As You Like It* already alluded to:

> Sweet are the uses of adversity,
> Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
> Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

The toadstone was greatly valued of old as a bringer of good luck, and as a precious charm or amulet against a great variety of diseases. It was frequently set in valuable rings, which were handed down from one owner to another as precious heirlooms. Some toadstones are said to have borne a figure resembling a toad on their surface. They varied in colour; some were dark gray, others of a brownish fawn colour. These stones were supposed to grow only in very old toads, and to be extracted as the animal was dying, although an old writer declares that the toad voided the stone when placed on a red cloth. In reality, this precious charm was made of borax and a variety of other materials.

In the *Transactions* of the Royal Society, there is a letter, dated December 17, 1699, from a Mr Edward Lhwyd, some time keeper of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, describing a variety of amulets then used in Scotland. Among these is the toadstone, which, he says, 'is some peble remarkable for its shape and sometimes variety of colours. This is presumed to prevent the burning of a house, and the sinking of a boat; and if a commander in the field has one of them about him, he will either be sure to win the day, or all his men shall fairly dye on spot.' Truly a potent charm! But its value was greatest medicinally. It was especially powerful against witchcraft and poison. When placed in proximity to the latter, or when applied to one bewitched, the stone was believed to sweat, and to change colour. It was sometimes applied internally, being swallowed as a remedy for fever or the bite of reptiles. The old notion was that nature provided bane and antidote together. The toad contained poison, for which the stone supposed to be in its head was the antidote; as an Elizabethan writer, Robert Greene, says: 'For experience teacheth me that the fairer the stone is in the Toades head, the more pestilent is the poison in his bowels.' It is evident that not even the teachings of experience can be trusted in a superstitious age.

The virtues of the stone were shared by the toad, for the creature itself was considered of great medicinal efficacy in a variety of ways. It was applied both internally and externally. Powdered toad was an excellent remedy for the plague and for smallpox. Among the papers of Aubrey, the antiquary, now in the custody of the Royal Society, there is an elaborate description of the method of preparing the powder. The horrible process begins with the slow stewing of twenty 'great fatt toades,' placed alive in a pipkin on the fire. The calcined remains are again heated, and, afterwards, the white powder is beaten still finer, when it is to be kept in a glass ready for use. The

general use of the powder is vouched for by Sir Kenelm Digby. 'In times of common contagion,' he writes, 'they use to carry about them the powder of a toad, and sometimes a living toad or spider shut up in a box; or else they carry Arsnick, or some other venomous substance, which draws into it the contagious air, which otherwise would infect the party.' Powdered toad was also administered in cases of dropsy and smallpox.

There is a mysterious connection between toads and warts. This is known across the Atlantic, where, in New England, they say that one who kills a toad will have as many warts as the victim has spots. Toads are used for the cure of warts by American boys, who operate by rubbing the troublesome excrescences against one of the unfortunate reptiles impaled on a sharp stick. Live toads, or their limbs, confined in a bag worn round the neck, as described by Sir Kenelm Digby, were good for quinsy, would stop bleeding at the nose, and, above all, were a most valuable remedy for king's evil or scrofula. A belief in the efficacy of a live toad in cases of scrofula is still widely held in the west of England. Not many years ago, a certain 'cunning man' used to hold an annual gathering at Stalbridge, in Dorsetshire, which was locally known as 'Toad Fair,' because the quack sold, at no cheap rate, legs torn from the bodies of living toads, which, when placed in bags and worn round the neck, were reckoned as sovereign remedies for scrofula, and for those who had been 'overlooked' or bewitched. These 'toad-doctors' used to travel about the country dispensing these abominable and cruelly obtained remedies to the credulous sufferers from 'king's evil.' Seven shillings was a common price asked for a bag containing one of these limbs, a price that must have been very profitable to the 'doctor.'

A less cruel method sometimes adopted by the scrofulous or those suffering from glandular swellings, was to enclose a live toad in a bag, and hang it up in a room, in the faith that as the toad died and wasted away, so the disease would depart or the swelling be reduced. This, however, must have required an unusual degree of faith, for the toad might continue alive in its bag for quite an unconscionable time, without a thought of dying to oblige the sufferer. There are many stories told of toads having been found alive at great depths in the earth, enclosed in blocks of coal, or in the solid stone, where, according to some legends, they must have remained without light or air for countless ages. But although many of these stories are somewhat mythical, it is an undoubted fact that the toad can sustain life for considerable periods without access to air. Experiments have been made with toads by enclosing them in boxes which, again, were encased in thick mortar or other material which effectually excluded all air; and, after many months, when the mortar has been broken away, and the boxes opened, the toads have been found within, still alive, and apparently little the worse for their prolonged incarceration.

One undoubted 'vulgar error' about the toad may be mentioned in conclusion; and that is the old belief that there are no toads in Ireland. It was said that when St Patrick cleared the Emerald Isle of snakes, he also banished for ever all toads. Shakespeare makes Richard II. allude to the belief in the lines:

> Now for our Irish wars:
> We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns,
> Which live like venom where no venom else
> But only they have privilege to live.

But despite this poetic endorsement of St Patrick's claim, the story or belief must be classed as a vulgar error, for in many parts of Ireland toads are to be met with, just as in other countries with patron saints of less anti-reptilian reputation.

## AH! ME, 'TIS WINTER YET.

I know a time shall be,
When, from each slumbering bough,
Shall flash on you and me
The beautiful young leaves,
Like glimmering emeralds set
In April's coronet:
When the warm south wind shall sough,
And, to the silent eaves
The twittering martlets cling,
With tidings of the Spring.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

I know a time shall be,
When, for our sweet delight,
The pretty pageantry
Of April shall unfold;
The herald violet,
With purple banneret;
Gay king-cups, bravely dight
In shining cloth of gold;
And, dancing in the breeze,
Virgin anemones.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

I know a time shall be,
When, on my longing ear,
Your voice, a melody
Of silver strings, shall sound,
And charm away the fret
Your absence doth beget;
When Love shall cast out fear,
In chains eternal bound,
And, coming to his own,
Raise in our hearts his throne.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

I know a time shall be,
When all, save Love, shall fail;
That dim futurity
When we, dear heart, must stand
Where life and death are met.
May there be no regret
As, down the stream, we sail
Toward the shadowy land
Where, crowned with asphodels,
Spring-time for ever dwells.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

OLIVER GREY.

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## THE ETHICS OF INDIFFERENCE.

Of all nursery heroes surely he that 'broke the pitcher, and was neither glad nor sorry' for having done so, most captivates attention by the mystery of his indifference. Was his superiority to joy or sorrow the outcome of incipient heroism? Was it admirable or shameful? The result of fortitude or apathy? Was the pitcher a daily burden, heavy when empty, intolerable when full, that natural relief at its destruction neutralised natural regret? Was it so ugly or so damaged an amphora as to have justly offended an embryo æsthetic mind, and rendered it callous even to remorse? Was it the royalty of an inward happiness that lifted the youth above a carking care for a paltry pipkin? Or—dreadful thought—was he a relative, as nursery kinship goes, to that other who, because he 'didn't care,' came, and comes, finally to so bad an end?

There is a suspicious resemblance indicative of consanguinity. To rise superior to fate, to accident—though subject to the one, and having just met with the other (that is, supposing the pipkin to have come fairly accidentally to potsherds)—to be open to blame, to have earned a scolding, and perhaps a scourging, and yet to be neither glad nor sorry! In such calm lies the germ of a future possible hero. With a like indifference, real or feigned, did Achilles shut himself up in his tent while, in consequence of his abstention, 'woes unnumbered' afflicted his brethren of the Greek host; with even a more joyous indifference did Nero fiddle an answer to the burning Roman question of his day and hour. If the pitcher-boy and the original 'Don't Care' were not identical, and their histories, two legends of one and the same demi-god, as it were, then it is presumable that, 'to make a third,' Nature 'joined the former two' in the person of a boy of tender years, who, being admonished as to his probable end, replied with the philosophy of a Toots, that 'it was of no consequence,' for 'if Don't Care *was* hanged, it didn't matter, for *he* didn't care, any more than *he* did!' With such armour-plated invulnerability as this, argument is impotent. Is it the inherited memory of generations of brave men, or the blue blood into which a drop of that mysterious lymph, that divine ichor of freedom for ever from care, has entered, and is circulating so triumphantly through his childish veins, that he *can't* care?

The acquired indifference that could permit a man of Sir Thomas More's wisdom to jest whimsically, with his beard on the block, is as far removed from the callousness of a highwayman 'dying game,' as it is from that indifference which is the offspring of dullness. Here a good digestion, and little or no imagination, enable a man to pass through troubles, almost scathless, that would sink a more sensitive or irritable nature into a slough of despair. And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely his fortune is a-ripening, and wakes one morning to find his affairs all at sixes and sevens, why, he resigns himself to his want of success with masterly indifference. By so doing he avoids chagrin, if he loses dignity and happiness. He will never be a martyr to cat-killing care. He breaks misfortune with superior force—the force of apathy. Care is no cure, he sagely remarks, so he goes comfortably to bed and to sleep, for the care that works at night labours to no purpose; so he refuses to let so corrosive a sublimate make *his* eyelids smart.

Yet it is undoubtedly better to incur ridicule for too anxious a care, than to be ruined for the want of it. Not to rank one's self with the barbarous multitude to care for this or that, is good; not to be a pipe for Fortune to play what tune she pleases on, is better; but indifference presents a poor picture when, in Spenser's words, 'Rude was his garment and to rags all rent, Ne better had he, *ne for better cared*.' To be able to assume indifference, to wrap ourselves in it as the dying Cæsar wrapped himself in his mantle, as the even more bitterly anguished Virginius hid his face in the corner of his gown to be shaken within, yet show no outward sign

of tribulation, was a Roman virtue, and well worthy of the name. Although nowadays we are happily not often called upon either to enact or witness such heroic self-mastery as these, there are still many lighter occasions, when it is a good thing to slip into the toga of indifference. Circumstances either irritating or ludicrous, or both, are apt to overtake us when least expected.

Not long since, a lady, sketching in a quiet corner of a French provincial town, displayed under provocation a sang-froid that filled at least one observer with envious admiration. Gradually there had gathered round her all the idle gamins of the place. From merely crowding round her, sniffing—it is imperative on a watching boy to sniff—and commenting aloud on her and her work, one, the boldest, constituting himself her gamin-in-chief, began coolly picking from her dress and bonnet certain little green caterpillars, which fell pretty continuously from the sycamore beneath which she sat, presenting each one for her inspection, with, 'Une autre petite bête, madame,' while he winked aside to his companions. Madame continued her work with an indifference more apparent, perhaps, than real, when, fortunately for her, a baker opposite, kneading bread, or rather dough in a cellar, with his feet, caught sight through a grating of this petty persecution going on before his eyes. To seize a whip, and spring naked-footed into the middle of the road, and crack that whip as only a Frenchman can, was the work of an instant; the members of the inquisition, including the grand inquisitor, fled, howling, and Madame's indifference melted into a smile, as she exchanged bows with the retiring Frenchman.

Infectious as is fear, it is scarcely more so than courage. Many a panic has been stayed and lives saved by one brave man who scorned not death, but the fear of it. In like manner the gravity, not to say severity, of one in authority has been known to stiffen to the decorous performance of their parts a score of people under novel and incongruous circumstances. In a certain old edifice, on a certain occasion, the bag, plate, or toll-dish, was missing. A consultation, *sotto voce*, between the collector and his chief concluded by the latter handing the former a large brown leather folio, and bidding him, audibly, 'Collect on *that*.' He did so, and with such immovable composure, that from the first depositor, an elderly maiden lady, who laid a reluctant—sticking to her cloth glove—threepenny bit, like an oasis in the middle of the brown leather desert, to the last, a bashful countryman, who twice dropped his penny before it would consent to settle, nothing but a preternatural solemnity marked the method of collecting as out of the common course of levying.

Comparing notes afterwards, the company confessed, each, his inward terror, as that brown sloping substitute approached him in its rounds, lest his treacherous coin, or no less treacherous self-control, might play him a trick at the last moment, and cover him with confusion. But it was the imposing unconcern of the principal actor that, like the Marquis of Steyne's carriage at Becky's door, 'kep us up,' and carried the company triumphantly through the ordeal. Among many kinds of indifference, two are chiefly practised, not merely on the great world's stage, but on those small stages where actors most do congregate—a smiling indifference, and a stony one. The comic actor naturally adopts the first, and by his careless, don't-mention-it, daffing aside of the applause, as it were, commonly earns another round; while the tragedian, his stern, indifferent gaze fixed immovably on vacancy, does his best to extinguish the enthusiasm he has worked so hard to kindle, and succeeds.

To manifest indifference to injuries no doubt argues greatness of mind; to be careful not to avenge one's self is due to the wrong-doer. But indifference should not lead a man to forget that he has been wronged: this he owes to himself. Indifference may be, according to circumstances, either a precious anodyne, or a pernicious poison. In certain troubles, such as fall to the lot of most men, at some period of their lives, such as a disastrous lawsuit, an irreparable loss, or losses, ill-conducted relatives, or disease, one may, by exercising a cultivated indifference, prevent the misfortune, whatever it may be, from pressing too fatally on the recollection. When a man has wrung from a certain trouble all the instruction, the experience, the warning—in a word, all the *good* it will yield him, he will do well to cast the grief substantially behind him, and have done with it. An error of judgment, a mistake, may also wisely be so treated; but a fault, or still less a crime—never; unless the fault, the crime, be due to ignorance. In this case the recollection of the offence may be banished by adroitly fixing the attention on something else, when it invades the memory. We have far more power over our minds than we are willing to concede, because to exert the capacity is irksome. 'Sure we cannot help our thoughts,' is often affirmed. But if we cannot, we are in a poor case.

The art, like other arts, is to be acquired, and though difficult, especially at the beginning, the effort soon yields a rich return. A man's mind may be a kingdom—nay, is; but often a very unruly, because ill-ruled one. Of what benefit is a realm always or often in rebellion? Indulged thoughts, like petted children, are apt to grow self-willed and masterful. That way lies madness; unless indeed the thoughts are of a sanity and sweet reasonableness beyond the common session of silent thinkings. Even dreams are far more amenable to the *habit* of mind of the dreamer, than is dreamt of in his philosophy perhaps.

Indifference has been spoken of above as a precious anodyne and a no less pernicious poison, according as its virtues are legitimately or illegitimately applied. Before taking a physical anodyne—an opiate—we are accustomed to take the advice of a physician; that is, if we wish for a cure, and not a mere momentary relief from pain. And, lest we encourage and nurse

forgetfulness of that which should not be treated with indifference, it were well to refer the case to the Great Physician of souls, or at least to consult His manual.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER IX.—THE PHYSICIAN.

When we assembled for early dinner on Monday, I looked to see some effect of our little Saturday voyage and talk on Isabel. Alas! the cloud hung again over her head: a visible, dark cloud. She sat timidly glancing at her lover, who was also her liege and lord; more timidly, perhaps, because Robert had now begun to put off his silent habit and to talk at dinner—one result of his West-End experience.

For my own part, the talk of Saturday afternoon and the revelation of the girl's unhappiness so mightily impressed me—one can never bear to see a girl in sorrow—that I had been thinking ever since how Isabel's life might be bettered for her. I could only think of two ways: first to lighten her work, and next to introduce a little change. As for the former, she was housekeeper, and kept the household accounts, which was enough for one girl to attempt: also, she was accountant to 'Burnikel and Burnikel,' and kept the books of the house and paid the men. Keeping the books meant a laborious and old-fashioned system of double book-keeping, which took a great deal of her time. This alone was enough for one girl to attempt. She was, further, private secretary: she hunted up passages, copied passages, made notes, and wrote all Robert's letters. This alone was quite enough for one girl to attempt: and lastly, she had to look after her own dress; and I am sure that this is quite enough to occupy all the time of a conscientious girl. As regards getting some change of scene, the only way was to bring the change to her. And that, I saw clearly, must be my task.

It is a delicate thing to interfere between a man and his mistress, even when the mistress is not the object of any fondling and nonsense: even when she is also accountant, secretary, and housekeeper. I therefore approached the subject diplomatically.

'Boat-building,' I said, working round to it by an unexpected path, 'is a business of selling as well as of making, isn't it?'

'Go on,' he replied cheerfully; 'what are you driving at?'

'This, first. I am getting on very well with the craft, but I don't know much about the trade.'

'You know very little about the trade; and I fear you never will. Because George, though you may make me a gentleman—to look at—no one will ever make you a tradesman.'

'Why not?'

'Because you've been brought up different. You haven't our feeling for money. Every coin with us means money saved or money won. A sovereign means victory in a pitched battle. With you it comes out of an inexhaustible bag. See now. If you want to go anywhere, you take a cab. It comes natural to you. Lord! I laugh when I see you calling a cab. We take a penny bus. If we must take a cab we give him a shilling, reckoning up the fare and measuring the distance; we grudge that shilling. You toss him half-a-crown, and think nothing of it. You tip waiters and porters with sixpences and shillings; we never tip anybody at all if we can help it. When you want to have anything, you order it without asking the price; we cast about to get it cheap, or we do without it.'

'My dear cousin, the period approaches when I shall have nothing but pence to study. However, what I wanted to say was this. The time seems to have come when I ought to learn something of the trade side.'

'Well, I will tell you what you please.'

'There are the prices of materials, the cost of labour, rent, taxes, selling prices—all these things. The best way for me to learn is not to worry you, but to read and examine your books. Everything is there, of course.'

Robert did not reply for a few moments. It is the instinct of a man of business to wish his affairs to loom large in the imagination of humanity. His books alone conceal the real truth.

'If it was any other man,' he said, 'or for any other purpose—but as it's you—take the books and examine them. They are in the safe over the way. Isabel has the key.'

'Thank you. With her help I will not only look at them, but, for a term, keep them for you.'

'You can't keep them. You don't know book-keeping by double entry.'

'Isabel shall teach me, and your books cannot be very complicated.'

'Very well. Have it your own way.'

So that was done. I could thus take a great load off the girl's frail shoulders. Then I went on to the other points.

'Isabel,' I said, 'is not looking well.'

'She looks exactly the same to-day as she did six months ago.'

'No: she is not looking at all well. She is not, naturally, I should say, a strong girl. If I were you, Robert, I would speak to some one about her.'

'Why?' he answered impatiently. 'She hasn't told me she was ill. What is the matter with her?'

'Too much confinement. Too little change.'

'I've noticed nothing wrong.'

'No. You see her every day. You would hardly notice a gradual change. Can't you see, however, that she is pale and nervous?'

'She is always pale and nervous. Is she more pale and nervous than usual?'

'There is a furrow in her forehead: there are black lines under her eyes: and her cheek is thin.'

'This,' said the fond, but injured, lover, 'comes of having women about one. Why can't she tell me if she is not well?'

'You must have noticed how silent she is—and how she droops her head.'

'She is always silent. She knows that I don't like chatter. As for drooping her head, I suppose she carries her head as she likes.'

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'No doubt. At the same time, Robert, she is in a bad way. I am certain of it.'

'Well'—he hesitated. 'What am I to do? Look here, George, you know more than I do about women. It's no use talking to the Captain, and there's only the cook besides. What am I to do?'

'I should say—give her first, more fresh air—less work—more amusement—change of scene.'

'Good Lord! man! how am I to give her change of scene? You don't mean that I am to give up my work, just now—when the election may be sprung upon us at any moment, in order to go dawdling and dangling about with a woman?'

'Well—I'll help a bit—if you agree.'

'Agree? I should think I would agree! Go on.'

'I was thinking—if you don't mind—that I could take her out occasionally—on Saturdays or Sundays—and perhaps in the long evenings.'

'If you would, and if it would do her any good. I don't want to be hard on the girl, George. You know how busy I am, and what a lot I have to think about. She's a good and obedient girl on the whole. I can't, you see, be worrying myself continually about the day-by-day looks of my clerks and people.'

'Isabel is hardly a "clerk and people," is she?'

'Of course not. But you know what I mean.'

'I believe I know what you mean. Your thoughts are always concerned with things that seem to you of far more importance than a woman's health.'

'That is so,' he replied, impervious to the shaft of satire.

'Well, Robert, I will do what I can. While we are talking about Isabel, there is another thing on my mind. When you are a great man—a man of society—it will be a matter of some importance that your wife should hold her own in society.'

Robert coloured. 'Why shouldn't Isabel hold her own? A woman has got nothing to do but to sit down and take what comes.'

'There are many ways of sitting down.'

'You mean, I suppose, that her case is—like my own. Do you want to send Isabel into Piccadilly to learn manners?'

'Her case is not so bad as yours,' I told him plainly. 'But it is a case of the same kind.'

'I always thought she was a quiet, modest kind of girl. Else, I could never have promised to marry her. But I daresay you are right. After my own experiences—I am a good bit wiser than I was—I suppose that there are ways and customs that a woman should know—that can't be learned in this corner of the world.'

'She wants manner—that is the only thing she wants, except happiness, perhaps—I cannot impart manner to her, but I can show her women who have it.'

I knew, of course, while I spoke, that to acquire that manner was impossible. A girl brought up as Isabel had been, could never acquire the real air and manner which belongs to the gentlewoman born and bred. All kinds of virtues, graces, charms, attractions, allurements, arts, and accomplishments, may be acquired by a woman; but this one quality she inherits or develops from infancy. Not that it is a charm above all others, as some women fondly believe. By no means. For my own part I have learned that a woman may lack this charm as she may lack other things, and yet be above and beyond all other women in the world in the eyes of her lover.

'I suppose,' said Robert grudgingly, 'that you are right.'

'Very good. Then I will sometimes take her where she will see well-dressed women. You shall see, after a bit, how her pale cheeks will put on roses and her listless manner will become cheerful. Oh! and there is something else. She must practise her music more—she is starved for want of music. She must practise in the daytime. Perhaps she might sing a little. It won't disturb you.'

'All right,' he said, 'all right. Have it your own way. Perhaps you'd like the workmen over the way to sing a chorus while she strums the piano. Perhaps you'd like me to do a breakdown in the road. Only make her get well, George, without troubling me. And don't look as if it's my fault that she's a bit pale.'

That day, after dinner, Robert went his way as usual. The Captain went another way. Isabel, the cloth being removed, spread out her books upon the table, and sat down with a little sigh.

I sat down on the other side leaning my elbows on the table.

'Isabel,' I said, 'you've got to be obedient to your physician.'

'I must go on with my master's work, please, physician. When that is done I will be obedient.'

I took the books from her, shut them up, and put my hand upon them. 'There!' I said. 'Now you are not going to trouble yourself about these books any more. Thus saith the healer.'

'What do you mean?'

'I have spoken to the Commander-in-Chief. He graciously consents that I shall take over these books for the future. You are released. He thinks further that if you housekeep with diligence, and look after your dress with zeal, and make yourself look pretty and desirable, you will have quite enough to do.'

She blushed a rosy red. 'Robert didn't say that! Oh! Impossible!'

'He didn't exactly say so—in so many words'—in fact, it was impossible—'but I have no doubt that he really meant it.'

'It was you who said it, and meant it, too,' she murmured.

'The Commander-in-Chief further expresses his desire that you should practise your playing all day long, if you like, and your singing too, if you can sing. Nothing is better for the chest than singing.'

'I have never learned. I only sing in church.'

'I will get you some songs and some new music—plenty of music, that is my first prescription. Plenty of singing, that is the second prescription; laughing, if you can find anything to laugh at. You can laugh at me, if you like—I wish you would; you can't believe the good it would do you. Dancing, if there is any one to dance with; you can dance with

me, if you like—I wish you would. Flowers for the windows, and to brighten up this old house. Change of air and of scene; you shall go with me somewhere next Saturday.'

She stared in amazement. 'What does all this mean?' she asked.

'It means, Isabel, that Robert is seriously concerned about your looks, and it means that we have considered together what to do with you, and that these are the measures we have adopted.'

'Robert seriously concerned about me? Robert anxious about my looks?'

She covered her face with her hands to hide the tears that arose. 'It would matter nothing to Robert if I were dying. He would notice nothing, and he would care nothing. I belong to him, that is all, so does his chair. Oh! It is you, you who have done this. It is all your kindness—yours—and I am almost a stranger to you. And Robert, who is to be my husband, has never all the time said one word of kindness—not one word of kindness. And as to'—— She stopped, with sobbing.

'Nay, Isabel. Take all this as an act of kindness. It is not his way to say words of affection.'

She shook her head. 'Not one word of kindness. Robert cares nothing for me—nothing.'

'And you?'

'Oh! I tremble day and night to think that I must marry him. George, you asked me for my secret. That is my secret. If I could go away anywhere, to be a housemaid even, I would go. But I cannot—I cannot—and he will never give me up unless—— Oh! I pray night and morning that he may find another woman, and fall in love with her. But he will not—oh! he cannot; he does not know what love means—his heart is as hard as stone, and he thinks of nothing but himself.'

'I will keep your secret, Isabel,' I replied, gravely. 'Let us never speak of it again. And perhaps, when he gets on in the world, he will soften.'

She shook her head again.

'Play me something, my child, and soothe your own soul.'

## MODERN GUNPOWDER AND ITS DEVELOPMENT.

During the latter half of this century the weapons of warfare have undergone enormous changes. Our guns attain to a size and precision previously unthought of; and the accuracy with which a heavy projectile may be driven to a distance of several miles is one of the great triumphs of this century of science. Yet the propelling agent used when field-pieces first figured in warfare—at Crécy in 1346—is still in our midst; and, indeed, until recent years had no rival. Further, from that time until recently the gunpowder used in all weapons remained of practically the same composition—namely, a more or less intimate mixture of seventy-five per cent. of nitre, fifteen per cent. of charcoal, and ten per cent. of sulphur.

The cause of the longevity of the old type of gunpowder is not far to seek. In times when complete accuracy of firing was neither sought nor desired, and when the projectiles employed were much less than at present, an explosive of the composition given fulfilled all the requirements of warfare. It was safe to transport; could be relied upon to ignite; and gave a large propulsive force; and such being the case, there is no cause to wonder that a mixture so satisfactory should have survived so long. It was only when the large charges requisite to fire the steel monsters of to-day were employed that the ancient mixture was found to possess objectionable features; and these, after many experiments, have been eliminated one by one, culminating in the several types of powder at present used in our army and navy.

When larger guns were first constructed, requiring a larger charge of powder, a serious drawback was experienced. It was found that after firing a few shots from them the firing-chamber was badly damaged, being in some cases cracked. Additional thickness of material in this part of the gun proved only a temporary remedy, as the violence of the explosion bodily removed layer after layer of the inner surface. Here was a serious problem; and steps were immediately taken to investigate the cause of this local rupture. It was soon discovered that the evil was due to the too rapid burning of the powder, which, being converted almost instantaneously into gas, exerted an enormous pressure in the firing chamber before the bullet had commenced its motion down the barrel. As the pressure is proportionate to the amount of powder used, that produced by a small charge would not be sufficient to give rise to these destructive results.

A simple experiment will illustrate this disruptive action. If a sheet of stiff paper be held between the fingers and gradually approached with a sharp penknife, the paper will be pushed forward without being penetrated. If, however, the knife be suddenly brought to the paper, the latter will be pierced. We have here all the difference between a sustained and a sudden pressure, and a complete resemblance to the action in a gun. If the pressure be slowly and steadily generated, the bullet will move forward; if sudden, a tendency to rupture will be inevitable, and bursting must ensue if the pressure be sufficiently great.

Steps were therefore taken to overcome this difficulty, and various devices were tried to make the powder burn more slowly, and thus produce a more gradual pressure. The first remedy which naturally suggested itself was to compress the powder; for, as is generally known, a compressed substance burns much more slowly than a porous one under ordinary conditions. Accordingly the powder was strongly compressed into cubical blocks, varying in size from one half inch to four inches, according to the purpose for which it was to be used: the largest blocks being used for the largest guns. The compressed powder was then put to the trial,

and signally failed to fulfil the purpose for which it was intended. Not only was the damage to the firing chamber practically undiminished, but in the case of the largest blocks quantities of unburnt powder were shot out with the bullet and scattered in all directions, rendering the firing of the gun an extremely dangerous matter for the gunner. Such was the state of affairs at the time of the American civil war, and it was during the progress of that war that the shape of the blocks now universally adopted was devised—by whom is not known. Blocks hexagonal in shape, and having a hole through the centre, were made whereby it was ensured that the powder should burn from the interior at the same time combustion was taking place at the exterior. In addition, the blocks were compressed by a sudden blow from a cam machine, so as to make the outside portions more dense than the inside, as is the case with an ordinary stamped coin. Thus although the combustion took longer to reach the internal portions of the block, yet the quicker rate of burning of the less compressed part would ensure that the whole would be completely burned. No unburnt cores followed the bullet when this form of block was used, and its adoption in small guns proved a complete success. But when large charges were used the hexagonal block gave no better results than its predecessors; the damage to the firing chamber was still undiminished, and the problem of producing a slow-burning powder remained still unsolved.

The question now arose: Why should compression fail to produce the desired result? A consideration of the conditions existing in the firing chamber of a gun furnish an answer to this question. As soon as the powder is ignited, an enormous quantity of gas at a white heat and great pressure is produced. Any mechanical mixture would be permeated by this gas as if it were a sieve; and thus no amount of mechanical compression could prevent the mass of the gunpowder from being ignited in an extremely small space of time. The only barrier to such permeation would be for the particles to be only separated by a molecular distance. It thus became evident that attention must be directed to the composition of the powder; and the problem thus passed from the hands of the engineer to those of the chemist. It remained for the latter to provide a powder which fulfilled the required conditions; and the result is seen in the powders in use to-day, which stand as examples of how a proper application of scientific principles may overcome apparently insurmountable difficulties.

In seeking to modify the ingredients so as to produce a slow-burning powder, the first question presenting itself was: What are the parts played by each constituent? This had many years previously been made the subject of investigation by chemists, and it was well known that the nitre (saltpetre) furnished oxygen for the combustion of the charcoal, the pressure produced being due to the gases formed by this combustion; whilst the function of the sulphur was to spread the flame. It therefore appeared that the real remedy was to diminish the percentage of sulphur, whereby the tendency of the flame to spread would be lessened. As previously stated the ordinary gunpowder contained ten per cent. of sulphur; and on this percentage being reduced to between two and four, it was found that a powder could be produced which burned considerably slower than the ordinary type. Indeed, a powder having this composition is still in use for moderately large guns, and gives excellent results. But in the case of the largest guns even this powder caused considerable damage to the firing chamber, and the complete solution had not yet been arrived at.

As no efficient substitute for the nitre was known, attention was in consequence directed to the charcoal. It was thought that if in addition to diminishing the quantity of sulphur, some slowly burning substitute for charcoal could be found, the problem would be solved. Trials were therefore made with powders in which the charcoal was replaced by partially charred wood fibres, which were in the main highly dried cellulose. The trials were a complete success from the beginning, and the 'brown powders' in use to-day are the results of these experiments. These powders owe their brown colour to the fact that the wood is only slightly charred before being ground and incorporated with the other constituents. If completely charred the colour would of course be black.

Two chief varieties of these brown powders are now made, and are known as 'Slow-burning cocoa'—from the fact that cocoa-nut fibres were first employed in the experiments—and 'Prism brown I.' The former contains about four per cent. of sulphur, and burns rather more rapidly than the latter, which contains only two per cent. Baked straw is the material now used to supplant the charcoal, as it provides a form of cellulose which may be readily reduced to a fine state of division. The shape is still the perforated hexagonal prism introduced in America.

The burning of these powders is steady and the increase of pressure gradual, attaining a maximum when the bullet is about half-way down the barrel of the gun. The damage inflicted on the firing chamber is very slight; perhaps as slight as ever will be obtained with such large charges of powder.

Uniformity of velocity is secured by ensuring that in the making, the proportions employed shall be accurate and the mixing complete. The prisms of any given class of powder are made exactly the same in weight and composition, and in consequence, a charge composed of a given number of prisms will give in every case almost exactly the same propelling force. It is thus that fine-aiming adjustments are made possible, as two consecutive bullets of the same weight may be propelled almost exactly the same distance—varying only a few yards in a range of several miles—by equal weights of powder of uniform composition.

We thus see how enormous projectiles may be fired with safety and precision, as the result of careful deductions from known scientific facts. Amongst all the improvements made by science in this nineteenth century of ours, that made in the direction of a proper understanding of explosive bodies is by no means the

least; and the gunpowders of to-day form notable examples of what may be achieved by the application of diligent and careful scientific reasoning.

## BILLY BINKS—HERO.

### CHAPTER II.

When we reached the house again, I took him to the kitchen and surrendered Billy to the care of our cook—an Irishwoman of very marked character. She promised to look after him, and leaving him in her hands, I sought my wife. Somehow I had taken a great fancy to the little Ishmael, who was as sharp as a weazel, and as lawless as a fox cub. I had my own ideas as to what I would do with him when he grew a bit bigger.

One evening about a week later, I went round to the kitchen after dinner to investigate a complaint preferred against him.

'Well, Mrs Flannigan,' I said, as I entered her comfortable abode. 'What is this I hear about Billy?'

Mrs Flannigan crossed her arms upon her ample bosom, looked hard at me, and as I realised, to my horror, had prepared herself for a lengthy speech.

'Bedad, sir,' she began immediately, 'he's not a boy at all at all. He's a little woild animal, that's fwhat he is, sir, as sure as you're born. He eats his victuals like a dog, an' he swears fit to turn an honest woman's stomach sick, to say nothin' of them dirty poipes he's always smokin'. Now he's been and thrashed Mrs Barner's boy till he can't see out o' his eyes, an' all about a bit of old green hide rope not worth lookin' at.'

'Never mind that,' I answered promptly, remembering the good woman's little peculiarities. 'Barner's boy is a year older, and two inches taller, and ought to be able to take care of himself. Come, come, Mrs Flannigan, we mustn't be hard on the lad; he doesn't know any better at present. Don't be afraid, we'll soon teach him to behave himself, and then we'll make quite a useful boy of him.'

'Well, if ye do that ye'll be a wonder, sir, for he's the woildest little divil as ever I clapped eyes on. And that's a big talkin', for I've seen a many.'

'Where is he now?'

'Asleep in the room next to mine at the back, sir. If you want to see him you'd best take the key, for I've locked the little varmint in, not knowin' fwhat mischief he wouldn't be up to if I didn't.'

I took the key and went round to the room at the back. Arriving there, I stood before the door and listened, but not a sound came from within. I inserted the key, turned the handle and passed inside. Then I called 'Billy,' but no answer rewarded me. I called again, but still with the same result. Thinking he must either be sleeping very soundly or playing me some trick, I lit a match. The bed stood in a corner, but it was not tenanted, nor could I discover a sign of the urchin. The door, however, had been locked, and there was no window in the room, so how could he have got out? I searched about, but not being able to discover him, returned at last to the house, resolved to demand an explanation on the morrow.

Next morning, as I was crossing the yard, I saw Billy at his breakfast in the kitchen. On observing me he looked up and grinned in such a mirth-compelling fashion, that I forbore from making any inquiries which might result in trouble. That night and the next I went to his room only to make the same curious discovery as before.

On the third morning I was sitting in the veranda, putting a new cracker on my stock-whip, when the storekeeper, a young Englishman named Brukett, came up to see me.

'Well, Brukett,' I said, looking up at him, as he ascended the steps, 'what is it? Anything wrong?'

'I came up to see you about the chestnut night horse, sir,' he answered.

'What about him?' I inquired.

'Only that he's no good for anything at all—he's quite worn out. To look at him you'd imagine he's been ridden all night, over bad country, at racing pace. He's in a regular lather even now, and it's as much as he can do to walk. I thought it was no use leaving him in the paddock in such a state, so I've had him taken up and put in the stable for you to see.'

'I'll come down and look at him directly I've finished this,' I said, and he thereupon left me.

When I had completed my work I picked up my hat, and whistling to my dogs, set off for the stable. On the way I encountered Billy, who turned and trudged silently along by my side, his hands as usual thrust deep down into his trouser pockets, and his hat tilted over his nose.

Once, as we approached the stables, I thought he looked suspiciously at me—but as he volunteered no remark, I asked no questions.

There could be no doubt that the horse, which every night was kept in the fire paddock near the house to be ready in case of emergency, was in a very bad way. As Brukett had said, he looked as if he had been ridden at a gallop half the night, and was completely worn out. When Billy discovered the object of my visit, he went out into the yard and whistled softly to himself. I gave a few orders and presently joined him.

'It's funny about that horse, isn't it, Billy?' I said, as we went towards the store.

Billy agreed that it was certainly peculiar, and capped his assertion with an oath of considerable power; for which I promptly lectured him.

'By the way,' I continued, 'Murtagh (one of the hands) tells me that when he came to saddle his horse this morning, he found his stirrup leathers put up to the top holes. I wonder whose legs are as short as that. It couldn't be Murtagh, you know, for his are longer than mine.'

''E 'ave got turble (terrible) long legs, ain't 'e?' said Billy, with the scarce concealed intention of diverting the conversation into another channel.

'Billy,' I said sternly, regarding him again with close attention.

He met my eyes without flinching.

'Billy,' I remarked once more, 'you're hiding something from me.'

This time he looked all round the horizon before he brought his eyes up to mine. When they got there, however, they regarded me as before without a flicker of the lids.

'Do you know who has been riding that horse?' I inquired, half expecting a denial.

But if Billy were anything else, he was no liar. So he spat on the ground, hoisted his trousers, pulled forward his cabbage-tree, and then said deliberately, and as I thought with a little touch of defiance, 'Of course I knows; why, bless yer, I have!'

'Indeed, and pray why did you do it?'

'I dunno; I wanted a ride, I serpose. I can't abide that there room at night, it's so stuffy, an' so I climbed up the chimley and got out and went.'

The upshot of it all was that Billy, from that day forward, was allowed an animal for his own special use, and was invested with the definite rank of horse and cowboy at a microscopical salary. The duties suited him admirably, and to see the urchin mount his steed by sticking his toes into the hollows of the brute's near fore-leg, and clutching at the mane, was a sight of which I never grew weary. And there could be no doubt about it, the child could ride. He was as much at home upon a horse's back as a bank clerk is upon his high stool, and what was more singular, even the roughest animals quickly became tractable in his hands. Satisfactory, however, as all this was, there can be no blinking the fact that Billy was continually in hot water. The week was but a round of scrapes and peccadillos on his part. Mrs Flannigan found him cheeky and blasphemous; the wives of the married hands, who were jealous of him without exception, reported that he fought their youngsters on every possible opportunity, when, to their chagrin, he invariably came off conqueror, and what was worse, that he taught them to smoke, and led them into such continual mischief that they could not be permitted to run at large with him at all. I remonstrated with him, and on two occasions felt compelled to castigate him, but though he promised amendment, it made little or no difference.

Then came the arrival of our precious baby, and in the excitement consequent upon that great event, Billy, his sayings, and doings, were relegated to a second place. Never shall I forget the day when he first saw the child. The little fellow was lying in his mother's arms, in the veranda, when Billy made his appearance with a note from the storekeeper. While I was reading it, he was asked if he would care to see the infant. He jerked his chin into the air by way of signifying assent, and accordingly the veil that protected the little face was withdrawn. Billy, with his hands as usual thrust deep into his pockets, looked down upon it, while my wife and I watched him, wondering what he would do or say. He made no remark, however, save to ask if he were to take back an answer to Mr Brukett, and on my replying in the negative, crammed his hat further on to his head and went down the steps again whistling softly. But he had not gone very far before he turned, and once more stood before us. Divining his wish, my wife again drew back the curtain that he might see the sleeping infant. He looked steadily at it for nearly a minute, then heaved a heavy sigh, wheeled about, and went slowly away. After that, Billy did not attempt to disguise his admiration; month in month out, he was so continually on the lookout for an opportunity of seeing the baby, that I told my wife I should soon feel compelled to deprive him of his other duties and appoint him nurse. What was more extraordinary still, his admiration never seemed to grow weaker. Indeed, ten months later, a threat that any more fights or evil reports, which might reach my ears, would end in his being debarred from the cradle altogether, was sufficient to keep Billy immaculate for something like three weeks. An awful fall from grace, however, was the result.

One morning, three weeks after his first birthday, the babe was placed in his hammock in the shady veranda, while his mother went to the kitchen to interview her cook. I was writing a letter in my office when she burst in upon me declaring that the precious child was lost. 'I left him in the hammock only ten minutes ago while I went to the kitchen,' she gasped, 'and when I came back he was gone. I've been into all the rooms and I can't find him anywhere.'

'Perhaps Mrs Flannigan has taken him up,' I said, not being able to understand what else could have befallen him.

'No, she couldn't; I have been with her all the time,' she answered. 'Oh! what can have become of him?'

An inspiration seized me, and I went to the end of the veranda and called 'Billy.' Receiving no answer, I asked one of the hands, who was passing through the yard at the moment, whether he had seen the urchin.

'No, sir,' the man replied, 'but I heard the overseer telling him a while back to go down to the twelve mile paddock to look for one of the cows that's missing.'

'If that's so, Billy can have had nothing to do with it,' I said, turning to my wife. 'Perhaps the little chap fell out of the hammock and has crawled away into the bushes. He may be asleep somewhere. Let us look!'

Thereupon, assisted by the storekeeper, who had just come up, and two of the men, we began our hunt, searching in the house and peering among the bushes in the garden. Not a sign, however, of the precious infant could we discover. And all this time, her mind filled with thoughts of wells and snakes, my wife was nearly beside herself with terror. Finally I sent for every man then at home, and organised a regular search among the outbuildings—but still without success. The boy seemed to have disappeared off the face of the earth. By mid-day we were at our wits' end to know what could have become of him. Then suddenly I bethought me of the dry creek bed about a hundred and fifty yards from the house. Could he possibly have managed to

crawl so far as that? No sooner did the place, however, occur to my memory than I was off to it.

Short distance though it was from the house, it seemed an eternity before I reached it. Then I looked down from the high bank, and a minute later was running back as hard as I could go to fetch my wife. We approached the spot together and took in the whole scene.

On the white sand, and in the shade of a big ti-tree, sat the baby, beating his little fat hands together, and crowing with all his might and main; while in front of him, decorated with plumes of grass and leaves, solemnly danced and pranced the atrocious Billy. Both were enjoying themselves to the top of their bent, but the merriment of one ceased abruptly as the indignant mother swept down the bank and clutched her offspring in her arms. Then leaving me to deal with the principal offender as I might deem best for the welfare of his soul, she made her way home, the baby screaming *adieux* to his companion over her shoulder. From that day forward Billy was forbidden, on any pretext whatsoever, to venture near the cradle.

And now, after all this introduction, I am brought to the commencement of my narrative proper.

At the time of which I am writing, Queensland was approaching a period of awful trouble. For years past the labour question had been calling for serious consideration. Every shearing-time the scum of the earth (I am not referring to honest men), who patrolled the country, thieving, intimidating, and falsely calling themselves bushmen, had been growing more and more insolent. Almost refusing to do legitimate work, they scamped what they did do in such a fashion, and accompanied it with so much cruel tyranny, that everybody knew a crisis must soon come. Come it did, and in a fashion that no one, who had experience of it, will be likely to forget.

To grasp my meaning properly, you must understand that earlier in the season, thousands of the riff-raff of the colonies, calling themselves unionists, exceptionally well armed and mounted, had banded themselves together to achieve a certain result, which was neither more nor less than the destruction of the squatters. A conference was held and a general strike of station hands ordered. Every man in pastoral employment was commanded to participate in it, and those who refused paid dearly for their contumacy. From that time forward, stations were robbed, innocent men intimidated, bush fires started, woolsheds burned, railway bridges destroyed, cattle maimed, until the stability of one of, if not *the*, most important industries of the colonies trembled in the balance.

For some months after the strike was declared general my men remained true to me. Then outside influences began to creep in among them in the shape of threatening letters; delegates from the unions arrived and harangued them, until, finally, all those who were sufficiently weak-minded to fear the ridicule or threats of their mates gave in and decided to cease work. In vain I remonstrated. They informed me they had no option, and that it would be only courting certain death for them to remain. On hearing this I called all my employees together and addressed them, promising that I would protect to the very best of my ability any man who should stand by me in my trouble. At the same time I took care to make it clear to them that the law would be sure to back me up. When my harangue was finished, I requested those who had any desire to remain to step into the veranda, while those who wished to go, might continue where they were. Out of the sixteen present (the two overseers not included), two immediately sprang into the veranda—while the balance stood sheepishly watching us from the sunlit garden, afraid to take my part. Feeling certain no threat or entreaty would move the latter, I bade them come into the office for their wages, and after that make themselves scarce as soon as they could conveniently manage it. They took me at my word, and in less than an hour not a single unionist remained upon the place.

To understand something of the difficult position their defection would place me in, you must try to imagine yourself left in charge of a station about the size of Yorkshire, carrying something like three hundred thousand sheep, with only five men and a boy to do the necessary work upon it. The very idea was preposterous. But I was comforted by the assurance that Billy had promised to stand by me.

A week later I received a peremptory and insulting letter from the union demanding that my remaining men should either join their society or leave my employment, and holding out dire threats of vengeance if I should induce them to remain contumacious. This letter I read to the men, who with one accord authorised me to take no notice of it. In consequence, my back country was set on fire that week by some miscreant, and fifty thousand innocent sheep perished in the flames. Then one morning a band of armed unionists swept down upon us and surrounded the station, and that visit was the forerunner of the worst part of our trouble.

Their leader, a big Irishman, with red hair and a voice like a bull, rode up to the office door and demanded an audience with me.

Slipping a revolver into my belt, I went out to him.

'Ye've got three dirthy blacklegs wid ye now,' he began, without preamble. 'Fetch 'em out to me.'

'You must tell me first what you want with them,' I answered as quietly as possible.

'Never you mind fwhat I want wid 'em,' he replied. 'Fetch 'em out to me or 'twill be the worse for ye.'

Seeing that it would be foolish to refuse to comply with his request, I called to the men to come into the veranda. Fortunately they had the wit to bring their weapons with them, and thus, with the two overseers and Billy, who wore a large Colt revolver stuck conspicuously in his belt, we presented a sufficiently determined appearance to overawe the hectoring ruffians before us.

The next ten minutes were occupied with

threats and cajoleries, but to both my men proved adamant.

'Well, since you won't listen to fair talk, we'll be off,' said the leader of the party, when he had come to the end of his arguments, 'but I warn ye we'll be back again in a pig's whisper, and then Hiven help the lot o' ye if ye don't pay attention to fwhat we say.'

So saying, he wheeled his horse round, and with one last gesture of defiance, rode off, his followers at his heels.

As you will see, apart from the evil resulting to the station from the insufficient attention we were able to bestow upon it, the position was one of absolute danger for ourselves. Many were the times I wished I had been able to foresee what was coming, and have sent my wife and child away to safety in the south. But now with the country-side patrolled by armed ruffians, and with the knowledge before me that ten thousand more were under canvas, drilling like soldiers, less than three hundred miles distant, I knew it was worse than useless to think of such a thing.

One precaution, however, I took, and as you will see, I very soon had reason to be thankful I had done so. That was to arrange that every man upon the place should sleep in my own house at nights, and also that a regular watch should be kept, hour by hour. To Billy Binks this change of quarters meant supreme happiness, and a curious sight it was to see the little fellow, with the big revolver in his belt, solemnly mounting guard over the baby as he slept in the veranda. Surely such an old-fashioned head on such young shoulders was never seen before.

## PETS AND PESTS IN BARBADOES.

By Major Battersby, F.R.A.S.

If there be anywhere upon earth a paradise for the animal kingdom—carefully excluding the human race and the whole family of the beasts of burden—it should be found in Barbadoes. In our northern winter the struggle for existence amongst birds and beasts is always painful, and sometimes hopeless, when the ground is iron-bound with frost and white with snow. In latitude thirteen degrees north the Barbadoes blackbird, a cousin of our English starling, which rejoices in the tremendous name of 'Quiscalus Crassirostris,' has no care for food or warmth to trouble him, but may live his life like the human blackbirds around him, with a minimum of toil and a maximum of placid enjoyment of existence. There are no enemies to annoy him, no birds of prey to alarm him. He can build his nest in a sand-box tree ('Hura crepitans'), up the trunk of which, studded as it is with thorns set as closely together as the spots in a calico print, not even a monkey could climb, much less a negro. What a paradise such a tree would be for our English magpie, sorely vexed by schoolboys, and how he would chuckle when he found it!

There are only five or six species of birds indigenous to Barbadoes, and they do not increase in numbers. Possibly the lazy and luxurious life which they lead is not conducive to longevity; but, on the other hand, it appears to suit the negro, who thrives and multiplies exceedingly, and covers the island with long wooden huts like dolls' houses, in each of which lives at least one family, and which will all blow away into the sea like a pack of cards when the next hurricane comes.

Into this terrestrial paradise man has introduced one devil very worthy of the name—the mongoose. In Jamaica and Martinique he was of some use in killing venomous snakes; but in Barbadoes there never were any venomous snakes to kill, and only one very rare variety of the harmless kind. So, as the negro is fond of keeping fowls, and the mongoose of eating their eggs and chickens, it would seem a pity to have allowed him to land. One would have thought that, with every man's hand against him in an island with a population of about eleven hundred to the square mile, he would have been exterminated long ago; but he has certainly not been. A pair of very fine ones prowled about in our back garden for a while, till we set a trap with an egg for bait, and in an hour had the female secured. She was very angry—not in the least terrified, but simply furious. She ate the egg in the trap whilst we looked on, and spat and snarled like an angry cat, every hair on her back bristling with rage. We admired her pluck, and released her. She and her mate took the hint, and were seen no more.

Probably the mongoose lives chiefly on the green lizards which swarm on every tree, and which certainly have the hardest life of any creatures in Barbadoes, since their flesh is so delicate that everything eats them which can catch them. Cats, fowls, birds, monkeys, and snakes, all devour the poor lizards, which have only two methods of defending themselves, both very inadequate for the purpose. One is their power of changing their colour, whereby they can appear bright green at one moment on the leaf of an aloe, and then dark chocolate brown on a piece of damp earth. If this does not conceal them from their enemy, they drop their tails. The caudal appendage jumps from the ground, and makes a frantic dance all by itself, and if the pursuer is deluded into seizing it, the lizard avails itself of the chance to escape and grow another tail. But we are bound to confess that we have never yet seen a quadruped taken in by the artifice, though it may deceive a bird now and then.

For the rest, the poor lizards are harmless things, with pathetic eyes, in which lurks an expression of weariness and disillusion, as though they were as old as the world itself, and had found it all vanity and vexation of spirit. They are fond of plaintive music, and will enter at the open windows when a piano is playing, and sit listening, and nodding their queer flat heads, and looking out of those wistful eyes at the player, till he, or she, if of an imaginative temperament, might fancy he was playing to an audience of transmigrated souls.

The mongoose loves the rat—that is to say, he generally eats him; though hybrids between the

two animals are not unknown. Into whatever hole the rat can go, the mongoose can follow, so that the poor rats are driven to take refuge in the trees and become arborescent animals. They eke out a precarious existence on the eggs and young of birds which are foolish enough to build their nests in trees whose trunks are undefended by thorns. Whilst the pair of mongooses lived in our back garden, we found there one day an unfortunate rat, which had taken refuge in the hollow stem of an old Spanish Bayonet ('Yucca draconis'). He was very gaunt and starved, so had probably been hiding there for some days. It would be as much as any mongoose's or rat's life was worth to enter one of the great holes which, like a rabbit warren, honeycomb the sand under the tamarind trees by the sea. For there live the great land-crabs in endless variety, from the old brown warrior ('Gelasimus bellator') with a claw six inches long and as large as his whole body, which claw he uses as a defence for his home, by placing his wife in safety at the bottom of his burrow, and then sitting just inside the mouth of the hole, with this powerful pair of pincers filling the opening; down to the little scarlet foragers which scamper about amongst the dead leaves, like living pieces of cloth from a soldier's tunic; or the hermit-crabs, which appear to spend their lives in looking for better shells than those they occupy, and never refuse an offer of a larger and more roomy habitation, wherein they show themselves singularly undeserving their name of 'Cenobita Diogenes.'

Your land-crab is a carnivorous animal, and a cannibal in all senses of the word. If you shoot him from a window with an air-gun, you may see his comrades eat him there and then. The road to Charles' Fort, in the garrison, runs for some distance along the hedge bounding the military cemetery. On a dark and rainy night the field-officer on duty on his way to turn out the fort guard hears on all sides of him uncanny noises of rattling claws and scurrying feet, and knows the crabs are at work! It really requires nerve, or rather the absence of nerves, and the sense of security imparted by the wearing of jackboots, to face the perilous passage in the wet season.

If the crab eats man, the negro eats him. The approved method for his capture is to sally forth on a dark night after heavy rain with a sack and a lantern. To this equipment the negro adds a stick, but we prefer a landing-net. Walking slowly through the wet grass, one observes a great claw, and a pair of goggle eyes staring in a bewildered manner at the light. While he is dazzled is the time to secure him. If you give him time to recover his wits, he will be into a hole or up a tree. A grim and awesome sight is one of these uncanny monsters climbing a tree by the fitful light of a lantern! When the sack is heavy with a crawling, fighting mass, it is emptied into a cask, with the top removed, as the bulging sides are beyond the scaling powers of even a crab. The negro cooks and eats him forthwith, not being squeamish. The white man prefers to feed his captives for a fortnight or so on corn-meal, after which he makes soup of them. The flavour is said to be excellent, but of this we cannot speak from personal experience. Many strange things have we eaten in the West Indies, but we draw the line at carnivorous land-crabs!

'Bhunder,' the Capuchin monkey which we keep chained to a running ring under the ever-green tree ('Ficus nitida') which shades our front door, is fond of a small crab now and then. He has a salutary respect for the claws of the smallest; and a large one he will not face at all. His method with one of suitable size is to knock it about with his paw by quick pats until it is sufficiently dazed to give him a chance of smashing its claw with a large stone. Once he has succeeded in that, he knows his victim is defenceless, and tears it to pieces and devours it at his leisure. He is a cruel little beast, just like a boy of limited intelligence and bad heredity. Once a poor little green paroquet, which lived in the veranda and was perfectly tame, was foolish enough to pay him a visit. He carefully plucked her, and then drowned the unfortunate bird in his water-pot, after which his mistress declined to speak to him for several days. His great friend is 'Cox' the kitten—indeed, the affection of Capuchin monkeys for cats is well known and remarkable. It must be allowed that Bhunder's affection for Cox is of a very selfish character. He will not give her a morsel of his food, even when he can eat no more himself, but confines himself to seizing her whenever she comes near him, taking a turn of her tail round his neck, and upsetting her by catching her fore-leg on the far side and drawing it under her body. Then he rolls her about on the ground and teases her, till she tries to retaliate by scratching him, when he gets hold of all her four paws and holds her down firmly.

Bhunder's good time comes when the rain has turned the soil round his tree to mud, and the latter has caked in the swivel of his chain, and clogged it so that it will not turn. He knows by experience that he has now only to catch the chain over a branch and twist till it breaks. Meanwhile, he has been studying a scheme of mischief. He generally begins by entering the dining-room through the open windows and mixing oil, vinegar, salt, mustard, hot sauces, and pepper, in an awful mess upon the tablecloth. He can open any box so long as the fastening is not beyond his strength. It is never beyond his intellect. Driven from the dining-room by the angry butler, he proceeds to tease the other pets, pull out the macaws' tail feathers, upset their drinking-water, tear off the hibiscus flowers, and eat the gardenia blossoms, and generally enjoy himself. When tired of mischief, he commonly walks in and surrenders himself with a grin, knowing that voluntary submission is the best way to avoid punishment. He never wishes to escape, knowing how well off he is. Indeed, when the butler brings in afternoon tea, he has a standing order to release Bhunder, who rushes into the house and upstairs to get his share. He does not try to run wild on these occasions, well knowing that, with two or three yards of chain attached to him, he would be an easy prey. When we wish to tease him, we give him a tin money-box with a few pence in it. He can see the money through the slit, but neither shaking nor banging on the floor will extract it. He can never resist trying the experiment, and gets angry when laughed

at. He has a great range of language, and Professor Garner was probably wise in selecting the Capuchin monkey for his experiments.

Another specimen of the Simian race known to us as 'the wee Bhunder' we keep loose amongst the trees, as he is not of the mischievous nature of his brother. This is a charming little animal, only the size of a squirrel, and quite as agile as one. He has a golden brown back, gray breast, and a long tail. His face is black, with a haughty expression, recalling to mind the pictures of the hapless Marie-Antoinette. Over the forehead is a bush of white hair, standing straight up, and about an inch long, which gives the little beast a really handsome expression. What his particular genus is we have been unable to determine. He is certainly an uncommon species and a charming pet. He comes down regularly for food, and eats bananas out of our hands. When hungry, he has a shrill pipe like a boatswain's whistle.

One of his great sources of food he finds in the two blue and yellow macaws ('Macrocercus Hyacinthus'). These birds we obtained young from Demerara. They live, quite at liberty, in a frangipani tree, whence they descend when hungry, and come waddling to the windows to be fed. We named them 'Ferdinand and Isabella,' after the Columbus celebration. They do little credit to their royal names. Their plumage is magnificent, and their size not far off three feet from tip of beak to end of tail. But they have none of the intelligence of the parrot tribe, and are much more on a level with the domestic hen in this respect. Their great beaks could almost sever the wee Bhunder in two, and yet, when he sees them eating bananas, he can almost always force them to let the fruit drop by jumping over them once or twice, and getting them into a flurry. It is like a practical exposition of Jack the Giant-killer to watch the performance. Up in their tree, the great birds are always squabbling, and pushing one another off the boughs. When it rains, they perch on the highest branches and scream like a whole colony of rooks. We have heard them a mile away. The scream is evidently the origin of their name, the latter being as nearly as possible the phonetic spelling of the former. We live in hopes that the royal pair may take it into their stupid heads to nest some day. A young macaw with its enormous beak must be a remarkable object.

There are a few snakes in the underwood between our quarters and the sea. In April, on a wet day, we caught a large one asleep outside the stable. Having induced him to crawl into a large jar, we constructed a good-sized box for him with a glass front, and a hole in the side, closed by a glass stopper, whereby to introduce food. Through this hole we made our captive crawl, and named him 'Obadiah.' A diet of lizards agreed well with Obadiah, whose mouth was of so expansible a nature that he cared nothing as to whether he swallowed the poor victim tail first or doubled up from the middle. He proved a greedy snake, and could devour three seven-inch lizards a day with ease. On the 24th of May he cast his skin, which had clearly got too tight for him. On the 9th of June he astonished us by laying seven eggs, thus proving that we had mistaken his sex! The eggs came to nothing. On the 16th of July he cast his skin again, all in one continuous piece even to the discs, like talc, which had covered the eyes. At the time of writing *she* is more than double the thickness she was at the time of capture, and as hungry as ever. We feel a compunction about the lizards; but it is better to sacrifice them than warm-blooded animals. We once put in a mouse; but the poor little creature trembled so with fear when it saw the snake, that we had to release it.

One other pet deserves mention—namely, 'Ahasuerus' the tortoise. He is a tabular tortoise ('Testudo tabulata'), so called from the regular hexagonal plates on his back. He was sold by a negro, who complained that his children were so fond of playing with it that they absented themselves from school! One would like to know how to set about playing with a tortoise! Ahasuerus is about a foot long. When he is awake, he is pretty active, and can travel at quite a mile an hour. He is fond of hiding himself in the long Guinea grass and going to sleep. When he awakes, he displays a great appetite for bread and milk. We put it before him in a tin, and he makes several aimless dabs with his great head before he can get his nose into it. His shell is battered and dinted, and he looks at least a hundred years old, which he may well be. He can scarcely be called interesting as a pet, though he certainly causes one to wonder why he was created so ugly and helpless.

However, if one begins to discuss such questions in the tropics, one is soon puzzled. Why were mosquitoes given a taste for blood, and provided with 'two lancets, a double barbed spear, a needle, a saw, a pump, and a bag of poison,' for the purpose of torturing such warm-blooded animals as they may encounter?

Then there are the ants. How many varieties reside in our house we should be sorry to say. Some of them have wings, and are half an inch long, or more, and love to fly over a dining-table lamp and light on the dishes. Some have a mission to remove carrion of all kinds, and may be seen scientifically carrying out operations in the moving of dead cockroaches, which throw the builders of the Pyramids into the shade. The sugar ants are the most annoying. They are so small that they could penetrate a hole made by a small pin in a piece of paper, so that there is no keeping them out of cupboards and boxes.

The ant in the West Indies is capable of great deeds. In 1518 to 1520 he overran the island of Hispaniola to such an extent that it was on the point of being abandoned by the Spaniards—in which case some events of history might have turned out very differently. In 1760 the same kind of ant ('Formica omnivora') was imported to Barbadoes in some mould brought from the island of Tobago. They multiplied in their new home till the island was almost rendered uninhabitable.

In 1780 the great hurricane came up from the waste of waters to the eastward, and burst upon the Antilles and the Caribbean Sea. When it passed away, up the Gulf Stream, it left behind it shattered fleets and ruined forts, and dead men by thousands. But it saved the islands, just as Egypt was saved from the plague

called up by Moses. The ants were gone. Drowned by the rain-torrents, or swept out into the open sea by the resistless gale, their numbers never rose again to a dangerous point, and at the present day there are few of the species to be found.

What shall we say of the West Indian cockroach ('Blatta Americana')? Those who have lived in houses infested by the common black beetle may form some idea of them if they magnify the said 'beetle' enormously, give him a most malodorous smell, and then introduce him to drawing-room and bedroom, kitchen and pantry, stable and cellar. When he is young he is not much larger than an ant, and finds his way into boxes and cupboards with ease. He grows rapidly, and he has a healthy appetite! Above all things, he loves the colour red.

No! As we remarked at the beginning of this paper, Barbadoes is a paradise for the animal kingdom, and it is not a bad place for the black man; but the white one who wishes to keep his goods and his temper, not to mention his digestion, had better not settle anywhere within thirteen degrees of the equator! 'Experto crede!'

## 'AN UNFORTUNATE EXPEDITION.'

### A STORY OF THE WESTERN SAHARA.

Author of *Rising of the Brass Men; A West African Story*, &c.

BETWEEN the south of Morocco and the river Senegal stretches for some hundreds of miles a sandy coast which forms the western border of the Sahara desert. Inland lies a wild and desolate land of low rocky hills and wastes of hot sand, although here and there in isolated spots, where a little rain falls at long intervals, may be found clusters of date palms, a little rough barley, and enough small bushes and harsh wiry grass to support a few sheep.

This sun-scorched, dried-up country is inhabited by wandering tribes, half Moor and half Arab, who travel about from oasis to oasis in search of food for their horses and sheep. These are wild men, true children of the desert, and although both Sultan of Morocco and Spanish Government claim a kind of suzerainty over them, they acknowledge no man's authority, and are as ready to shed the blood of Moorish shereef as they are that of Spanish officer or English adventurer.

It is believed that there are valuable minerals in this country—that there is gold I know—but for the reasons given, prospecting is not successful, neither have explorers always returned. Now some little time ago a company was organised in England 'to explore and develop the great mineral riches' of the country in question, and Spanish schooners from the Canary Islands were sent with presents in hopes of inducing the Moors to allow miners to prospect. One or two of the officials of the company also spent a pleasant time, lounging about on shady hotel verandas, or making delightful excursions among the vine-clad hills and wild volcanic mountains of Grand Canary and Tenerife, or from time to time chartered a steamer and spent a day or two on the coast. After this they sent home encouraging reports, and small specimens of gold and other matters, so that the hearts of the shareholders were lifted up in the expectation of twenty-five per cent. dividends, and they did not hesitate to increase the salaries of the officials in question.

Meantime, the wandering tribes held many consultations among the defiles of the hills as to what should be done to the infidel, for the sons of the desert are true Mussulmans. The younger ones suggested that the whole party should be killed off-hand, but the gray-bearded sheikhs shook their heads and said: 'That is foolishness, for if you slay them, who will give you presents, even many rolls of cloth, and guns, and knives? Besides, they are not of the race of Spain, and though you would without doubt destroy them, yet would many of the faithful die in the attempt. It were better, therefore, to respect the firman of the Sultan which the Christian dogs hold, and allow them to come freely while they enrich us with their cloth and picnic about the land, and we will even extend our good-will and send them guides to lead them—where there is no gold. Thus will Allah blind their eyes that they may find nothing, and when they be tired and the presents cease, then shall ye slay them.' And all the tribesmen agreed that there was wisdom in the words.

Some of my readers may know the harbour of Las Palmas, in the Island of Grand Canary, which is perhaps the dirtiest and at the same time one of the most beautiful on earth, for while below are coaling stations, lime-kilns, and wooden hovels; above, the great volcanic mountains rear their jagged crests against the sapphire sky, with soft clouds of silvery mist shrouding their vine-clad slopes.

One night in August there was a sound of revelry by night in the little tavern of Juan Garcias at the head of the mole, which showed that the exploring expedition was enjoying itself preparatory to embarking. It was what the Americans would call a 'mixed crowd.' In a corner sat the two Westons, Tom and Jim, who were nominally in charge, handsome bright-eyed young fellows, both shouting with delight at the antics of big Peter, engineer of a Spanish steamer, who was dancing a sword dance to the music of two guitars and a mandoline, played by the Spanish captain, Manuel, and two of his swarthy crew. Around the wall lounged six men, known as 'the army,' who, on the strength of having at one time served her majesty, had been engaged as a guard of honour. There were also two Syrians to act as interpreters with the Moors, while sitting on the middle of the table discoursing upon things in general was Captain Thomas, who had been everything from captain of an Australian clipper to successful prospector in Alaska, and who was practically in charge of the party. When he was sober, which was, however, rarely the case, it could not have been in better hands.

At length, when the expedition had drunk all the manzanilla and sweet moscatel in the place, and shouted themselves hoarse singing

'The road to Mandalay,' it took itself off and staggered along the mole in the direction of its launch. The 'army' lingered behind to settle a dispute about payment by throwing the unfortunate 'mozo' over the mole into the sea, informing him as they did so, that this was how they were prepared to treat 'the 'ole bloomin' Arabs.' As, however, the islanders can swim like fishes, the episode only meant a further bill for the company, while two armed *guardias civiles*, looking on unmoved, with Spanish gravity remarked that 'truly all the English are mad.'

A little later the rattling of blocks and slatting of canvas announced that the fast schooner *Hermosa Beatrix* was getting underway, and by-and-by a dim outline of white canvas that gleamed in the moonlight, as the graceful vessel threshed her way along over the glittering sea, close hauled to the fresh trade breeze, was all that the watchers on the mole could see of the expedition.

Two days after, Jim Weston, turning out on deck at five o'clock, found the schooner heading for a line of sandy coast, over which the sun was just rising, lighting up the heavy surf that broke on the beach. Lowering down the peak of the mainsail she crossed the tail of a bank on which the long Atlantic swell was breaking in sheets of snowy foam, and with bos'n Carlos swinging the lead in the forerigging, the captain carefully felt his way up a channel leading between the bank and the shore, and a few minutes later the little vessel rode securely to two anchors, rolling from rail to rail and throwing sheets of glittering spray over her bows as she dipped into the creamy broken seas that swept over the bank.

After breakfast the big launch was put over the side, and although there was some trouble in getting through the surf, the whole party, with their goods and chattels, landed wet but safe on the beach. Each man at once strapped on his load of provisions, blanket, and felt-lined tins of water. The two Westons, the two Syrians, and Captain Thomas carried revolvers as well as rifles, while the 'army' was armed with the Martini alone.

When all was ready, Jim Weston gave the word to march, and the party tramped along under their heavy loads, ankle-deep in hot sand, until towards noon they emerged from the sandhills into a flat treeless plain. Under foot lay loose red earth mixed with sand and white pebbles, and the only sign of vegetation was a few thorny bushes; while ahead, the plain stretched without a leaf or blade of grass to break the monotony, until blue and distant on the eastern horizon lay a low line of hills which was their destination. Overhead the sun shone down with pitiless fierceness, and the ground lay shimmering in the glare with that peculiar dancing of the air which may sometimes be seen in England on a hot July day.

'We can't stand still without sunstroke, lads,' said old Captain Thomas, 'so come along; while the perspiration's running off you it's all right;' and worn out and half-blinded with the brightness they stumbled along until sunset, when they camped at the foot of a few rocks.

In this land there is little twilight, and scarcely had the sun dipped behind the sandhills than the darkness came down, blotting out the glowing crimson and green of the western sky, and with it came a cool breeze which occasionally blows at night in the desert, though where it springs from amid the waste of hot sand it is hard to say. When we had cut a few of the brown thorny bushes which grew every here and there, a fire was made and a kettleful of tea and a few drops of vermouth washed down the frugal meal. The two Moorish hostages who always accompanied the party, assured them that none of their people were near, so arranging for the 'army' to relieve one another as sentries, Jim Weston rolled himself in his blanket and lay down, looking up towards the stars which in that clear air flashed with a brilliancy unknown to the north, and drinking in the cool night breeze that swept in grateful freshness across his sunscorched face until he fell asleep.

Next morning the whole party, including the sentry who was slumbering as peacefully as any, were awakened by the hot sun on their faces, and after a scanty breakfast were soon on the march. 'Worse nor a bloomin' treadmill, Tom,' said one of the army to his comrade; 'no ale, no time to sit down, no gold, an' no nothink.'

'Well, if you ain't got no gold, be thankful you've got no lead neither,' was the reply, and the party went on in silence. Towards noon they reached the first of the low rocky hills, and for some hours threaded their way through a stony defile, in the bottom of which it appeared as if a little water had run at some remote period. That is what the Arabs call a 'wady' or river, and as the Moors had indicated this as a spot in which gold was to be found, all hands were on the alert. Captain Thomas, however, could find no trace of any metal, and shortly before dark he came running back calling out that he had seen three or four mounted men disappear round the shoulder of a hill. The guides either had not seen them or would not admit that they had, so when night fell the party climbed the side of the valley and camped in a hollow on one of the bordering hills. 'You can arrange it any way you like, men,' said Weston, 'but there must be two of you on watch together all through the night, and no noise; if you see any Moors, let me know at once.'

None of the expedition will ever forget that night; the surrounding hills shut off the breeze, and the hot rocks radiated the warmth they had stored by day, so that the heat was, as the army said, 'somethink awful.' Soaked in perspiration they smoked and chatted in low tones until Captain Thomas, who had been in the country years before, took up the tale and told how such and such an unfortunate Spaniard had perished by knife or bullet, or had been carried away into the far Sahara, while the hostages, who understood a little English, licked their lips and nodded their heads approvingly. At length Jim Weston nudged him and whispered sharply, 'Stop it, you fool, or you'll have the whole lot bolting—come out with me.'

Side by side they climbed the slope and

crossed a strip of tableland, and Weston stamped his foot as the words, 'There's a Burma girl a waitin' an' she sings ka lo la lai,' rang out through the still night from the camp they had left behind, followed by the swinging chorus, 'On the road to Mandalay.'

'What's that fool Tom doing to let them make that row,' he said. 'If the Moors are on the maraud, there'll be half a pound of slugs in camp before they know—— Thank goodness they've stopped now.'

By this time the two stood looking down into a narrow rocky gorge which lay at their feet, one side clear and distinct in the moonlight, while the other lay in deep shadow. Weston raised his head and slowly swept his gaze around, but he could see nothing but a wild stretch of stony desolate hills, gleaming white and ghostly in the moonlight, and seamed with dark patches of shadow where the valleys intersected them.

As he stood and watched, the captain grasped his companion's arm. 'Drop down flat on your face and keep the rifle barrel in the shadow,' he said; and they both flattened themselves against the hot stones, while from up the valley came the faint sound of hoofs.

'I hope to the Lord those fools won't sing again,' said the captain, and they both waited breathlessly while the soft sound of hoofs came nearer and nearer—for the Arab horses are rarely shod.

At length from out of the shadow emerged three camels swinging along at their awkward gait, both left feet together, and both right feet together, a way in which, as far as I am aware, no other animal travels. On the back of each sat two Moors clad in a long blue garment, half tunic and half shawl, which hung from the shoulders, loose blue trousers and white burnouse; following one by one came a score of horsemen, the barrels of their long guns gleaming in the moonlight. Beautiful weapons these are, the fine Damascus steel barrels often inlaid with gold and silver, and the stocks curiously dovetailed ivory and hardwood. Riding silently one by one into the moonlight, they passed away again into the shadow like a procession of ghosts.

When the last had gone the captain said: 'I know them. They are some of the tribe the Spaniards at Rio de Oro had the trouble with, and if they are looking for us our lives are not worth much.' Rising to their feet the two companions climbed a small elevation, from the summit of which they watched the horsemen emerge from the hills and strike across the desert in the direction of the coast, then they turned towards the camp. As they neared it several rifle-shots rang out and the two Moorish hostages went flying past them. In an instant Weston threw up his rifle, but just as he lined the foresight on one of the men's shoulders the captain seized his arm.

'Let them go,' he said. 'If you shoot one of these fellows we'll have the whole country down on us to-morrow;' and so the two Moors disappeared in a ravine among the hills. On our reaching camp it was decided that as the hostages had bolted, treachery was intended, and they had better make for the coast at once.

Space will not permit us to tell of the return journey. Suffice it to say, that the army declared the march to Cabul to be 'nothing to it,' and that with all their water used up, utterly worn out, scorched with the sun and half blind from the glare, on the morning of the second day the expedition dragged its weary limbs around the point and staggered into the little bay of Santiago.

'Boys,' said Captain Thomas, 'the schooner's gone; there's too much wind and sea here, and she must have run down the coast for shelter.'

This was the end, and the whole party sat down on the sand in despair.

'It's all up,' said one of the soldiers. 'I can't go a foot farther, so we must just sit down and wait for the Moors—here they come too,' and he pointed inland where they saw some twenty mounted Moors and a number on foot making for the sandhills.

'We may just as well stay where we are and make the best stand we can; they won't take me prisoner,' said Jim Weston as he tapped his rifle.

'Don't be fools,' was the captain's reply. 'We can hold the top of that sandhill against them even if they mean business,' and as fast as their tired limbs would let them, the men struggled through the sand to the summit of the dune which rose above any of the surrounding ones, where a hollow was scraped out in the sand; and laying their baggage around the outside, the little party lay down to wait events.

By-and-by the Moors rode into the sandhills, tall handsome men mounted on diminutive horses, and waiting until the men on foot came up, spread themselves round the Englishmen's position, a number lying down amid the sand on neighbouring heights so as to shoot to advantage.

'Ask them what they want, Girardi,' said Tom Weston to the elder Syrian, and the latter standing up spoke in Arabic to a tall sheikh who seemed to be the leader, and after the latter's reply turned to his comrades and said:

'They are come to take us away to the interior where we will be held for a ransom, but not ill-used if we make no resistance.'

'Tell them to come and take us if they can,' said Jim Weston.

''Ear, 'ear! there'll be a gorgeous fight,' replied the army.

Wheeling his horse the sheikh rode back to his followers, and the next minute at full gallop they dashed past the foot of the sandhill, turning in the saddle and firing their guns as they passed, and with a vicious 'phit, phit,' slugs and small stones threw up little puffs of dust and perforated the water tins. Not a man of the expedition fired, but when ten minutes afterwards the cavalcade again approached, the old captain shouted, 'Now lads, give it them this time,' and the army ground their teeth and jammed their left elbows in the sand as they followed the horsemen with the tiny foresight, 'crack, crack,' went the rifles, and a cloud of blue smoke drifted across Weston's face. Next moment his hat was lifted

off his head and something threw a handful of dust in his eyes, while a volley of small stones and slugs whistled over the heads of the defenders.

When he could look out again, two of the horses lay rolling in agony amidst the sand at their feet, while a wounded Moor crawled away on hands and knees. Then he sat up and looked at his perforated hat and felt a little sick, while from overhead the sun's rays poured down with a pitiless heat, the sandhills threw up the glare, and rifle-barrel and sand burned the fingers.

'This ain't no bloomin' fitin', nothin' but a picnic,' said one of the ex-troopers, 'but you may as well be shot as die of sunstroke'—— He stopped suddenly, for three little puffs of smoke blew out from the surrounding sand, and a shower of slugs whistled into the camp.

'I can't see no head, Tom, but that's like the sun on a gun-barrel sticking out behind them stones—let's try.' Both the rifles flashed, and presently a Moor crawled out on his hands and knees, then rolled down the slope, and lay at the bottom a patch of raw blue and brown against the white sand. After this the firing ceased, and Captain Thomas rising to his feet looked round. 'I can't see any sign of them; they must be crawling in the sand somewhere, waiting to rush us,' he said. 'Hurrah! here's the *Beatrix* coming. She has been standing off and on waiting, for there's too much sea to anchor here.'

All jumped to their feet, and as they did so, 'crack, crack, crack,' went three guns, and the smoke floated down the face of the opposite slope. Tom Weston felt a smart blow on his arm, and found he had a slug through it, while one of the troopers got a stone in the leg. There was no help for it, and all hands at once flattened themselves down into the sand, which felt like red cinders, and lay panting in the heat with mouths and throats dry and parched, while they watched with anxious eyes the white canvas of the schooner coming nearer and nearer, until at length she rounded to, and they saw the big launch with ten seamen in it coming ashore.

The chances were, however, that the launch would be swamped in the surf or smashed on the beach, and then their friends would be as badly off as themselves. As they anxiously watched her they saw the tall figure of Carlos, who was standing at the tiller, shove his helm down, and next moment as the launch came flying shoreward on the crest of a big green roller, ten swarthy bare-legged seamen sprang into the water and struggled up the beach against the backwash of the sea. Four men, meantime, remained in the launch and pulled her out clear of the surf. The seamen were only armed with their inseparable long knives, and Carlos carried a sixteen foot oar; but whatever the Spaniard may be he is no coward, and between the 'Canarios' and the Moors, in spite of a certain similarity, there has been for ages a deadly feud, and many a wrecked schooner's crew or 'bacalao' fisherman has disappeared into the wilds of the Sahara.

Dashing the water out of their eyes and drawing their knives they advanced up the beach, while the expedition marched out in a solid body from the top of the sandhill, and without firing a shot charged straight for the launch right through the Moors who dashed out horse and foot to intercept them. The next minute there was, as the army said, a gorgeous fight. England and Spain side by side, rifle-butts flying among horses' heads, the long knives of the Spanish seamen flashing, and the Westons and the younger Girardi firing their revolvers right and left into the mass.

In the midst of it stood Carlos swinging his long oar at arm's length and knocking his swarthy foes out of their saddles right and left. The fray was so quick and mixed that shooting, except with the revolver, was out of the question, and while the Spaniards used their long knives with effect, the English struck right and left with clubbed rifles. In a few seconds it was over. They broke through the Moors, and rushing waist-deep into the water, tumbled head first over the stern of the plunging launch, and the seamen grasping the oars made for deep water. The younger Girardi, the greater portion of his jaw shot away, lay down in the stern-sheets, and with his repeating-rifle shot several of the Moors; and a few minutes later the expedition stood on the deck of the *Beatrix*, which vessel, under all the sail she could carry, stood away to sea.

There were at least two of their foes hit in the sandhills, besides horses, and several more lay on the beach; while of the adventurers, Girardi lost half of his lower jaw, two Spanish seamen were badly wounded, and a third was taken prisoner and carried away into the desert.

Shortly afterwards the shareholders, seeing no prospect of the twenty-five per cent. dividends, wound up the company; but all those concerned in it will long remember the 'unfortunate expedition.'

## TO LOUIE.

THEY say, if I'd a poet be,
'Twere better I should sing
Less oft, Sweetheart, of love and thee,
And change my fretted string,
Then in some newer, less-sung strain
The poet's garland strive to gain.

But sweeter 'tis for me, to sound
Thy beauty and thy name,
Than live a poet laurel-crowned,
And win a world-wide fame;
For dearer far art thou to me
Than fame, or song, or minstrelsy.

Grim Age doth hobble on apace,
Nor slumber by the way,
Too soon he'll win Life's little race,
End Love and lover's lay:
Then while the fleeting hour allows,
To songs of love the lyre I'll rouse.

WILL HILL.

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## THE PERSECUTED HERRING.

A GREGARIOUS fish such as the herring is commonly looked upon as one of the least intelligent denizens of the deep. It holds a place in the world of waters amongst marine vertebrates similar to that held by the sheep among terrestrial mammals. While in other respects they may justly be termed the 'rabbit of the sea,' this does not hold good as regards intelligence. Extremely prolific as they apparently are, and forming the food of the greater number of predaceous fish, as well as marine birds and mammals, they are yet not particularly productive as compared with many of their most virulent and formidable enemies. Still we are unable to assert positively the reason for their prevalence, and do not really know how often they may throw ova. There is a tendency to believe that, on account of their multitudes, notwithstanding continued persecution, they must, like the rabbit, reproduce more than once a year. Yet this simple problem has never been solved, although herring in milt and roe may be found in our seas throughout the year. We have no certainty that the same fish, or even the same shoal, throws ova more than once in the twelve months. One would have anticipated that, with all our expenditure on marine investigation, this primary and simple question to the fishing industry of Scotland, so greatly dependent on the herring fishing, should have been settled long ago. But preconceived ideas on this common and little understood fish had apparently diverted inquiry into wrong channels. Only comparatively recently, the view that the herring came from the Arctic regions, and crept gradually down our coasts, has given way before facts that were too stubborn to question. We now know pretty fairly that the Scottish herring is largely a local fish; that every Scottish loch has its own well-defined variety, and that even the herring shoals of the North Sea are specially characteristic, off the different stretches of coast.

Indeed, a great grievance with certain districts is, that *paf* herrings, from the three emporiums on the Aberdeenshire coast—Peterhead, Aberdeen, and Fraserburgh—have a preference amongst buyers, before those either to North or South. When these fish have spawned and become 'spents,' they gradually lose their more gregarious instincts, and become what were formerly considered a different species, and named unpoetically 'gut-pokes.' This simply meant that they were what is called among salmon 'mending-kelts.' The necessity for food drove them to forage pretty well for themselves, during which period they are the most indiscriminate of feeders, and will not hesitate to devour the young of their own species with sublime indifference. They are then taken readily with unbaited bright hooks, by jigging, so voracious are they. Their cannibalism makes it all the more extraordinary that a fish, throwing only some thirty thousand ova, compared with the millions of its enemy the cod, can still maintain its pre-eminence in multitude. Besides the comparatively local shoals, there are undoubtedly immense pelagic shoals, living mainly in the deeper and more troublous waters, and becoming coarser and more suited to fight the ruder conditions of a pelagic existence. These commonly approach some quiet shore or shallow bank to deposit their spawn on rough ground, and may be readily known by their tougher skins, and a less delicate make than that of their more delicately nurtured brethren. A shoal may long visit an isolated locality without coming into touch with the fishing community; always somewhat conservative, and following orthodox lines.

Such a shoal was discovered some few years ago to the west of the island of Islay, and after having been for some time a little mine of wealth to the locality, attracted the attention of a class of fishermen following a destructive mode of fishing, too little regarding to-morrow. The so-called seine-trawlers, or circle-net fishers, who attack a shoal of fish

instead of lying in wait for them, sweeping them away in millions, regardless of size or condition, cause absolute consternation amongst the finny tribe. But for them the shoals might remain for weeks or months in a locality, giving employment to hundreds of men, and supplying the market with well-chosen drift-net fish of good quality and in best condition. The trawled herring, in any case, is hashed, is irregular, and has the blood lying along the back-bone, and the market is apt to be choked by a reckless and intermittent supply. But, above all, the seine-trawl terrifies the fish, and turns what might be a regular and steady fishery, into a sudden over-supply of inferior fish, followed by their practical disappearance.

We may take this Islay fishery as a fair example of what does, and ought not to, happen. The shoal, in ripe condition to some extent, came in from the outer waters, and if the weather was suitable sought the quiet haven inside Neave Island, towards the head of the comparatively shallow waters of Loch Gruinard, in Islay. Here, probably for a lengthened period, they deposited their spawn, unmolested by man; for boats seldom frequented this exposed coast. The shoal steadily increased until, when accidentally discovered, it had reached important dimensions. At first it was worked by the Portnaguran fishermen, who fished under trying conditions, as they had no facilities for the safety of their boats, and had to draw them high and dry on the Saturday, while they returned to their distant homes on foot for the Sunday. A subscription oil-lamp alone guided them into the difficult and dangerous haven, and the produce of their labours was carted to Port Charlotte or Bruchladich, across the island. Except a few farmhouses, there were no dwellings in the vicinity. But soon private enterprise threw up huts and curing-houses, and a little community sprang up on the spot at the fishing head of the shallow loch. Application was made for the aid of Government to provide lighting and pier facilities; but the question arose: Is there any security that the fishery will prove to be a permanent one? The enemy had begun to appear in force, in the seine-trawlers, and collisions had even taken place between the rival systems. Would the fish return to their spawning-grounds, tormented by the trawl, made foul by decaying fish from overweighted nets, and, worst of all, almost cleared of spawn which, when matured, would have returned to their original place of incubation? They have at least attempted to return, and occasionally succeeded, to their destruction. But they have also been sometimes driven by gales out of their course, and perhaps thus explained the occasional sudden appearance of shoals in new districts. Thus they spread down the Sound of Islay to Portaskaig, and originated new curing stations there along the Sound. Some took refuge in West Tarbert, Jura, and spawned there, as they were at first permitted to do. This occurred mainly through the severe weather that destroyed so many of the fleet some years ago. But it showed them the way there, and the loch was full of sile, or young herring, the following season.

For some years this fishing has kept increasing and spreading, with the fears of the locality also increasing, and the benefits spreading to other quarters. It took some little time for the fact to become accepted that a great new fishing-ground had arisen, towards the end of the fishing season elsewhere. The fine size of the fish also made them especially attractive, and assured of good prices in the London market. So the annual fleet kept increasing, and the seiners more and more regardless, until the fish became so afraid of a net that they would not approach the orthodox drift-net, and only the seines were successful. This fact was advanced as a proof of the value and importance of seine-fishing, while it was only a proof that it had done its work but too well. No doubt this last season, when the fleet was absurdly great for the extent of fishing-ground in safe water, over-fishing of both kinds played havoc with the shoals; but daylight seineing had most to do with the unhappy result. The herring, terrified at the onslaught, spread away up the sound between Jura and Colonsay, and, unable to rid themselves of their spawn, sought the quiet of Lochbuie, in the hope of at last being unmolested. This hope was not to be fulfilled, as they had no sooner been notified as arrived than the Philistines were upon them, aided by steam. Whereas a quiet fishing might have been carried on here for a considerable time, with the reasonable use of the drift-net; two or three days of the seine swept the loch, and drove the remains of the despairing shoal out into deeper waters. A few days and they were marked in Duart Bay, to the north of Mull. And here again a furious assault was made on fish that were of little value for the table by that time, the spawn running freely from the poor persecuted creatures, unable to find a place of rest, or allowed to continue the species that is so valuable to our fishermen, as well directly, as by being the main food of our western marine fauna.

A nation that permits such reckless abuse of its resources, cannot pretend to any proper administration of its fisheries. That reasonable 'black mail' should be levied on every shoal of fish that approaches our shores may be granted; but wholesale slaughter, regardless of to-morrow, ought not to be permitted, or our own proper fish stock treated as if they were some unknown emanation from the unseen deep. The first duty of the new Fishery Districts will probably be to protect such local industries, and prevent the wholesale destruction by stranger crews of what prove, when properly conducted, the very best and surest means of advancing localities in all the comforts and graces of civilisation. The money brought into Islay from this fishery during the last eight years has been most important to this fine, but somewhat isolated, island; and it will be a cruel blow should the fishery be destroyed, as it threatens to be. What has happened has already taught us some lessons. It has shown how new grounds may be stocked by wandering shoals, driven from their usual haunts by stress of weather or regardlessness of man. It has shown how far a shoal will travel in terror before rude processes, no longer necessary with capital in plenty in the industry;

and it has surely made evident the necessity for more stringent supervision of such important and valuable industries. In the meantime what has it taught the herring? We have considerable evidence that the natural spawning-ground of this fish is close to the shore, but it has been driven farther and farther away by persistent persecution until it spawns in depths of many fathoms. It may learn other lessons, and take to deeper waters than the ten or twelve fathoms of the Ballantrae banks, if it does not force us to follow the industry like the Dutchmen of old, out in the deep, where our delicate loch fish is an impossibility. This 'persecuted shoal' of Islay may yet be an object lesson of national value, if properly appreciated.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER X.—IN THE FIELDS.

I GAVE her new music, some books of songs, some books of poetry, and some novels of a kind that I thought she would like. I filled the windows with flowers, insomuch that Robert groaned: I gave her flowers for the table: every evening I took her on the river for an hour of the fresh strong air which sweeps up with the flow and down with the ebb; and on Saturday I took her for a little journey into the country.

I wanted real country, not cockney country, though that is not to be despised. Isabel was clad, I well remember, in a summer dress of some soft and light material. Perhaps it was not trimmed exactly as a Bond Street dressmaker would approve. She wore a hat which had been bought in the neighbourhood of Aldgate; yet it was a pretty hat; and with a touch of colour round her neck, and a flower at her throat, she looked a very dainty damsel indeed; and oh! the blindness, and the coldness, and the stony-heartedness of her *fiancé*, who would have no kissing, and fondling, and foolishness. In this respect, though we were sprung from the same stock, I am not ashamed to confess that in opinion, not to speak of practice, we were hopelessly at variance.

'Permit me to observe, Isabel,' I remarked, judicially, 'that you look very nice, and that your dress becomes you.'

'Oh!' she coloured with pleasure—she was so unused to compliments, you see. 'I am so glad you like it. If you had not made Robert give up all that work, I should not have found time to make it.'

'Well, I thought of taking you by rather a long journey, if you don't mind that, to Rickmansworth. Then you shall walk through a lovely park that I know of, and then we shall be picked up by a trap and drive to Chenies, there to dine, and go home in the cool of the evening. Will that suit you, Isabel?'

'Anything suits me that suits you, George; only I am afraid'——

'What are you afraid of?'

'I am afraid of you. Oh, not that way'—she did not explain what way—'only you belong to another world, almost. I am afraid that I shall be such a stupid companion. I don't even talk your language—and you always look so happy. I am ashamed to be seen with any one who looks so happy.'

I laughed. Afraid of me! As if any woman in the world could ever be afraid of me! 'Why,' I told her, 'I go in perpetual awe and adoration of all women; I look happy because you condescend to walk with me. Women are all goddesses—I worship in fear.' So she smiled and resigned herself to fate, and we set off.

From Wapping to Rickmansworth is a long journey; it takes an hour and a half. In the underground Isabel began to talk again about Robert.

'I am ashamed,' she said, 'of having told you what I did last Monday, I am ashamed of feeling so—afraid of Robert. You will think me the most unworthy person in the world when I tell you that it is gratitude, the deepest gratitude that ought to bind us to Robert. Did he never tell you how we came to his house? No? Well, I will tell you—and then you will understand what I mean. It is five years since we came to him. I was sixteen then. We are his cousins. He could not get on with his mother. She was a very grand lady—I remember her—who dressed in black silk and wore a large gold chain and wanted to rule everybody. And Robert was the master, and he intended to be master, in which he was quite right; so they couldn't agree; and his mother went out to her other sons in Tasmania. Then Robert remembered us. Just then it was—oh! a terrible time with us. I used to lie awake crying and praying for help. And Robert brought the help.'

'What was the trouble?'

'Father had a stroke—you see how lame he is—and he couldn't go to sea any more, and there was no money at all.'

'Oh! But that was terrible.'

'Yes. They were trying to get father into the Trinity Almshouse—and I was to go and do something—become a barmaid, perhaps. Then Robert found us out. "Come and live with me," he said—and so we came. I was to be his secretary, and to keep the books and the house.'

'And that you have continued ever since. Yes. And you have never been outside Wapping once all that time?'

'Oh! yes. Now and then I go to Aldgate.'

'Have you been into any kind of society? Have you had any kind of change?'

'No. We have no visitors here. And I have been too busy to think of change.'

'That is just it. You have been too busy. Don't talk to me of gratitude, Isabel. Robert has taken from you more than he has given. Not that he is to be blamed. Robert, you see, is such a strong sort that he never wants any change; and he thinks that nobody else does. Why, you've lost what ought to have been your happiest days. Why, you ought to have been a princess.'

'Please, George'—she stopped me, turning red. 'Remember that whatever I have lost, I have never heard foolish compliments.'

'If you call that foolish. But I refrain. So,

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little one, you entered upon the boat-building business; and you saw Robert, naturally, every day.'

'Yes; all day long.'

'And he—he—I mean, you—presently accepted him.'

She blushed again. 'Yes; he said he must have a wife some time or other, and he would marry me. But he had a great deal to do first, and I must not expect him to—to'——

'I know. The most singular limitation of an engagement on record.'

'If I could make him happy, how could I refuse? Besides, I was afraid to refuse. And we owed everything to him. But it won't have to be for a great while yet—not for years.'

The train arrived at the station. I ordered a conveyance to meet us at Chorley Common, and I took Isabel by a way that I knew through the park.

There is nothing in the world, I believe, lovelier than an English park in early summer. Wild places—lofty mountains, tall peaks, dark ravines, broad glaciers, black forests, cliffs white, cliffs red, cliffs black, touch another note. Then there is the tranquillity; the great beauty of the park fills the soul with rest and calm.

Isabel had never before seen a park. She looked about her with a kind of stupor. There were tall trees, not in lines, but single; all with their lower branches at the same height above the sward—the height, that is, to which the deer can reach; the foliage was at its best; the turf was green and soft and elastic; a sky-lark was singing up above; a blackbird was repeating his pretty tuneful lay close beside us; there was a confused chatter from the hedge; the buttercups covered the low-lying part; beyond us ran the river, the little river Chess, winding among the meadows. The air that fanned the soft cheeks of the girl breathed refreshment. We were quite alone save for the birds and the trees, and afar off a herd of deer.

'What do you think of it, Isabel?'

She made answer with the simple interjection which is used for everything beyond the power of speech. There is no other word in any language half so useful or half so expressive; because, you see, it expresses every possible form of emotion—love, pain, pleasure, hope, fear, admiration, joy, despair.

'Come,' I said, 'we must not stay too long.'

'Oh! But not to hurry. It is wonderful; to think that these lovely places are all around us and we never see them! George, to live all the time in that corner and never to see these things! Oh, is it life?'

'No, Isabel, it is not life, it is prison. But courage, we have broken prison. The doors are open. We shall see lots of things rare and beautiful now. This is only a beginning.'

So we walked on more slowly, because this part of the park is not very big. In order to show off my country lore I carried on a little running commentary. 'That whistle is the blackbird's; that is the thrush; did you hear the cuckoo? You must run for luck. That is the blackcap; that is the complaint of the willow warbler.'

'You know them all,' she said jealously, 'and I know not a single one. Oh! how ignorant I am of everything—everything!'

'I will teach you. I am sure you will be an apt scholar. You shall learn the flowers, too—the names of all the flowers; I have got some good by being born in the country. I can teach you the birds and their song and their flight; and the flowers, and their seasons, and their history; and the trees and the leaves. We had a country-house once; there was another one near us, with a huge park, where I used to wander with Frances.'

'Who was Frances?'

'Lady Frances was the daughter of the Earl of Clovelly, formerly prime-minister. Her mother was a great political lady. Frances and I were great friends always, and we learned those things when we were children together.'

'Are you engaged to Lady Frances?' she asked sharply.

'Oh! dear, no. There is no question of engagement between us. We are like brother and sister. Frances is a young widow: if she were to marry again, it would be a strong man, full of ambition, who would advance himself and enable her to become what her mother was.'

'She should marry Robert, if she wants a strong man.'

'Indeed, she might do worse. Now, Isabel, this is the wildest place anywhere round London; you are quite in the country; there are no houses to be seen, no roads, no railways, nothing but trees, and grass, and sky, and flowing river. Sit down on this trunk and rest, and don't try to tell me how much you like it.'

We sat down on a fallen tree; the sunshine lay on the rippling waters where the light breeze here and there lifted the surface into a little crest of wave, or where it was broken by the leaping of a fish; there were wild ducks overhead flying in two straight lines that joined at a single duck, to make an angle of thirty degrees—not that Isabel asked what angle they made—and higher up was flying a pair of heron, their long legs stretched out behind them.

No one, I say, was in the park: nor was there any sign or sound of any human creature: the leaves of spring were at their earliest and their loveliest: the chestnuts were in bloom: and the girl sat with hands folded in her lap, carried away by the spectacle of the abounding joy of spring. For the first time in all her youth she felt the joy of life. It fell upon her in waves: it made her faint: it filled her with a new emotion. Shall we ever become too old to remember the joy of life in adolescence—the yearning after we know not what—the happiness of the sunshine, the air, the water, the green trees, the birds—the fullness and the sweetness and the innocence of it—the consciousness of understanding for the first time what life means—how happy it may be—if the gods permit—how glorious and how abundant are Nature's gifts to bless the living? We cannot thus clothe the thoughts of the young with words: youth is hardly conscious of them. I am sure that Isabel could not describe the

emotions that filled her soul. Words are only possible long after the thing itself is over and done with, and possible no longer. We who are old can never again feel that overwhelming, supreme, passionate joy of life; but we can remember—sometimes. When did it fall upon you, dear reader? Like the Wesleyans, let us exchange experiences. Were you alone? Was there a companion to share your passions? Was it on some bright day in early summer among woods and streams and the song of birds that this sense of an all-abundant nature and a life capable of feeling all, embracing all, receiving all, fell upon you, and carried you for a brief space—a space all too brief—beyond yourself?

Her face was flushed, and her eyes were bright, as that was their wont, her hands were tightly clutched, and her lips were parted. She was in a highly nervous condition when we started. Now she looked like one trying to repress some overmastering emotion.

She sprang to her feet. 'Oh!' she cried, 'I must run: I cannot sit still.' She threw out her arms, she was carried away, she was drunk with the new-born joy of life. 'I must sing.' She lifted up her voice, her clear full voice, and sang—and—wonderful to relate—she sang the words of a hymn:

> 'O, God of Hosts, the mighty Lord,
> How lovely is the place,
> Where Thou, enthroned in glory, show'st
> The brightness of Thy face!'

'Isabel!' I cried, 'you are transformed!'

She was: not the finest actress in the whole world could so change herself in a moment of time: not the greatest queen of Tragedy could so stand with outstretched arms, with flaming cheek, and parted lips—as if to welcome and to drink in all—all—all that Nature had wherewith to bless the living. It lasted a moment only. Then her arms dropped and the colour went out of her cheek, and I caught her as she fell, and laid her gently on the grass. I ran down to the river and brought back a hat full of water, and touched her forehead with a few drops. She quickly recovered and sat up.

'Where am I? What has happened?' she cried. 'Oh! what has happened?'

'Nothing serious, Isabel. Keep quite quiet. The heat—or the sun—or the strangeness was too much for you. Perhaps you had better lie back for a little.'

'No—no'—she got up. 'I must have fainted. Why did I faint? Oh! I am so ashamed of myself. I cannot understand why I fainted.'

'Well, Isabel, when an ancient Greek met the great God Pan in the forest, he instantly fell dead. So that you ought not to be surprised that you merely fainted when you first saw great Pan's dominion. Will you rest a little longer?'

'No, I am quite recovered. Let us go on for fear I should faint again.'

So we walked on, through the rest of the park and came out close to the common called Chorley. Here the carriage was waiting for us, and we drove the rest of the way.

Isabel was very silent. She lay back in the carriage looking into the woods as we drove along the road. She was in a mood when the soul needs silence. Had I known that she would be so deeply moved, I think I should have hesitated to bring her to such a place. The mind of a maiden is too delicate an instrument for the rough hand of man. He cannot touch the strings, without fear of something snapping. But her cheek was touched with colour and her eyes with light.

We arrived at Chenies. There is a church here with tombs of the Russells. Isabel took no interest in them. There is an old manor-house, the most beautiful manor-house in England—a gem of a house built of red brick, with creepers all over it and a stately garden; a house to dream of. But Isabel cared nothing at all about the house, and showed no interest or curiosity in the noble House of Russell. There were the ruins of a small Religious House at the back. Isabel took no interest in the monks or nuns, who once lived in this house, nor in the ruins, nor in the little reconstructions of the house which I attempted. But beside the ruins at the back there is a wood, and here we walked in the shade, looking out between the trees at the breadths of sunshine beyond, and up into the branches above at the gleaming sunlight, and between the leaves. She wanted nothing more than just the peace of the wood and the glory of the sunshine.

When I left her at last at her own door: 'We are home again,' she said. 'Thank you, oh! so much. It has come with me all the way home. I hope it will stay with me? Good-night, George.'

What had come with her? I believe she meant the new-born feeling of the beauty and the joy of the world.

## CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS BY NOMINATION.

A VERY large number of posts in the Civil Service are filled by nomination, the appointment of course being made subject to the nominee passing a qualifying examination. Such situations, however, may be offered for competition at the discretion of the head of the department concerned. In this class, which is by no means an unimportant one, we have such appointments as those of prison-warder, postman, storekeeper, and matron, as well as more remunerative situations like those of fishery officer, prison-governor, and vice-consul.

A further class of nomination appointments was provided for by an Order in Council in June 1870, which, while establishing the system of open competition, empowered the Civil Service Commissioners to dispense wholly or partially with examination, on receiving evidence satisfactory to them that the candidate possessed the necessary qualifications. The knowledge and ability deemed requisite are wholly or in part professional, or otherwise peculiar, and not ordinarily to be acquired in the Civil Service. Hence we find such appointments as demonstrator and instructor to the Admiralty, dispenser to the Chelsea Hospital, and trades-warder in

our prisons, made by simple nomination. It is at once seen that it would be neither expedient nor beneficial to fill situations like these by means of either limited or open competition.

In regard to many vacancies, however, the system of limited competition is taken advantage of, candidates being nominated by the heads of the departments in which the vacancies exist. To obtain any situation where nomination is concerned, influence, direct or indirect, is indispensable. The necessary nomination having been secured, the applicant in due course receives notice from the Civil Service Commissioners as to the time and place of examination, the latter being usually in London for all offices in England, Edinburgh for Scotland, and Dublin for Ireland. A considerable period often elapses between the promise of nomination and the day of examination, which of course depends entirely upon the time when the next vacancy in the office occurs. It must be understood that a nomination is not actually made until a vacancy exists. In limited competitions there are usually at least three or four candidates for each post vacant, but the ordeal is on the whole much less severe than when the examinations are open.

One of the most attractive of these limited competitions is that for British Museum assistants. The limits of age are eighteen and twenty, and the examination fee is £4. Right of nomination is vested in the three principal trustees of the museum—namely, the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Speaker of the House of Commons. In addition to the usual subjects of Civil Service examination, candidates are tested in one ancient and in one modern language, and in any other subjects which the trustees may prescribe. These additional scientific or literary subjects vary according to the particular branch of the museum in which the vacancy occurs. On an average there would be from two to four vacancies annually. Second-class assistants receive £120 per annum, which rises to £450, and several assistants receive additional allowances for extra work. In the higher department there are eight assistant-keepers with salaries ranging to £600, and twelve keepers with salaries rising to £750.

Perhaps equally popular situations, and possibly quite as desirable, are clerkships in either House of Parliament. In 1887 the Clerk of the House of Commons, Sir Reginald Palgrave, introduced the system of limited competition. There are usually one or two vacancies annually, and the obligatory part of the examination, besides the usual subjects, embraces Constitutional History and Latin, while the optional subjects include Greek, French, German, and Mathematics, of which subjects the candidate may attempt two only. The examination fee is £6, and the limits of age are nineteen and twenty-five. Clerks between the ages of nineteen and twenty-four, whose parents do not reside in London or the vicinity, must be provided with such a place of residence as shall meet with the approval of the Clerk of the House of Commons. The whole clerical staff in this House numbers thirty-four, and the salaries run from £100, the figure at which a junior begins, to £1000, at which the remuneration of the principal clerk culminates. The staff of clerks in the House of Lords is smaller, but is recruited in a similar way, the only important difference in the examinations being that French is in this case compulsory, Italian taking its place among the optional subjects. In the House of Lords' staff there are eighteen clerks, with salaries running from £100, to that of the chief, who yearly draws £1200. Besides these, many have extra allowances which run from £25 to £450. Vacancies occur but seldom; there has been no appointment made since 1890.

For the situation of paymaster in the navy, the daily rate of pay runs from fourteen to thirty-three shillings. This post is reached through that of assistant-clerk, appointments as such being made by limited competition, with the exception that one candidate is admitted annually on passing a test examination. This candidate is selected by the Board of Admiralty from sons of deserving officers of the navy; all other candidates must be nominated by the First Lord of the Admiralty. Two examinations are held annually; and a fee of £1 is charged. The limits of age are set down as fifteen and seventeen. The test examination includes French and Scripture, while the optional subjects embrace Mathematics, Latin, German, Spanish or Italian, and Elementary Physics. Assistant-clerks get two shillings and sixpence per day, and after one year's service, are rated clerk, on which their pay becomes four shillings. After three years' further service, and on passing a test examination, a clerk becomes assistant-paymaster, when his daily remuneration runs from five to eleven shillings and sixpence.

Before leaving clerkships, we may glance at those of the Foreign Office which are obtained by limited competition. In 1891 it was decided that these appointments should be interchangeable with attachéships in the Diplomatic Service, and the entrance examinations were then made the same. The limits of age are nineteen and twenty-five, and the nomination rests with the Foreign Secretary. The scheme of examination embraces French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Latin, and the History of Europe. In 1892 Shorthand was added by direction of Lord Rosebery, then Foreign Secretary. The examination in modern languages is of a very searching character. Vacancies are few—about four annually—and an examination fee of £6 is demanded. Attachés receive no salary until they serve two years; then they take the place of third secretaries with a salary of £150. Second secretaries receive £300 to £500, while commercial attachés get £1000 to £1300. The prospects of clerks are excellent, for the Diplomatic Service comprises one hundred and thirty-two members, and £1000 is by no means an uncommon salary. There are twenty-six ministers with salaries running from £1250 to £6000, while those of ambassadors vary from £5500 to £9000 a year. It is noteworthy that the British ambassadors now at Washington and Constantinople respectively, commenced their careers as junior clerks in the Foreign Office.

We now come to consider a whole array of inspectorates whose members are admitted by limited competition. The first we may notice

is the Assistant-inspectorship of Mines. The limits of age are twenty-three and thirty-five, and the examination fee is £6. The right of nomination rests with the Home Secretary, and a condition of nomination is that, within five years previous to his appointment, a candidate must have been employed for two years underground in a mine. The principal subject of examination is, of course, theoretical and practical acquaintance with mines and mining. The staff consists of twenty-six assistants, with salaries rising from £300 to £400, and thirteen inspectors, who yearly draw from £600 to £800.

More attractive, because the chances of promotion are trebled, are the Inspectorships of Factories and Workshops. Formerly, persons having no special knowledge of factories were nominated to fill this post, but of late years the appointments have been given to practical men. The chief subjects of examination are a practical acquaintance with factories and workshops, Applied Mechanics, and the Factory and Workshop Acts. About two vacancies occur annually. The limits of age are twenty-one and thirty, but the higher limit is raised to thirty-eight in the case of candidates who have been occupied for seven years in a factory or workshop. Sometimes, as is also the case with Inspectors of Mines, the situations are filled by simple nomination. The staff numbers sixty-nine, and junior inspectors get £200 a year, which rises to £300. First-class inspectors get as much as £500, while there are five sub-inspectors with salaries rising to £700, and one chief-inspector with an income of £1200.

A new class of appointments was established in 1893—that of Assistant-inspector of Factories; and twenty-five of these have since been appointed, while a few vacancies may be expected annually. The subjects of examination are elementary, with the exception that some acquaintance with laws relating to workshops and factories is asked. The limits of age are twenty-one and forty, and the examination fee is ten shillings. The salary commences at £100, and rises by £5 annually to £150.

From inspecting and sub-inspecting mines and factories is an easy transition to assisting to inspect our educational institutions. It is pleasing to note that a very considerable change was recently made in the examination for Assistant-inspectors of Schools. The subjects, beside the usual elementary ones, now include two ancient and two modern languages, and Elementary Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics. The limits of age are twenty-five and thirty-five, and candidates are selected by the Education Department—nomination virtually resting with the chief-inspectors—from among those certified teachers who are in actual service, and who either have been trained for two years and obtained a 'first division,' or are university graduates. The scale of salary is £150 to £300, with prospects of promotion to sub-inspectorships, with incomes rising to £500. There are one hundred and sixty-two assistants in England, and twenty-one in Scotland. There are about seven vacancies annually. Inspectors in England and Scotland are appointed by simple nomination. In Ireland the scheme of examination, which has hitherto been very elaborate, is at present under revision.

Considering the troublous times that Ireland has seen, we must allow that the Inspectors in the Royal Irish Constabulary are an important body of men. The staff numbers two hundred and fifty-nine, and the salaries run from those of third-class district inspectors at £125, to those of county inspectors, which rise to £450. Cadets are trained to fill vacancies—which usually number about eight annually—in this force. The right of nomination is vested in the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland; competitions, however, limited to the sons of constabulary officers, are also held. The limits of age are twenty-one and twenty-six; but if a candidate can show specially qualifying service as an officer in the army or navy, or in a police force, he may be admitted up to the age of twenty-eight. A minimum height of five feet six inches is required. The fee for examination is £2, and the subjects include Latin, French, Elementary Principles of Law, and Law of Evidence. Successful candidates must be provided with an allowance of £50 a year to supplement their pay while under instruction.

An important branch of the service yet remains to be noticed—that of the newly-established body of female typewriters. Those who had hitherto been employed temporarily were in 1894 placed upon the permanent establishment of the Civil Service, and typists are now employed in at least a dozen offices.

Candidates must be nominated by the head of the office in which they wish to serve. The limits of age are eighteen and thirty, and the subjects of examination include a few elementary branches and typewriting. The initial salary is sixteen shillings during the first year, which is spent on probation; then seventeen shillings, rising two shillings a week yearly to twenty-five shillings. A superintendent may be appointed in any office where more than two women are employed; and where more than six are employed, two superintendents may be appointed. A superintendent's salary will rise from twenty-six shillings weekly to thirty shillings, and where more than ten are employed, to thirty-five shillings.

There is no doubt but that this branch of civil employment may yet be very greatly extended. Its rise will be anxiously watched by many, among whom, perhaps, we may reckon the typewriter manufacturers.

## BILLY BINKS—HERO.

### CHAPTER III.

THE week following the visit of the delegate, as just described, was an eventful one. On Monday, our bran-new woolshed, which had been fitted with the latest sheep-shearing machinery, was burned to the ground: on Wednesday, another paddock on the western side of the homestead was fired, and twenty thousand more sheep perished in the flames, while on Thursday, four of our best cows were discovered by one of the overseers hamstrung and dead.

Seeing that matters were growing more and more serious, I got up the best horse we had

on the station, a magnificent animal, as clean bred as Eclipse, standing nearly sixteen hands, and stabled him in a shed adjoining our private kitchen. Here he was kept in continual readiness, for we never knew when we might have to send off to the township for assistance.

In this fashion those long summer days went slowly by. From morning till night we were busily engaged doing the best we could for the stock in the paddocks adjoining the homestead. It was little, however, that we could accomplish even there, while outside a radius of a few miles we were absolutely powerless. The anxiety was awful, and every week the mailman brought us more and more alarming news from other parts of the colony. From him we learned that troops had been ordered up from the capital, and that on two occasions they had been within an ace of coming into actual conflict with the strikers; woolsheds and stations were still being burned in all directions; the piles of two railway bridges had been cut through in hope of destroying the military *en route* to the scene of the worst disturbances; while from another quarter came news that, during her husband's absence from his camp, a non-unionist's wife had been tarred and feathered in broad daylight by some fiends in human shape. Serious rioting had occurred in Charleville and Hughenden, and, it was said, an order had gone forth from the strike executive, in the event of other measures proving futile, to set fire to the country and so burn the squatters out. No one could overestimate the anxiety of the time. At Kalaman we ate our meals with our rifles within reach of our hands, never went beyond the garden fence without revolvers in our belts, while the slightest suspicious noise in the night was sufficient to bring every man out of his bed and into the veranda with his finger on the trigger of his rifle. Those who had wives and children had occasion to be doubly anxious, for who knew what might not happen even in an hour's necessary absence from home. And every day the strain was growing greater. For ourselves the bursting of the storm came even sooner than we expected.

How well I remember that night!

It had been a close sultry day, and as we were all worn out, we went to bed earlier than usual, leaving Jameson, the overseer, on watch. A little before midnight I heard him come along the veranda and tap at my door to let me know that it was my turn to mount guard. I rose accordingly, and having dressed myself, went out into the veranda.

'You've not heard anybody about, I suppose?' I said, as I took possession of the cane chair he had vacated, and propped my rifle against the wall close to my hand.

'Not a soul,' he answered; 'it's all as quiet as the grave. The wind got up a bit about eleven, but it soon died away again, otherwise I've not heard a sound.'

'All right. Now you'd better turn in as soon as you can. Good-night.'

'Good-night,' he answered, and went away to his room.

After he had left me I sat where I was for nearly an hour, thinking over my troubles, then all being quiet I sauntered down the garden path, through the little wicket-gate, and out past the peppermint hedge towards the buildings in the rear of the homestead. It was a lovely night, bright starlight, with not a sound in the air, save a faint wind rustling in the long grass, and a curlew whistling in a waterhole by the creek. I propped myself against a post of the store veranda and lit my pipe. After a while the kitchen clock struck two, and on hearing it, my smoke being finished, I was in the act of returning to the house to call the next sentry, when, to my horror and astonishment, I heard a noise behind the building. Next moment, out of the darkness rode half-a-dozen men. On the thick dust their horses made no noise, and had I not leapt back into the shadow, they must certainly have seen me. As it was, they passed within half-a-dozen paces of where I stood. It took me some moments to collect my senses, but when I did, I saw that there was a man in command, and that he was busily engaged distributing his men at equal distances round the house.

One glance was sufficient to show me the awkwardness of the position in which I was placed. Unless I could manage to creep across the open space between the sentries, and so reach the house to give the alarm, those inside might be captured without having a chance to defend themselves. At any cost I felt I must get in and warn them.

Now, before proceeding further with my story, I must endeavour to explain to you the lie of the country. In front of the house and on two sides was my private garden, at the rear the kitchen, the well, and the stable we had fitted up for the horse mentioned elsewhere. Round all these buildings ran a stout wire fence shaded by luxuriant peppermint trees. Thus to reach the house from the store, where I now stood, I should have to pass over a broad strip of open ground, crawl through the fence, and then cross the garden without exciting attention. To do this I could see would be an exceedingly difficult business.

To right and left of me, seeming to tower up almost to the clouds, were two sentries. I gauged my distance carefully, and then threw myself down flat upon my stomach, and began to wriggle my way between them. Every few yards I was compelled to stop for breath, and then I lay and listened with my whole being in my ears. But the thumping of my own heart, the rattle of their horses' bits, and the faint sighing of the night wind across the plain, were the only sounds I could hear. But what puzzled me most was the enemy's reason for not making some further move. Their inaction frightened me. (It turned out later that they were only the advance guard of a larger body, and were waiting for the others to come up before commencing operations.)

At last, after what seemed an eternity of crawling, I reached the fence and began to wriggle myself between the wires. Their trembling and rattling brought my heart into my mouth more than once, but seemed to attract no attention from those mysterious black masses

sitting so still and silent in the darkness. As soon as I was on the other side, I rested for a few moments in the shelter of the trees, and then, taking advantage of every bush, and quaking with fear every time a twig snapped or a pebble rattled, I resumed my crawl to the house. At last, breathless and exhausted, I stood within the veranda. Still, the enemy showed no sign of action.

As soon as I recovered myself a little, I made my way to the chief overseer's room. He was sleeping placidly, so taking him by the arm, I shook him till he woke, and then poured into his ears the news of the disaster which had befallen us.

'How many of them are there, do you think?' he asked, when I had finished.

'I'm sure I can't say,' I replied, 'but I should think there are at least a dozen round the house and possibly as many more behind. It's a nasty lookout!'

'You don't intend to give the free-men up to them, I suppose?'

'Of course not. The men have stuck by me and I shall stick by them. If we hand them over, God alone knows what will happen to them. No; our best plan would be to put somebody up on the horse and send him off at once to Karabee, as hard as he can go, for the mounted police. They are camped just outside the township, and, though it's nearly forty miles, a good horseman ought to be able to do it in, say, two hours and a half, or at most three hours. If he gets through all right we should have the troopers here by breakfast-time.'

'Until then we ought surely to be able to keep them at bay.'

'You approve of my plan? I'm glad of that. Now whom had we better send?'

'There are only three of us who could possibly go. It would never do to send one of the free hands. He'd be caught and murdered for a certainty on the way.'

'But we can't spare a man. Look here, why not send Billy? I believe the young rascal would prove trustworthy, and there's no doubt he can ride as none of us can.'

'Do you think it is wise to trust so much to so small a boy?'

'I'll give him a note to take. Yes, I believe we can trust Billy.'

'Then let us go and wake him at once.'

Together we went down the passage to the little cubbyhole where Billy had slept since his promotion to the house. He lay curled up in his blankets, like a dormouse in his nest, fast asleep, with the butt of his beloved revolver peeping from beneath his pillow. When we woke him, his surprise was most comical; he sat up, rubbing his eyes and blinking like a young opossum.

'Billy,' I said sternly, as soon as I saw he was sufficiently awake to understand, 'do you think you are to be trusted?'

'I dunno, what for?' replied Billy with his habitual caution.

'To go on the chestnut with a letter to the Inspector of police at Karabee. The unionists are out, and if they catch you they'll skin you alive. If you get through you'll save—well, you'll save the baby's life and ours too. If you don't, we'll all be dead by breakfast-time. Save us, Billy, and I'll give you Gipsey's foal, and anything else you like to ask me.'

Billy hesitated for a moment and then, as if an idea had struck him, said: 'Will yer let me take the baby out for to play by the creek?'

'Yes—you shall take him out.'

'True as ever?'

'True as ever!'

'Then I'll go just as soon as I've got on my trousies.'

'You're not afraid?'

'No, I ain't afeard!'

I helped him to complete his attire, while the overseer went out into the veranda to reconnoitre. As soon as the boy was ready I told him to remain where he was till I called him, and then, with the overseer at my heels, crept softly down the central passage and across the yard to the horse's stable. The noble beast was lying down when we opened the door, but on seeing us he rose to his feet with a scramble.

'Are you aware that they have posted men at both the gates?' asked my companion as he handed me the bridle. 'How on earth will Billy get out?'

'I don't know,' I replied, 'but we'll find a way for him somehow, even if he has to jump the bare wire. We'll bind this brute's feet with flannel and take him through the house to the front veranda; the fence is lower on that side, and the sentries are farther apart. Give me up that girth.'

In less than five minutes we had the horse saddled and ready. His feet were swathed in bandages, so that he made no noise when we brought him out of the stable and took him across the yard to the house. To persuade him to mount the three small steps that led into the back veranda was a matter of some difficulty, but this once accomplished, he walked through the house as if it were the entrance to his own loose box. But in spite of our precautions, his muffled tread was sufficiently loud to do one bit of harm; it roused my wife and brought her with a frightened face to her bedroom door.

'Oh! what is the matter?' she cried on finding the animal almost filling the little passage. 'What are you going to do with that horse?'

'Hush, dear,' I whispered, 'don't speak so loud. The unionists have surrounded the house and I am going to send Billy off to Karabee for the police. Go back into your room, there's a good girl, and keep quiet. Above all, don't show a light.—Now, Jameson, bring Billy here.'

The overseer disappeared in the direction of the boy's room, and I was left alone with the impatient horse, who immediately began to toss his head and to paw the floor as if wondering what on earth this extraordinary conduct might mean. As I have already said, he was a fine animal, quite thoroughbred, standing upwards of sixteen hands, and as fast, if not faster, than anything in the district. Besides this, he was as surefooted as a cat, had the courage of a lion, and could jump like a stag.

In less than a minute Jameson returned with Billy; the free hands who had learned what

had happened accompanied them, and stared at the horse as if they had never seen such an animal before.

'I've changed my mind about the note, Billy,' I said, as the youngster came to my side. 'If they caught you, it would never do for any writing to be found on you, so you must make your way to Karabee as best you can, and as soon as you get there, ask for the Inspector of police. Tell him that Kalaman station has been stuck up by the unionists, and beg him to come over as fast as his troopers can ride. Say we think we can hold out till breakfast-time, but not a minute longer. Now let me hear what message you are going to give him!'

Billy replied after his own fashion, and when he had finished, I opened the front door and led the horse out, across the veranda and down into the garden. Then the bandages were removed from his feet, and he was ready for his journey.

It was not until Billy was about to be hoisted into the saddle that I discovered he had ornamented himself with my best pair of spurs. I did not stop, however, to inquire how he had obtained them, but lifted him up and arranged his stirrup leathers to his satisfaction.

'Now listen to me,' I said. 'The unionists are all round the garden fence and at the gates, so you'll have to be careful how you go. You know that the horse can jump, so you must take him across the tennis-court, and at the fence between the two peppermint trees that were broken last week. Jump at the post, he'll clear it, then head across the plain for the Twenty Mile Crossing. Don't spare him on the way, and remember that you're trusted to-night to save us all. Now go, and God bless you.'

For a moment we had a view of the queer little figure perched like a monkey on the top of the big horse, then there was a wild plunge, a clatter of hoofs upon the garden walk, a rush in the darkness, and next moment a shrill little voice crying 'Over.' This was followed by a rattling of fence-wires, a sudden silence, and then the sound of steady galloping on the plain beyond. This comforting noise, however, was soon drowned in the shouts of the enemy, and one rifle-shot. But Billy, we knew, was well out of danger by this time and riding for our lives and his own to Karabee.

## HIDDEN TREASURE.

Stories of hidden treasures have always possessed a mysterious charm, and held a prominent place in the romance and traditions of most countries. But, unfortunately, in many cases such tales are not only wanting in corroborative proof, but must be regarded as more or less apocryphal, founded on little or no basis of fact. But that all kinds of treasures lie concealed in the strangest and most unobtrusive spots cannot be doubted; especially as, in years gone by, the earth oftentimes was the bank to which owners confided their money and valuables, and it would be impossible to say how much wealth lies hid. Such a practice was only natural when it is remembered how, in consequence of civil commotions, many a home was in danger of being robbed of its most costly belongings. This circumstance would account for the secretion of treasure hoards in buildings, traditions relating to which are associated with many of our old family mansions. According to an entry given by Pepys in his *Diary*, a large amount was supposed to be buried in his day, and he gives an amusing account of the hiding of his own money by his wife and father when the Dutch fleet was supposed to be in the Medway. And a curious old story is told by Thomas of Walsingham, which dates as far back as the fourteenth century. A certain Saracen physician came to Earl Warren to ask permission to kill a dragon which had its den at Bromfield, near Ludlow, and had committed great ravages in the earl's lands. The dragon was overcome, but it transpired that a hoard of gold lay hid in his den. Some men of Herefordshire went by night to dig for the gold, and had just reached it when the retainers of the Earl of Warren captured them and took possession of the money for the earl.

A legend of this kind was long associated with Bransil Castle, a stronghold of great antiquity about two miles from the Herefordshire beacon. The tale goes that it was moated round, and watched over by a black crow—presumed to be an infernal spirit—in charge of a chest of money till discovered by the rightful owner. This chest, it is added, could not be dislodged without the mover being in possession of Lord Beauchamp's bones. Similarly at Hulme Castle, formerly a seat of a branch of the Prestwich family. The hoard was generally supposed to have been hidden either in the hall itself, or in the grounds adjoining, and was said to be protected by spells and incantations. Some years ago the hall was pulled down, but although considerable care was taken to search every spot, no money was discovered. In the same way Stokesay Castle, Shropshire, was reported to be possessed of a chest of treasure secreted in its vaults, but, as is only too often the case, no one has ever succeeded in discovering it. According to a local tradition the chest stands in the vaults still, and no one will ever be able to get possession of the chest till the key is found; and, as it is said in the neighbourhood, 'it never will be found, let folks try as much as they please.' A romantic story is told of Blenkinsopp Castle, which has long been haunted by a 'white lady.' It seems that its owner, Bryan de Blenkinsopp, had an inordinate love of wealth which ultimately wrecked his fortune; for his wife in a fit of anger had a chest of gold concealed that took twelve of the strongest men to lift. Filled with remorse for her undutiful conduct, the spirit of the unhappy woman is supposed to

wander amongst the crumbling ruins of the old castle, mourning over the accursed wealth of which its rightful owner was defrauded.

These treasure-legends differ largely in detail. At Addleborough, Yorkshire, for instance, there is the story of the giant who one day made a vow that he would carry his chest of gold over Addleborough in spite of God or man. But the coffer fell from his shoulders, and forthwith Stainrag rose up and covered it, till some fortunate person shall see a face with the form of a hen and an ape, and without speaking shall draw out the long-buried hoard. Immediately above Churchill is the remarkable encampment of Dolbury, of which a local rhyme as old as Leland's days, makes it the depository of hid treasure, reminding us that:

> If Dolbury digged were
> Of gold should be the share.

In Ireland there are numerous legends of the same sort, and there are few old ruins in and about which excavations have not been made, at some time or another, in the expectation of finding hidden money; in some instances the consequence has been the destruction of the building which has been actually undermined. About three miles south of Cork, near the village of Douglas, is a hill known as Castle Treasure, where 'a crock of gold' of immense value was supposed to be concealed. Much excitement was caused, some years ago, by the discovery of a rudely-formed clay urn, and two or three brazen implements; a circumstance which attracted for many months crowds to the spot. But, according to the popular belief, it is always a very difficult task to exhume such buried treasure, as some uncanny influence generally is experienced. There is an old legend current in County Meath that when the Danes departed, they hid large quantities of gold, still guarded by dogs and cats. There is a tradition that in a little round room in the moat of Diamos are nine kegs of gold guarded against all comers by a black dog as large as a calf, which has a white spot on its side. Whoever, it is said, intends to get the gold must first kill the dog by stabbing it three times in the white spot. Again, on the banks of a northern river, and near a small eminence, writes a correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 'is a beautiful green spot, on which two large moss-covered stones over six hundred feet apart are shown. A local legend says that two huge crocks of gold lie buried under these conspicuous landmarks, and that whenever a persistent effort has been made to dig round and beneath them, a monk has appeared in full habit, carrying a cross in his hand to warn off sacrilegious offenders.' But many of these stories, as it has been observed, vary little in their details, beyond the actors and localities; although, in years past, treasure-hunting has become by reason of them an important business with many of the Irish peasantry.

In the south of Scotland, there has long been a tradition that vast treasures are hidden away beneath the ruins of Hermitage Castle—one of the most famous of the border keeps in the days of its splendour—but as they are supposed to be in the keeping of the Evil One, they are considered beyond redemption. At different times, various efforts have been made to dig for them, yet 'somehow the elements always on such occasions contrived to produce an immense storm of thunder and lightning, and deterred the adventurers from proceeding, otherwise, it is said, the money would long ago have been found.' Scotland has numerous legends of this description, some of which have been incorporated into its popular rhymes. Thus, on a certain farm in the parish of Lesmahagow, from time immemorial there existed a tradition that underneath a very large stone was secreted a vast treasure in the shape of 'a kettleful, a bootful, and a bull-hide full of gold,' all of which have been designated by the peasantry in the neighbourhood, 'Katie Nevie's hoord,' having given rise to the following doggerel:

> Between Dillerhill and Crossford
> There lies Katie Nevie's hoord.

There is a popular notion that underneath Largo Law in Fife there is a very rich mine of gold, which up to the present time has never been properly searched for. So convinced are, or were, the peasantry of the truth of this story, that, whenever the wool of a sheep's side happens to be tinged with yellow, they maintain that it has acquired this colour from having lain above the gold of the mine. There is also a legendary belief that there is concealed at Tamleuchar Cross, in Selkirkshire, a highly valuable treasure, the situation of which is thus described by a popular rhyme:

> Atween the wat grund and the dry
> The gowd o' Tamleuchar doth lie.

For many ages past, a pot of gold is reported to have lain at the bottom of a pool beneath a fall of the rivulet underneath Craufurdland Bridge, about three miles from Kilmarnock. The last attempt made to recover this treasure was by the Laird of Craufurdland himself, who, at the head of a party of his domestics, emptied the pool of its contents by damming up the water, and had heard their instruments clink on the kettle, when a voice was heard saying:

> Pow, pow!
> Craufurdland tower 's in a low.

Whereupon the party left the scene, but the fire was only a scare, and on returning to renew their operations they found the water falling over the linn in full force. According to Dr Chambers, 'a later and well-authenticated effort to recover the treasure was interrupted by a natural occurrence in some respects similar.' But legends of treasures concealed at the bottom of wells are of frequent occurrence; and the 'white ladies' who dwell in the lakes,

wells, and seas of so many countries, are owners of vast treasures, which oftentimes cause many a hazardous enterprise. A local tradition tells us that, in a pool known as Wimhill Pond at Acton, Suffolk, is secreted an iron chest of money, and that if any one throw a stone into the water, it will ring against the chest; a male white figure having been heard on several occasions to cry in accents of distress, 'That's mine!' And a legend current in Shropshire, mentions an old buried well, at the bottom of which is a large hoard, which has long been supposed to lie hidden, or as a local rhyme expresses it:

> Near the brook of Bell
> There is a well
> Which is richer than any man can tell.

Similar legends prevail to a large extent abroad, and 'The Isle of Yellow Sands' derives its chief interest from the traditions and fanciful tales which are related by the Indians concerning its vast hoards of mineral treasures. Its shores, it is said, are covered with a heavy, shining yellow sand, which 'they are persuaded is gold, but that the guardian spirit of the island will not permit any to be carried away.' A great many years ago, it is reported that some sailors, driven by severe stress of weather upon the island, put a large quantity of the glittering treasure in their boats, and attempted to carry it off; but a gigantic spirit strode into the water, and in a tone of thunder peremptorily commanded them to bring it back, or else punishment would overtake them:

> Listen, white man, go not there!
> Unseen spirits stalk the air;
> Ravenous birds their influence lend,
> Snakes defy, and kites defend—
> Touch, then, not the guarded lands
> Of the Isle of Yellow Sands.

Likewise Drake in his *Legends of New England* tells how the fishermen on the Isles of Shoals used to affirm that spirits watched over certain buried treasures on Appledore Island; and Sir Walter Scott says the Buccaneers occasionally killed a Spaniard or a slave, believing that his ghost would haunt the spot, and keep away treasure-hunters:

> Trust not, would his experience say,
> Captain or comrade with your prey,
> But seek some charnel, when at full,
> The moon gilds skeleton and skull;
> There dig, and tomb your precious heap,
> And bid the dead your treasure keep.
> Kill some slave
> Or prisoner on the treasure grave,
> And bid his discontented ghost
> Stalk nightly on his lonely post.

In the same way, the Peruvian Indians have many of these treasure-legends, and maintain that the rich hoards of wealth concealed in emerald mines are specially guarded over by evil spirits; and Stevenson, speaking of the emerald mine in the neighbourhood of Los Esmeraldos, writes: 'I never visited it owing to the superstitious dread of the natives, who assured me it was enchanted, and guarded by a dragon which poured forth thunder and lightning on those who dared to ascend the river.' *The Ceylon Times*, in a paper on the subject, says that 'it is the belief of all Orientals that hidden treasures are under the guardianship of supernatural beings. The Singhalese, however, divide the charge between demons and cobra da capellos. Various charms are resorted to by those who wish to gain the treasures, the demons requiring a sacrifice. Blood of a human being is the most important, but, as far as it is known, the Cappowas have hitherto confined themselves to the sacrifice of a white cock, combining their blood with their own, drawn by a slight puncture in the hand or foot.' Instances of this kind might be easily multiplied, so widespread is the legendary belief in the existence of wealth secreted in the earth; and which only too frequently defies discovery. And yet, as is well known, at one time or another, many an expedition has been organised to recover what must be regarded as treasures of a purely mythical character. Hence, it is no matter of surprise that such searches have been only too frequently undertaken in vain, large sums of money having been thrown away after an utterly bootless enterprise.

On the Continent legends of hidden treasures are equally numerous, and are found under a variety of forms. According to a Danish tradition, at Daugstrup, not far from Viborg, there is a barrow under which a large copper kettle full of money is supposed to be concealed. On one occasion some peasants had nearly succeeded in unearthing this treasure, when one of them forgetting to keep silence let it slip; and, although many efforts have been made to recover it, they have never been attended with success. In digging up such hidden treasure the strictest silence is necessary, for as Oehlenschläger says in his poem of *The Treasure Digger:*

> But if a word thou utter
> It vanishes again.

The little island of Fuur is said to contain vast treasures which, in days gone, were thought to be under fairy guardianship. And even nowadays when the shepherds place their ears to the ground they fancy they can hear invisible beings locking and unlocking the secreted money chests. To quote a further instance, another legend tells how in a valley called Lodal, a light was seen burning every night. It happened that a Holsteiner came to the place, it having been revealed to him in a dream that on the spot where a light was to be seen burning he should dig and find a treasure. Accordingly, he dug and found in the earth a huge copper kettle full of gold, of which he took possession, but from that time the light ceased to burn.

Space will not permit us to do more than allude to a further kind of treasure-legends, whereby all sorts of hidden wealth are said to be revealed at certain periods of the year. Thus Russian traditions tell how at midnight, on the eve of the Epiphany, wondrous treasures are disclosed to certain favoured mortals, a belief which formerly prevailed in this country in connection with Midsummer-day. But ideas of this kind form an extensive field of legendary lore, and deserve to be separately

treated ; the purpose of the present paper having been more especially to enumerate some of the treasure-legends associated with certain localities.

## MY TADPOLES.

It may seem to many a curious taste, but I am quite devoted to frogs, and in the early spring I always try to become the happy possessor of a lump of their spawn. Other members of the household look upon me as a harmless lunatic, call my treasures 'messes,' and there is a tendency on the part of the family nose to turn heavenwards in scorn ; but one gets used to such lack of sympathy in time, and year after year the broad window-sill in my bedroom supports a large bell glass, containing my strange pets.

It was the 25th of March, last year, before I could procure any spawn. But in other seasons I have found it quite a month earlier. At first it is merely an irregular mass of transparent eggs, each one perfectly round and with a black spot in the centre. In about two days the spots lose their circular form, and every day become slightly longer, until it is easy to distinguish the head from the tail ; and in their impatience to taste the joys of freedom, the tadpoles twist and turn quite merrily. By the 4th of April they were free, and then began a startling proof of the statement that Nature never wastes anything, for the newly-escaped babies promptly set to work to eat the jelly which had hitherto formed their cradle. At this stage they are more like animated tea-leaves than anything else. All day long, their tails—I might almost say their whole bodies, for it is hard to decide where the tail begins — are wagging, and all day long the gelatinous mass is becoming less and less ; only at night are they still, and then even the proximity of a lighted candle fails to rouse them. Their breathing is now carried on by means of branchiæ, or external gills like branching whiskers, which are situated on either side behind the head. In about a week one branchia disappears ; I believe every one of my large family —there were about one thousand of them—lost his right whisker first. In some seasons the left has been the first to go, but all the tadpoles in the same piece of spawn seem actuated by the same laws, and what one does, they all do. Two days later, the second branchia vanishes. They do not drop off, but become absorbed into a cavity behind the head which is closed by a flap of skin, and now for the remainder of his tadpole life each little animated tea-leaf breathes with covered gills—ultimately superseded, in the full-grown frog, by lungs.

Strictly speaking, all aquatic specimens should be kept in water as nearly resembling their natural habitat as possible, but tadpoles make their homes in stagnant water which is too strongly scented to be welcomed in a bedroom or sitting-room ; so I provide my children with the kind I should prefer living in myself, and having thus deprived them of countless dainty morsels on which they would naturally fatten, I have to find some substitute, or the tragedy of the Kilkenny cats would be enacted over again. So small pieces of meat are hung over the edge of the glass by means of a piece of cotton, and allowed to rest on the surface of the water where the tadpoles attack it greedily. It can hardly be said that they eat the meat, but they suck away the nourishing part of it and leave only the fine thread-like foundation. I have fed them on various kinds, and found them equally pleased with all except veal. My solitary attempt with the fatted calf was not happy. Perhaps, like ourselves, tadpoles suffer from indigestion. Mine were certainly seriously indisposed after dining on roast veal, and they lay on the water as if their lives had suddenly become a burden to them—some died, and were at once devoured by their more robust comrades.

A wonderful spirit of tidiness seems to pervade the tadpole world. They always eat whatever has become useless—their own eggs, their superfluous companions ; even those who are only weakly are cleared out of the way, and the victims take it all as a matter of course. I have disturbed a strong member of the community just as he had begun to dine off the tail of a weaker brother, but the sufferer has not troubled to escape—he simply waited till the fratricide returned to complete his deadly work. For some time there is no grave change in the tadpoles. They simply grow and become so far transparent that their internal mechanism, which consists of one coil of intestines, is plainly visible. When, however, they are about three months old, a careful observer can distinguish a tiny foot on either side of the base of the tail. These grow slowly, but seem unable to move independently until shortly before the border land is passed which leads to perfect froghood. The hind legs have reached their full size before the front ones appear, and while the feet grow slowly, the hands are ready-made and can be used at once. For a day or two they can be seen under the skin before they venture forth, and their possessor is very restless and excited. He rushes madly about, jostling his comrades and no doubt being voted a bore ; then a more vigorous effort breaks the skin, and the tiny hand and arm appear. There seems some rule about the order of precedence here, as there was when the whiskers went, for this year my tadpoles almost without exception had their right hands some hours before the left, while on previous occasions I have had an entirely left-handed crew.

Now it behoves the tadpole fancier to be vigilant, for almost simultaneously with the acquisition of the second arm, the infant's tail begins to 'dwindle'—I know of no better expression to suit the case. The tail literally grows shorter, and before it has quite disappeared, the tadpole changes his mode of breathing once again and uses lungs ; then, of course, he requires air, and, strange as it may seem, there is nothing which drowns more easily than a young frog. As soon, therefore, as they show the second hand, I catch them and take them to some place where they disport themselves on land or in the water as may seem good to them. It is better to do this than to risk their lives out of curiosity concerning the conclusion of the dwindling process.

Another danger awaits them now, a danger that lies in the increased voracity of their kinsfolk and acquaintance. As soon as any luckless tadpole has four legs, his less forward brethren slay him and suck his composition away, so that my first glance in the morning frequently showed me three or four corpses which had been done to death during the night—they were but shadows of frogs, films with arms and legs, that floated like wan ghosts, and cried to me to avenge their murder. So much of this cannibalism went on that it seemed to me cruel to keep them any longer. Accordingly, one fine morning in August, when there were still about one hundred bipeds left, I carried them off to a shallow pond and washed my hands of them. There the two-legged ones could still remain in the water, while those more precocious were enabled to climb on to something solid, as soon as Nature warned them that henceforth they must be children of earth, and only occasionally return to that other element which had been their nursery.

## OLD SCORES.

### AN EPISODE OF GRAVELOTTE.

By S. Clement Southam.

'Rain!' said the captain, with a grim smile upon his scarred face. 'You call this rain that we have had. Blitzen! You should have been with us at Lauterbach. Ach! That was a night to be remembered; I feel as if I could not get the ache out of my bones yet. We were not seasoned then, and with our bivouac fires barely alive, rain, as though Heaven's windows were opened, and a bitter wind. We sat and shivered and longed for the morning which would, we hoped, bring us food. When morning came, things were not much brighter as we gathered ourselves from the soaked and yielding earth and fell in our places!' The captain took a long and hearty pull at his glass beer-tankard, and puffed complacently at the long and looped Alsatian pipe which hung from under his thick moustache.

The evening sun shone brightly over the great Place Stanislas at Nancy, making the helmets of the German guard at the hotel-de-ville glitter like wood sparks, and tinging rosily the handsome embossed gates and ferny miniature waterfalls.

It was the early summer of the year 1872, and the cafés swarmed with soldiers, a host of different uniforms passing as we sat; the sombre Hanoverian, the green of the Wurtemberger, and the handsome scarlet and silver of the Queen's Hussars, mixed with the blue, dark or light, of the Prussian and Bavarian, and jostled with all the carelessness of conquerors the few French who were passing. As my companion put down his tankard, the sentry's stentorian lungs sang out '*Heraus!*' and in a moment the guard-house was emptied of white-trousered, sturdy-looking fellows, who presented arms as a stern soldierly veteran with a gray moustache rode into the Square, attended by a single aide.

'Manteuffel,' whispered the captain, who had risen from the little white-topped table and stiffened like a military pointer as the general passed and acknowledged his salute. He sat down and rubbed the curious cross scratches which decorated his face, as if the process of tattooing had been commenced and abandoned uncompleted by a peculiarly energetic tribe of Indians.

'You are looking at my scars,' said he, with a grim smile. 'You would like to hear how I gained them? Well, another bock each and I will tell you.

'It was at Gravelotte, in that never-to-be-forgotten August, that we were lying concealed in the Bois des Ognons, ready to carry out the plans of our commander, which, if they had succeeded, would have caught Bazaine in as pretty a trap as was ever set. Under cover of the night our regiment, with others, had occupied this position, while a pretended attack was made in order to induce the French to advance from their strong position at Moscau and St Hubert, so that we might cut them hopelessly off from a retreat to Metz under the shelter of the big guns of St Quentin. The plot failed to draw out the enemy, so Steinmetz, with that old fellow you have just seen riding by, was obliged to carry out the plan they held in case of failure—namely, an attack in force. However, there we lay in the wood, ready for orders to advance, and hoping for nothing short of the triumphal capture of Bazaine and his army. Ach! Well, in these glorious expectations we were then doomed to be disappointed! Suddenly the puff of several field-guns from the Thionville road showed too clearly that the trick was discovered, and shell after shell plumped into the wood, knocking white splinters from the trees and driving us out like a stirred wasps' nest. Concealment was no longer useful, and away we went to join in the general attack.

'Many a time at Heidelberg, when I was a student with little care on my shoulders, I longed to take my place in the war-ranks, but a few hours under arms, with the bits of shrapnel whirring by your ears, and the spinning bullets knocking up the dust around you, alters your views of warfare very considerably, however fond you may be of the sound of the drum. There is many a one, with untarnished name for courage, whose private thoughts have run somewhat in the strain of Schiller's Maximilian:

> Den blut'gen Lorbeer geb' ich hin mit Freuden
> Für's erste Veilchen das der März uns bringt,*

while for no single moment did they think of shirking their duty.

'I don't remember much of the fight. I can call to mind scrambling over some rough uneven ground, with the white puffs of the French chassepots in front, and the ugly little bullets humming by our ears like a swarm of gnats. Now and then a shell would go screaming over our heads, or plunge into the ground, in some cases harmlessly, in others blowing up a small volcano of earth and iron; but luckily the French range was bad, most of the shells

* How gladly would I give the blood-stained laurel
For the first violet of the leafless Spring.
Coleridge's Translation.

pitching some distance behind us and many not exploding from defective fuses. And so our regiment pushed on, leaving a trail of bullet-stricken behind us: you English say that we Germans have no life in us, no "brio" as they say in music, but, my friend, if you had seen the battle-light in German eyes, and the swift rush of a strong attack, you would know that we are not the sleepy automatons we are thought to be.

'One moment I was shouting and scrambling forward, and the next one I was down with my hands fuller of Mother Earth than I usually keep them. I knew well, as I lay there, left behind by the advance, and striving to beat off a faint deadness which crept over me, that a chassepot bullet had lodged in my side, and for a few moments the blue sky seemed to turn round, with the blazing sun above like a wheel of fire. I opened my eyes after a time, feeling horribly sick and glad to lie still, after a single effort to move. Well, the ambulance found me at last, and carried me away; and, as the wound seemed dangerous, though thanks to a good constitution and a clever extraction of the bullet, it afterwards healed very quickly, I was taken to a sort of shed where the bearers laid me down, and hurried off again after they had made a hasty temporary bandage and given me some water. Three or four more German soldiers were stretched there also, lying on a rough litter of straw, but they were either dead or insensible, and the only sound was the long-drawn hissing breath, punctuated with hiccoughs as regularly as clock-ticks, of one shot through the lungs and bleeding inwardly. Outside there was a distant rattle and boom of the fight, but it seemed to belong to a far-off world, and myself and the little knot of compatriots were as if cut off hopelessly from life and motion. I lay half-consciously watching the dancing motes in a long ray of sunlight through the shuttered window, and my thoughts were back in Berlin, when I heard a step at the door and was glad, hoping for a surgeon and better aid.

'But, when I looked up at the intruder, it was no friendly surgeon's face I saw, but that of a lean old hag, stooping over me and gazing intently, while the countless wrinkles on her yellow face worked and quivered like seething metal. Then a skinny claw tightened on my throat, though faint and despairing I strove to call for help and to fight off the deadly weakness that bound me. Her thin hooked nose was thrust forward, and the peaked gray chin muttered and mumbled in some inarticulate sentences, while the deep-sunk eyes under her heavy white eyebrows glowed, or seemed to glow, like a demon's. Suddenly she broke into a low cackling laugh as she drew back her hands from my throat, and watched the feeble efforts I made to beat her off with my poor half-paralysed fingers. Then the other hand raised something slowly in the air, and I saw it to be a small iron fork, such as she might have used while cooking, and her voice grew louder so that I could hear what she was screaming at me in that abominable tongue of hers, which I knew fairly well. "You may be a fine soldier now, beau garçon, but wait until I have those little eyes of yours! You will never see again the beautiful land you are striving to take from us; you will never slay the poor Jean and Jacques because they will not have their country defiled by your invading feet!" Himmelsdonner!' said the captain, wiping the beads of perspiration from his forehead, 'no nightmare was ever so frightful as this old witch of the Brocken, with her yellow wrinkled face shaking with fury, and the awful truth of the impending fate dawning upon me! Ach! I sometimes dream that scene again, but I prefer the "Bullet-squirt" on a dozen battlefields.

'She stood looking at me a moment while I faintly called for help and drew my half-useless arm over my face, then down came the fork, but it struck into the sleeve of my tunic. Then she seemed mad, and, screaming with fury, she struck again and again, tearing my cheek and forehead with these lines which I shall carry until the fifes play the funeral march over me. With one hand striving to tear my arm away, and the other clutching her diabolical weapon, she exerted all her strength; but the frenzy of despair seemed to nerve me afresh, and, though my face was ploughed in many a furrow, she had not reached my eyes. It was only, I suppose, a moment's struggle, probably not a tenth part of the time I take to tell it, and then the sickness crept over me again, when, as I felt my arm relax and it was wrested away from my face, something fell over me, a warm stream flowing on my upturned hands, and then—nothing more, that I can remember, until I found myself lifted up and life and sense coming drifting back under the aid of a soldier's canteen.

'Dark-blue uniforms bent over me, and faces black with the soil of battle, but kindly enough. One was just slipping a cartridge into his rifle, while another supported my head on his shoulder and wiped the blood from my face. "Just in time," said the soldier, as he laid me down again, and they flung the corpse among the straw; "it was the mercy of Heaven we came up when we did. Ach! the witch! What an escape!" And so you see, my friend,' said the captain with a smile, as he rose from his seat and tucked his scabbard under his arm, 'my Old Scores were not very old before they were paid off, were they?'*

## THE VALUE OF A SLAVE.

We are indebted to the courtesy of a correspondent for the following relic of slave-owning days, in the shape of an 'Inventory and appraisement of all and singularly the goods and chattels, rights and credits of C—— H——, late of the parish of Vere, Esquire, deceased.' In looking over some family papers, this last will and testament of a Jamaica landowner turned up, along with the inventory. The will is dated 9th September 1805, and the value of the whole estate was somewhat over thirty thousand pounds. Our correspondent says: 'I read with a curious interest the following long list of slaves, male and female, and their

* A woman was actually hanged, during the war, for perpetrating a similar outrage upon a Bavarian officer.

appraised values. I think it not unlikely that other people may do the same, thankful likewise that the day of such things has gone by. It is strange and distressing to us to think of our fellow-creatures having been inventoried along with such subjects, as fifty-six cows at twenty-five pounds each; a chaise, forty pounds; nineteen mares at twenty pounds each; two old looking-glasses (not valued); a quantity of Guinea corn to feed negroes (not valued), with silver table and tea-spoons.' The total value of nearly one hundred male and female slaves comes out at something like eight thousand pounds. We have not space for the complete list, but quote some specimens of the names and value, which range from five pounds for a year-old child, to two hundred pounds for a healthy slave in his prime.

| Male Slaves. | Age. | Value. |
|---|---|---|
| John White | 26 | £200 |
| Frank | 23 | 160 |
| Johnny | 26 | 130 |
| W. Crow | 42 | 100 |
| Hannibal | 48 | 80 |
| Cæsar | 40 | 80 |
| Cato (deformed) | 24 | 50 |
| Colin (blind) | 24 | ... |
| London (runaway) | 43 | ... |
| Captain | 3 | 40 |
| Cadzoe | 3 | 30 |
| Tom | 2 | 10 |
| Hannah's Edward | 1 | 5 |
| **Female Slaves.** | | |
| Dolly | 25 | £135 |
| Quashiba | 19 | 130 |
| Rosetta | 17 | 130 |
| Daphne | 25 | 125 |
| Long Charlotte | 44 | 80 |
| Beniba | 29 | 80 |
| Penny | 31 | 75 |
| Nelly | 4 | 50 |
| Chance | 27 | 40 |
| Priscilla | 4 | 30 |
| Bell | 4 | 30 |
| Delia | 3 | 20 |
| Eliza | 1 | 10 |

When the slave-trade was in full swing, it was a common thing for merchants on the west coast of Africa to purchase a cargo of rum and tobacco and give slaves in exchange. The price of a prime slave when Mungo Park was amongst the Mandingoes was from nine to twelve minikallies, the equivalent of one minikalli being something like the following: eighteen gun-flints, forty-eight leaves of tobacco, twenty charges of gunpowder, and a cutlass. Dr Livingstone, than whom no explorer did more to expose the ravages of the slave-raider, says he never knew of an African parent selling his own offspring. When on his first great missionary journey he relates how, in a foray amongst the Makololo, thirty captives were given in exchange for three English muskets. Livingstone is especially severe on the Boers for looting his mission station in 1852, killing many of the Bakwains, and driving nearly two hundred of his mission children into slavery. The Boers, by so retarding his work, and making him uncomfortable at Kolobeng, helped to decide him to move northward, a decision upon which hung the future of modern African progress. Captain Lugard reminds us that slaves are still sometimes employed to coal our men-of-war off Zanzibar, and that our commercial returns from West Africa largely depend upon an illegal traffic in arms and spirits; the guns of the slave-raiders in the far interior being mostly of British manufacture.

Sir H. H. Johnston, in his latest report of three years' administration of British Central Africa, said that the centre of the continent was being depopulated for the benefit of the east coast region, and that about a thousand slaves were smuggled through annually for the coast plantations. For the benefit of Africa, sooner or later the Arab must go, and the sooner the better; and the severe blow inflicted by the forces of the British Central African Protectorate, early this year, upon slave-raiding chiefs near Lake Nyassa, it is hoped will be the death-blow to slave-raiding in that locality.

## TO SWALLOWS.

Thrice welcome, swallows swift upon the wing,
Fleet heralds of bright days and coming mirth,
When lavish Summer from her lap shall fling
Red rain of roses on the grateful earth!

In days bygone men held your coming dear,
And deemed you children's spirits from the dead
Come back beloved and loving year by year,
Unto the homes whence first your souls had fled.

And as ye hovered round the rustic thatch,
Fond ears did listen to your twittering sweet—
Ears that had yearned—ah! many a time—to catch
The well-known patter of departed feet.

Resting upon his scythe, the toil-worn swain
Would pause awhile to mark your wheeling flight;
And Mem'ry's ear was quick to catch again
Your merry mingling shouts of mad delight.

The mother's eyes grew moist as round each spot,
Endeared by tender ties, ye circling flew:
It soothed her grief to think ye ne'er forgot
The once familiar scenes your childhood knew.

'"Twas there,' she mused, 'their tiny hands did weave
The fragrant cowslip ball, the daisy chain:
'Twas there they wondering watched at silent eve
The glow-worm light his lantern in the lane.'

Each night they sought their rest, well pleased to know
Their darlings 'neath the thatch were nestling near:
Fond Love their lot did ease of half its woe,
And Sympathy aye sweetened Sorrow's tear.

Then welcome, swallows, to my homely walls!
Tidings of comfort to our sires ye told;
And still to me your coming now recalls
Like memories to those it brought of old.

For many a well-loved child my dreams have bred,
Whom young Ambition did of Hope beget;
And some are dying now—some long since dead,
With you, sweet birds, return and greet me yet.

Will Hill.

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## BIRD-CATCHING IN HELIGOLAND.

By John Cordeaux, M.B.O.U.

The island of Heligoland lies in the same latitude and two hundred and eighty-five miles east of Flamborough Head, forty miles from Cuxhaven and the mouth of the Elbe, and thirty from the coast of Sleswick-Holstein. Until its cession to Germany in 1890 it was the smallest dependency of the British crown. In case of a European war the island never could have been valuable to England, but on the other hand, its possession is an immense advantage to Germany, serving as a marine outpost to watch the entrances to the Elbe and Weser. When under the English rule, half-a-dozen coastguards did duty as garrison; now large barracks have been erected on the Oberland, and the plateau bristles with heavy guns.

The main island is one mile in length and two-thirds of a mile broad, with an area of about one hundred acres. The superficial extent may be estimated when we say it would be impossible to find room anywhere on the Oberland for a cricket pitch without the risk of an occasional far-driven ball skipping over the edge of the high cliffs of red sandstone into the sea. Some portion of the Oberland, or plateau, is covered with houses and very charming gardens, but the main town is below the cliff on the beach or Unterland. The population is about two thousand, with the addition of another two thousand visitors for the sea-bathing in the summer months. There is no cow on Heligoland, and up to the German occupation no horse had ever been seen there. So great, indeed, was the sensation amongst the primitive people when the Prussian engineers brought over some dray-horses to shift their big guns, that the school children, on the mere rumour of their landing, became unmanageable and broke away 'helter-skelter' to see the marvellous beasts. The produce of the island chiefly consists of potatoes grown on the Oberland, and some small plots of rye and barley, and there is grazing for a few tethered goats.

The great interest of Heligoland consists in the fact that it is, from an ornithological point of view, literally without a rival in the world. For its sea-girt cliffs lie directly in the line of the great migratory stream of countless birds which in the autumn pass from their northern breeding stations to seek the lands of the deathless summer, again to commence their journey northwards with the first breath of early spring. This bird movement in its flow and ebb assumes enormous proportions, and is continued from day to day, week to week, and month after month, so that with the exception perhaps of June, between the ebb and flow, there is no other month in the year when birds are not, with favourable meteorological conditions, on the move.

It may be readily understood then that, on a beefless and muttonless island, where every necessity and luxury must be brought from the mainland, what an immense importance to the islanders becomes the capture of the migrating birds which pass that way. And certainly we can testify in no other spot in the world is more attention given, or more ingenuity displayed, in the outwitting of the feathered hosts —guns, nets, snares, gins, catapults, and all possible devices, being brought into play. Fortunately for our knowledge of Heligoland and its bird wonders, there has been resident there for more than half a century one of the most eminent and painstaking naturalists in Europe—Heinrich Gätke; and in 1891 his great work on the *Birds of Heligoland* was brought out in German at Brunswick. This was subsequently followed in 1895 by the English edition,* which may fairly be considered the most important contribution in the present century to our knowledge of the path of the bird in the air. It is

* *Heligoland as an Ornithological Observatory: The Results of Fifty Years' Experience*, by Heinrich Gätke. Translated by Rudolph Rosenstock, M.A., Oxon. (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 10 Castle Street, 1895.)

from this splendid work and our own personal knowledge of the island that the materials have been brought together for this paper.

Some idea may be formed of the marvellous number of birds occasionally captured, from the fact, which Mr Gätke permitted me to copy from his journal on my first visit there, that on the evening of November 6, 1868, at the lighthouse up to 9.30 P.M. three thousand four hundred larks were caught beating and fluttering against the glass of the lantern; of these Mr Gätke himself took four hundred and forty with his own hand. The same evening, and in the same time, eleven thousand six hundred were taken with nets, lanterns, &c., within the zone of light below the lighthouse. A grand total of fifteen thousand larks in a few hours!

Much the largest number of captures, more especially of the thrushes, are made with a contrivance known as a 'trossel-goard'—literally a 'throstle-garden.' 'Throstle-bush' is more applicable to the structure, but there is no word in the Heligoland vocabulary to represent 'bush'—every form of growth, from the forest tree to a plant in a pot is 'boamen,' that is, trees. There are about twenty of these throstle bushes on the island. These may be either natural or artificial. The first, a slip or narrow belt of thorns and other shrubs growing in a garden. Usually, however, they are artificially constructed with a mass of thorns and sticks placed upright. At the highest and most open and exposed part of the island I once examined six of these constructions, a collection of thorns, bushes, and long sticks, ten to twelve feet high and perpendicular in front, and those in the rear inclined to them at an angle enclosing a space of brushwood with a twenty-foot front and six to eight feet wide at the base, gradually thinning off to the top. The east side, from which the birds come, is left open; the far side, top and flanks, is covered with a light net which extends to within a foot of the ground, and is there fastened to small upright stakes; from these extends horizontally the ground-net, forming an extensive semicircle round the far sides and flanks of the bush, and gradually nearing the surface till it rests loosely on the soil, six feet from the base of the construction. It is essential that 'throstle-gardens' should be visible to migrants at some distance, and that there is nothing which might impede the headlong rush of the birds towards the open and unnetted side.

Mr Gätke says, the arrival of the thrushes at early dawn is marked by a peculiar buzzing sound; the birds shooting down from a great height with an almost perpendicular descent, and so extremely rapid is this downrush that it only becomes visible to the eye as the birds slacken speed near the ground. During a strong migration, thrushes at early dawn will 'buzz,' with the speed of an arrow, through the narrow streets and precipitate themselves into the shrubs and throstle bushes. The greatest speed of the birds during the day is as nothing when compared to this early morning flight, which probably represents the last spurt of the migratory journey. Once within the false shelter of the throstle-bush, and the capture of the unfortunate victims is assured. They are driven forward by the beating of a stick, and at night by the additional glare of a large lantern, and finding egress barred on the far side, flutter downwards to pass beneath the horizontal ground-net from which there is no escape. These shelter-decoys are very effective, and immense numbers of migrants—even gray crows, sparrow-hawks, woodcocks, and often owls—are captured from time to time.

The Heligolandish fowlers draw a marked distinction between the habits of the blackbird and thrush. They say of the former, 'a very sensible bird which allows itself to be driven to the throstle-bush without much fuss.' A blackbird when on the ground, on being approached, will hop towards a throstle-bush, quickly in long leaps and frequent pauses; on the other hand, a thrush will sit still and at last fly vertically upwards and over the bush. The capture of thrushes was formerly a very lucrative employment, but in recent years (Mr Gätke thinks through meteorological changes) the take has greatly fallen off. Formerly a well-known fowler used to catch five or six hundred in a day, and once he caught a thousand in a day. At the present time a hundred is considered a good take.

The ring-ousel is always a great prize amongst the local fowlers, for they are invariably fat and in high condition during the autumn migration. Should a single ring-ousel get into the throstle-bush, its call will lure the members of any flock of its species which may be on the wing. On one occasion it was the good fortune of a fowler to take seventy-three of these splendid birds in one 'rush.' Usually ten or twelve would be considered an enviable catch.

The redwing is rarely taken in a 'throstle-bush,' seldom approaching one, the flocks resorting to more open situations. The same applies to the fieldfare, which only enters the bush under very exceptional circumstances, as when belated at night.

To Heligoland gunners the woodcock is an object of the greatest interest, and during his migration all other fowl are neglected. Woodcocks cross Heligoland in great numbers in the spring and autumn—and in the latter season, when woodcock are in flight, in the early gray of morning, the constant pop-pop of guns at the foot of the cliffs resembles a line of skirmishers defending their island home. It is on record that on the 21st of October

1823 the number caught and shot exceeded eleven hundred; eighty-three falling to one gun, and a certain Hans Prohl shot ninety-nine, failing to bring down his hundredth bird. When mentioning these exploits, it must be borne in mind that the guns used in those days by the Heligoland gunners were ancient infantry, flint and steel muskets fished up, after months of submergence in salt water, from the wreck of a Dutch vessel—the bowl of a clay-pipe being measure for both powder and shot. On October 16, 1861, about six hundred woodcocks were caught or shot, and bags of from two to three hundred have frequently been known for one day's shooting. Once in the spring, on a Good-Friday, seventy-four were shot by a young pilot.

Woodcocks have occasionally been taken in 'throstle-bushes,' and many are snared in large nets specially constructed for that purpose. These nets are from thirty-six to seventy-two feet in length, and twenty-four feet high, with two and a half inch mesh, so that a cock in full flight may readily get his head and neck through. The nets are made of strong gray thread, and hung on two poles in some opening between trees or buildings; there are two running blocks and a cord which the fowler holds; the net is weighted heavily at its upper corners to make it fall readily; and when a bird strikes, the net is instantly slipped, and it rarely happens the victim escapes. On the 15th of October 1859, a considerable flight of that small and pretty northern owl, called Tengmalm's owl, visited the island, and in hopes of capturing specimens, a woodcock net was hoisted in the dusk, but these owls fly so cautiously and see so keenly that the device was useless. There are ten or twelve woodcock nets in use on the island, on each of which is a tax of five marks.

Woodcocks on migration not only settle on the bare level upper plateau, but great numbers on the shingle at the base of the cliffs, and on ledges and slight projections at all heights on the cliff face. The story is told of a gunner, who, getting the heads of two woodcocks in line on the lower rocks, discharged his piece and found to his great joy he had killed four. Golden and grayplover are shot crossing the upper plateau and also on the Dune or Sand Island, being lured within shot without difficulty by the plover whistle.

In the early autumn enormous numbers of wheatears arrive on their passage south. The first—and this holds good amongst all the migrants—are young birds of the year. This last autumn in September the plateau was covered with these lively little visitors, or the remains of such as had been killed by hungry hawks on passage at the same time. The wheatears are caught in great numbers for the tables of the visitors who come for sea-bathing. A simple draw-net is employed. A small hillock being first erected five feet long and eight to ten inches high—parallel to this the net is placed, and by means of a line jerked over the hillock. Sometimes a colony of ants is introduced into the mound and forms an excellent bait. During a very strong migration the produce of a net may amount to five or ten score. On perfectly dark gloomy nights, when there is a heavy migration of larks and other migrants flying low near the surface, the whole island is astir, men and boys sallying forth with lanterns and a sort of big landing-net. As soon, however, as the very faintest indication of light appears from the rising moon, or a single star pierces the gloom, the vast migration flight ceases, the birds rising and passing forward at a high altitude.

There are other simpler means of fowling than any we have mentioned. On a pitch-dark night, moonless and starless, a man armed only with a stick and a large lantern will go forth on the plateau, traversing to and fro in the hope of being able to knock some belated wayfarers on the head, and by this means replenish his soup pot. Out of the millions of gray crows which in the autumn cross Heligoland by an east to west route, few ever remain the night, but it will sometimes happen that a late flock, not caring to face the darkness, after flying two or three times round the plateau, will alight and stay the night. I have a note that on October 14, 1887, a Heligolander went to the north point of the island with lantern and cudgel, and killed seventy-five hooded crows roosting on the grass. Mr Gätke mentions a case where a resident killed one hundred and eighty-four of these rascals in the same manner.

What do the Heligolanders do with their birds? Some are sent away to the Hamburg market, and the rest kept for home consumption. Roasting before a slow fire, with the trail on, over toast, is practically an unknown art, or at least one rarely practised. Everything goes into the pot for soup. 'Trossel-soup' is an institution much lauded. Mr Gätke tells us how it should be prepared. Take care to commit some forty or fifty thrushes, according to the requirements of the family, to the soup pot, and do not have the fattest birds drawn; and if the cook is a true artist, no one will fail to ask a second helping. A favourite Heligoland dish is Kittiwake pie. In November and December these gulls are very fat, and when prepared in Heligolandish fashion are considered a delicacy, although a somewhat fishy one. The gray crow is also a very favourite dish. Nothing strikes a visitor to the island in autumn more than the astonishing number of gray crows which pass over between the end of September and the close of November by an east to west route. A mere fraction of these vast hosts remain to winter in our eastern counties, but where do the remainder go? And more wonderful: Where do they all come from? Drawn together by some mysterious instinct from the confines of Europe and beyond? On the night of October 17th, or early morning of the 18th, last autumn, there was a large arrival on the east coast of Lincolnshire; and I noticed amongst these many having the pale slate-gray almost white, or very much lighter than the ordinary

crow immigrants. This was suggestive of an arrival from beyond the Urals from Western Siberia, and perhaps even the western boundary of Persia.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XI.—LOVE, THE TRAITOR.

In that way began the companionship that has changed the whole of my life and Isabel's life as well—you shall hear how.

My lessons in the study of Nature and Humanity were continued during the months of June and July. On Saturdays we went afield—to Hampton, to Richmond, to Dulwich, to Sydenham, to Loughton, to Chigwell, to Theydon Bois, to Chingford, to St Albans—wherever there are trees and gardens to be seen. Or we went up the river to Maidenhead, Bray, Windsor, Weybridge: or down the river to Greenwich. On Sunday morning I took her generally to Westminster, where she heard the silver voices of the choir ringing in the roof, while we sat in a corner of the transept beside the tombs. At such a time I would watch her and mark how her spirit was rapt and carried away. When the music ceased, we would get up and go out and seek the peaceful cloister, cool and shady, on the south side of the church, and there sit together, mostly in silence.

Let me make a clean breast of it. Not that I am penitent, but quite the contrary. I ought, I suppose, to have discontinued these little expeditions as soon as I learned what was coming out of them. That would be the line adopted by the Sage of seventy springs. I had only five-and-twenty. Moreover, it is very difficult to say when friendship is transformed into love: the young man goes on: the companionship, always delightful, becomes too delightful to give up: the companion creeps into his heart and remains there until one day he awakes to the consciousness that life without that companion will henceforth be intolerable.

But we entered upon the thing loyally: we had no thought of any danger: then, no one interfered with us: we went where we pleased. I began with thinking about Isabel when I ought to have been considering the lines of a boat: I began to think how she looked: what she said: her face haunted me: her sweet soft face, full of purity, grace, and every womanly virtue: her eyes, her deep and limpid eyes, wells of holy thoughts, charged with goodness: her voice—the tones of her voice—which had become to me the sweetest music in the world. I dreamed of these things at night—I thought of them all day: long before I understood what had happened to me: long before Isabel suspected anything. The last thing indeed which the maiden feared or suspected was the thing that happened. She was engaged to Robert: and I was Robert's cousin: and by Robert's permission I was showing her the world. Even a girl who knows the ways of the world, and especially the treacherous, villainous, deceptive ways of young men, and would be therefore suspicious in such a case, might have thought that there was some security in common loyalty and friendship. But Isabel had no knowledge of the world, and no experience of young men, and consequently no suspicion.

The end—I mean the end of unsuspecting confidence—arrived unexpectedly. It came one evening, about the middle of July and at sunset. We were sitting in the place where I had taken Isabel first, the park near Rickmansworth. She sang hymns no more: nor did she faint at beholding the splendour and the glory of the world; but she sat in silence, gazing upon the western glow in the sky and on the flowing river at her feet where the glow was reflected.

Could this glorious creature be the pale and drooping maiden whom I brought here six weeks before? Now she sat upright, cheeks glowing, eyes uplifted, limpid and lovely eyes, with rounded figure and head erect, a girl full of life and of the joy of youth.

'The summer is nearly gone,' she said. 'So there is no need for any more evenings abroad. Now I suppose I must make up my mind to go back to Wapping, and to stay there. Well, I have a very happy time to remember.'

'Indeed, you shall not, Isabel, if I can help it. Go back to the old life? Not if I have any voice in the matter. Besides, the clouds are not all gone. There is one that falls on you quite suddenly, and sometimes lies upon you for an hour or more. Why, it has fallen now. You cloud over suddenly, Isabel. It is some thought that comes to you uninvited. Your face must be all sunshine or all cloud. Never was such a tell-tale face.'

She blushed, but the cloud lay there still.

'What is it, Isabel? What is this cloud? Is it anything that I can remove?'

'No one can remove it,' she said.

'Is it anything—but I have no right to ask. Only, Isabel, if you like to tell me, I might advise.'

She remained silent, but the tears gathered in her eyes.

'Tell me, Isabel,' I pressed her. 'I asked you once before in the old burial-ground.'

'I do not dare. I am ashamed. You will think me the most ungrateful of women if I tell you.'

'Then tell me and let me scold you.'

'It is because of that promise.'

Then the scales fell from my eyes, and I understood the cloud. It was the terror of that promise. 'And you, Isabel, you do not want to marry him?'

'Oh, he has been so good. I have told you—we owe everything to him—I am bound to him by chains—and yet—yet, oh George. I am telling you everything. I am ashamed—yet I must tell some one, because sometimes I think I shall go mad; it weighs me down night and day.'

'Then you must yourself break off your engagement.'

'No, no. I cannot. You forget, George, that we are his dependents, my father and I, both of us. I must do what Robert wishes—all that Robert wishes.'

I groaned.

'And now you know the meaning of the

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cloud. I am only happy when I can forget my own future. And all your kindness is thrown away, because the thought of my own future never leaves me altogether—even with you.'

And then it was that I quite lost my self-control.

'Oh Isabel!' I cried. 'You shall not marry him. Oh! my love—my love—you shall not marry him.'

I took her hands. She cried out and sprang to her feet. I threw my arms round her and kissed her, being carried quite beyond my own control. And I told her in words that I cannot, dare not, set down here for the world to see all that was lying in my heart.

She pushed me from her, and sank back upon the fallen tree on which she had been sitting, and buried her face in her hands.

'Isabel!' I whispered, 'Isabel! if you can love me!'

She gave me her hand. 'Let me hear it once—and say it once, for the first time and the last. Oh George—and I did not know it.'

I kissed her again and again. It makes my heart leap up still only to think of that moment.

Then she stood up. 'It is the first time and the last, George,' she said. 'I am engaged to your cousin Robert.'

'Yes, Isabel.'

'Now we will go home. We will not forget this evening, George. I thank God—yes, I thank God we have told each other. Now I shall feel, whatever happens, that I have been loved—even I, whose promised husband scorns me.' Her voice broke into a sob. 'But we must never, never again speak of it. Never, never. You have loved me for a little, and that is enough for me—to gladden all my life. Even I have been loved—even I'——

I made no reply, because I was fully resolved, you see, somehow to speak of it again. In fact, I felt that it was impossible to consider any other future than one in which the subject would always form the chief topic of conversation.

'Give me your promise, George,' she went on. 'Promise that you will never speak to me of love again.'

'I promise, Isabel, that I will never again speak to you of love until Robert himself has set you free. Will that do?'

(*To be continued.*)

## WANDERING NEEDLES.

It used formerly to be supposed that when a foreign body—no matter what—became lodged in a person's tissues Nature resented its presence, and proceeded at once to do her utmost to cast it off. The means by which she attempted to carry out this purpose was by the formation of an abscess, so it was believed. But the light of modern science has shown that the assumption in this respect was scarcely correct. We now know that Nature is quite complacent in the matter, provided that the foreign body is free from micro-organisms, or to use a technical expression, is 'sterile.' A rusty nail, for example, thrust deep into the sole of the foot would be quite harmless in its effects were it to contain no micro-organisms on its surface. Again, many bullets have found a resting-place in the bones and tissues of soldiers, where for years and years they have remained without causing harm, merely because they were sterile when they entered the body. Moreover, numerous curious instances could be given of the location of foreign substances in the tissues which, for the same reason, have never caused the least disturbance. Perhaps, however, nothing is more striking in this connection than the wondrous records which exist in regard to needles. In surgery, needles have quite an established reputation for performing marvellous feats in the human body.

Needles display great propensity for travelling when they enter the body. If, for example, an ordinary sewing-needle, or a portion of it, happens to be thrust into, say, the hand, and for some reason no effort is made at the time to extract it, there is no saying when or where the little piece of steel will next be seen. In the majority of cases it starts on a voyage of discovery, which may ultimately prove to be a long course of travelling. In its quiet unobtrusive way it passes along in the substance of the soft tissues without exciting any ill effect. Then after a longer or shorter interval as the case may be, just like a traveller weary of strange scenes and longing to return once more to his native haunts, the needle at length makes its way to the surface of the skin, and when everything concerning it has almost been forgotten, it reappears to the amazement of its host. As it approaches the skin it causes a pricking sensation which leads to its detection. The attendance of the surgeon is required in order to extract it, and as with the traveller who returns with a bronzed complexion after a long journey in a tropical climate, so with the needle. It entered the tissues with its surface polished, bright and reflecting. On the other hand, after its extraction it is seen to have lost all its lustre, is stained, blackened, and more or less rough. But needles do not always travel in the body. Sometimes they appear to be quite satisfied to remain in one spot, namely that at which they originally entered the tissues. In this connection, perhaps, I may refer to the following instance. A young girl of seventeen years of age was admitted into a country infirmary. She came with the history that four years previously she had run a needle into her right knee while kneeling on a hearth-rug. She persisted in this statement, but careful examination altogether failed to detect the slightest indication of the presence of a foreign body. She was, however, so positive in her assertion that pressure on a particular spot over her knee caused her pain and that she could feel the point of the needle, that ultimately the house surgeon was convinced, and he was successful in persuading the visiting surgeon to make an attempt at the removal of the foreign body. Accordingly, under an anæsthetic an incision was made over the tissues of the knee, with the result that nothing could be felt or seen. The incision was made deeper, still without result. At this precise moment another member of the

visiting staff appeared, took in the situation at a glance, hurriedly remarked, 'Take care you don't go into the knee-joint,' and presumably in fear lest he should be present at such a misfortune, precipitately retired from the scene. After, however, the surgeon had been reassured, he divided the tissues still further, and then, at last, lying almost upon the capsule of the joint, in a transverse position, the needle was found, and, with some little difficulty, extracted. The wound healed without a bad symptom, and in the course of a few days the girl left the infirmary quite well. As she was a domestic servant, and had not previously been able to follow her employment in consequence of the needle hurting her when she knelt, it was obvious that the result of the operation from her point of view was eminently satisfactory. The above case is a good example of the difficulties which may arise in connection with the detection of needles which have become located in the tissues.

In one of the medical journals a surgeon recorded some years ago a strange instance of the wanderings of a needle in a lady. The patient called upon him, stating that the greater portion of an ordinary sewing-needle had broken in the first joint of her left thumb. The surgeon could plainly feel the needle point, but after ineffectual attempts at the extraction of the foreign body, he recommended that nothing further should be done, lest the attempts to remove it might result in greater injury to the joint. About a year afterwards, however, the patient called upon him to inform him that a day or two previously she had felt a pricking sensation in the right forefinger, and having broken the skin, she without difficulty extracted the portion of the lost needle from the point of the finger. If all these facts be correct, as reported, the needle travelled from the left thumb along the arm, across the chest to the right arm, and down the latter to the finger where it was extracted.

The following is a well-authenticated case of a similar kind. A man was stabbed in the back of the right shoulder with a hat-pin, such as women use. The pin broke when the blow was inflicted, and only the head with the upper part could subsequently be found. The man suffered no inconvenience from the injury, and this being the case, he thought no more of the matter. However, some months afterwards he suffered a good deal from pain in his right shoulder, and this was ascribed to rheumatism. But no relief followed the treatment adopted, and it was not until some weeks had elapsed that the symptoms entirely passed away. In the course of time he noticed a long hard substance under the skin in the region of the lower part of the breast-bone which puzzled him greatly. Suddenly he chanced to think of the stab with the pin, which he had received about twelve months previously, and then it occurred to him that the hard substance was the missing portion of the pin. He obtained the services of a surgeon, who cut down upon the foreign body and found it to be exactly as the man had supposed. The portion of the pin extracted was two inches and five-eighths in length, and slightly bent in the middle.

Nothing is easier than to explain how it is that needles can travel about in the body and remain there for long periods without the tissues resenting their presence. The explanation is that at the time of their entrance into the body the foreign bodies were free from micro-organisms, that is, sterile. The smooth polished surface of a needle, and the cleanly uses to which the little appliance is put, undoubtedly favour its freedom from microbic contamination. Why the needle should travel by the route it sometimes chooses is less easily explained. The fact that substances introduced in a sterile condition into the body are tolerated by the tissues is one of which surgeons have freely taken advantage. Indeed, a good deal of the success of surgical procedures in the present day depends upon it. One of the most notable instances in which it proves of use is in that relating to the employment of ligatures. Arteries are now tied with sterilised silk, and the ends of the ligature cut off short; of course, silk is a foreign substance which cannot undergo absorption, but no fear need be felt that the ligatures left in a wound will cause any subsequent trouble. Nature surrounds them with newly formed tissue; in other words, they become 'encysted,' and there the matter ends. Again, silver wire is used to unite fragments of bone, as, for example, in cases of fracture of the patella. The wire sutures are allowed to remain *in situ*, and no anxiety need be felt respecting them; they cannot provoke any inflammatory disturbance.

Röntgen's new method of photography—or rather shadow-fixing by means of kathodic rays—promises to be of much use in the detection of wandering needles. In Munich hospital a man was successfully freed, by operation, of a needle which had penetrated one of his hands between the fourth and fifth metacarpal bones, and had previously defied detection. The hand was photographed and the position of the needle was detected. At Queen's Hospital, Birmingham, a woman's swollen hand was photographed, and by the aid of the print a needle was easily discovered, and successfully extracted. Dr McKenzie Davidson, Aberdeen, successfully extracted a needle from the foot of a patient, after its position had also been defined by the new photography.

## BILLY BINKS—HERO.

### CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

As soon as he was gone, our little garrison was called to arms, and sentries were posted at every point of vantage. Then came a period of waiting, which was far more difficult to bear than any fighting would have been. About half-past four the enemies' commander came forward to the fence, and demanded that I should at once give up to him the free labourers in my employ. This I refused to do, at the same time allowing him to understand that the first man who set foot inside my fence would be shot without further warning. This firmness on my part had a wholesome effect

upon his followers, and they kept religiously outside, not, however, without threats of what they would do as soon as the main body should arrive. As six o'clock struck, my wife came running to me to say that the store and outbuildings were in flames, and when I heard that, I expected that the kitchen and stable near the house would follow suit. But either from fear of coming within range of our rifles, or because they hoped to be able to utilise them later on, these buildings remained unhurt.

Shortly before seven o'clock one of the hands hastened through the house to where I had stationed myself near my office door, to report that a big cloud of dust was rising on the plain to the eastward, and that he suspected it betokened the approach of the main body. Unfortunately it proved to be exactly what he predicted, and an hour later, the house was surrounded by nearly a hundred men, under the command of one of the most notorious of the Queensland strike leaders.

In language so vile that I cannot reproduce it here, this scoundrel called upon me to bring out and hand over to him the men I was sheltering, assuring me at the same time, with still more blasphemous oaths, that if I did not instantly comply with his request he would set fire to my house and allow every person inside it to perish in the flames. Then came a remark which brought out a cold sweat of fear upon my face.

'You'd best make up your mind pretty soon,' he cried mockingly, 'for there's no police coming to save you. You sent off a boy with a message a while back, but he won't deliver it. If you want him, you'd best go down to the Twenty Mile Creek, where you'll find 'im 'anging by 'is 'eels to a limb of a coolabah just above the crossing. Jim Burns, here, is ridin' his 'orse as you can see for yourself.'

*As he spoke, a man rode forward on the very identical horse I had put poor little Billy on to, not more than four hours before.* When I saw this, my heart sank like lead within me. If his tale were true, we were indeed at their mercy. But even then I could not give up the men to them, and yet, for the sake of the women in my house, I dared not exasperate them further. To gain time I endeavoured to argue with them. And in the end asked for an hour to consider their leader's proposals.

After a brief consultation with his subordinates, the delegate again rode forward, and said in a loud voice: 'You can have an hour to make up your minds. If you don't 'and 'em over to us then, we'll fire the place without further warning.'

To this speech we made no answer except to prepare ourselves the more earnestly for resistance when the time of grace should have expired. At the end of the hour there was a sudden show of activity; the leader came forward and prepared to address us. But we shall never know what he was going to say, for, just as he was about to speak, a voice in the crowd cried 'Police,' and next moment the entire gang were off across the plain as fast as their horses' legs could take them. Ten minutes later the troopers were dismounting in front of the veranda, and we were saved.

It was from the Inspector that I learnt the history of Billy's eventful ride.

It would appear that, after jumping the fence opposite the house, he set off due east across the plains at the top of his horse's speed, untouched by the rifle-bullet that the enemy sent after him. As straight as an arrow Billy steered his gallant horse for the bend in the Twenty Mile Creek, where he knew the best ford existed. By taking advantage of this crossing he would avoid a large patch of broken ground, and at the same time save nearly five miles. The creek once behind him, he would be half-way on his journey.

The horse was in splendid fettle, and, with such an atom as Billy upon his back, made nothing of the gallop. Landmark after landmark came into view, ranged up alongside and disappeared into the dark behind him. At the end of the second hour he was within sight of the big timber of the creek. Presently he reached the bank, checked his horse, and began cautiously to descend to the ford. An unpleasant surprise, however, was in store for him. Half-way down the path a black figure rose from behind a bush and seized his reins, while another clutched him from the other side.

'Hullo, young 'un, what's the meaning of this?' asked the man who held his bridle.

'Let me go,' said Billy, with a terrible sinking in his heart. 'I ain't doin' you no harm.'

'No, I'll go bail you ain't,' the man replied with a chuckle. 'But whoever you are, you'll have to come along to the camp and give an account of yourself.'

Thereupon Billy was conducted along the creek to a bit of open ground on the bank, where a camp-fire was burning brightly. A large party of men lay about on blankets spread beneath the trees, while their horses were hobbled within easy reach. Billy's captors gave a shout, and instantly every man was wide awake and eager to be informed where they had found him. As soon as this had been explained, the leader of the party walked over and lifted Billy from his horse.

'Now, young 'un,' said he, 'it will be best for you to tell us what you're up to. Speak the truth, or I'll skin you alive.'

'I ain't afraid of tellin' you,' said the unfortunate Billy, beginning to blubber. 'But I don't see what call you have for to stop me like this. I ain't done you no 'arm.'

'None of your jaw now,' said the man, giving him a vicious shake as he spoke. 'Just tell us what you're doing gallopin' about the country on the boss's thoroughbred like this?'

Astute Billy saw his opportunity, and began to sob with renewed energy.

'If I tell you, you'll go and split,' he moaned, 'an' then I'll be sent to *chokee;* I know I shall.'

'Well, what have you been up to?'

'I've been and bolted from the station, 'cause I didn't want to be killed,' he wailed, 'an' I couldn't get no other 'orse 'cause they've turned 'em all out. If the boss catches me, he'll murder me; I know he will.'

'You young dog,' said the man, 'you're lying, but I'll soon make you tell. Here boys, build up that fire and give me Dave Garman's green hide.'

The fire was built up with a few twigs, and the long rope was quickly forthcoming.

'Now,' said Billy's tormentor, running the latter through the ring, and slipping the noose over the little fellow's body to tighten it round his ankles. 'You'd best out with it, an' no darned shilly-shallying. Tell me what message the boss sent you with, or I'll hang you head downwards over that fire!'

'I ain't got no message to tell you,' sobbed Billy; 'it's the truth, so help me never.'

The words were hardly out of his mouth before the rope was over a projecting limb, and Billy was swinging by his heels above the fire. But still the little fellow's pluck held out. He no longer cried, however; his anger was thoroughly roused, and in spite of being half suffocated by the smoke, he hurled defiance at his tormentors with all the eloquence of his vituperative little tongue, calling them cowardly dogs, and offering to fight any two of them with one hand tied behind his back, if they'd only let him down. Never for a moment did he dream of purchasing his freedom by betraying the trust which had been reposed in him. And yet the pain must have been excruciating. The men stood round in a group and watched him, though the more soft-hearted cried 'Shame,' and one or two slunk away rather than watch what they considered deliberate murder, but, for the sake of their own cowardly skins, would not attempt to prevent.

Suddenly there was a cry of 'Fire,' and at the same instant flames darted across the grass towards the spot where the various blankets lay. In the face of this new danger Billy was instantly forgotten; every man rushed off to save his goods and chattels before the fire could reach them, and the lad was left alone. Then Billy, who by this time was almost unconscious, heard a voice whisper in his ear: 'Look out, old man, I've fired the grass to save you. I'm going to cut you down.'

An instant later the rope was severed, and a pair of strong arms had caught him, and were bearing him away towards some bushes where a horse stood saddled.

'Get up,' said his unknown friend, placing him in the saddle, 'and be off with you as hard as you can go. You've got our best horse, so don't spare him.'

Without even stopping to say 'Thank you,' Billy seized the reins, pressed home his spurs and started for the opposite bank. Before he could reach it, however, his escape was observed and three men started in pursuit. Seeing that they could not hope to catch him, one of them, noted for his cruelty and his extraordinary marksmanship, picked up a rifle, brought it to his shoulder and fired. There was a shrill little scream, and next moment horse and rider reached the summit and disappeared over the bank.

Once out of sight Billy set his horse going in downright earnest. He knew he had been hit, for he felt a stabbing pain somewhere below his left shoulder, and he could feel the blood flowing from the wound. But he had no time to think of how it might affect him; he was only conscious that he had lost nearly half an hour, and that he must make up for it at any cost. The horse was a willing beast, and Billy taxed his powers to the uttermost. But with every mile he put behind him he lost more of his strength. His head was swimming terribly, and his left side ached as if it were stabbed in a hundred places. The bushes and coarse Mitchell grass danced and flickered before his eyes, but on he galloped, clinging to the pommel of his saddle, and to his horse's mane when he became too weak to sit upright.

All the time, he told me afterwards, the baby's face was before his eyes, and a voice was ringing in his ears telling him, though he described it to me in other words, that he, Billy Binks, the little ne'er-do-weel and station outcast, had been trusted like a man, and for that reason, even if he died for it, he must carry out what he had set himself to do.

At last, in the gray dawn, after he seemed to have been galloping for years, the roofs of the township appeared in sight on the plain ahead; he roused his horse with a feeble shout, and in less than a quarter of an hour was among the police tents on the outskirts of the town.

The account of his arrival is best told in the Inspector's own words.

'It was about half an hour before daylight when I heard the noise of a horse galloping furiously across the plain towards the tents. Wondering what it might mean, and half expecting a call out, I sprang from my blankets and ran to the tent door. As I lifted the flap I heard the sentry challenge, and next moment a completely exhausted horse pulled up within half-a-dozen paces of where I stood. On its back was what looked, in that light, more like a monkey than the boy it turned out to be. He was hatless and coatless, and was clinging to the mane of his beast, as if he were afraid if he let go he might fall off. Altogether he presented a most curious figure as I went over to him.

'"What's the matter, my lad," I asked, taking him by the arm and looking closely at him.

'"Unionists at Kalaman," he faltered. "Boss wants you—wants you to come at once, baby—the baby"——

'But he could not manage any more. The pluck that had sustained him so long now deserted him, and, losing his balance, he toppled over and fell unconscious into my arms. Then it was that I discovered he was soaked in blood. Without losing a minute I sent him across to the hospital, after which I called up my men, and in less than a quarter of an hour we were on our way to Kalaman. The rest you know.'

. . . . .

Little as we expected it, this incident proved the end of our trouble, for three days later the Labour leaders declared the strike at an end, and Queensland was free once more. The very instant it was possible, my wife and I, taking the baby with us, drove into Karrabee to see the little lad who had gone through so much to save us.

We found him, as we had been led to expect we should, in the hospital, a dismal, galvanised iron building on the outskirts of the town. His appearance frightened me more than I liked to own, but his delight at seeing us was immense, and, when the baby was brought in and seated beside him on the counterpane, the nurse implored me to cut the interview short, as she feared the excitement would be too much for him.

Before we left I drew the doctor aside and asked him what he thought of the case. He gravely shook his head, and that shake made my heart ache worse than it had ever done before.

'We're going to operate to-morrow,' he said, 'but I'm almost afraid it will be useless.'

His words proved only too prophetic, for two days later, a little before sundown, the life of Billy Binks—a hero if ever there was one—was required of him. Without a murmur, conscious to the last, his hand in mine, the little soul went aloft to receive the reward which it has been promised shall be the portion of those who, at any cost, fulfil the trust reposed in them.

## OUR HIGHLAND AND ISLAND BREEDS.

In old-established homes we constantly discover traces of a connection with a foreign land, strange shells from the South Seas, boxes of perfumed sandalwood from the gorgeous East, or maybe a moccasin from the Great Lone Land. If we penetrated to the attics of such houses, we would find there, stowed away, furniture of a past date, driven out of the rooms below by newer importations.

Our Highland and Island animals are like these traces of far lands or of ancient lumber. They tell us of other days and races, and of foreign traffic. The dun and gray, long-horned Highland cattle have been driven with their owners out of the fat Lowlands, driven to the attics, as it were. The Duke of Hamilton preserves a few of the ancient Britons at Cadzow; sturdy, determined beasts they are, with somewhat of the build of the Polled Angus about them. These latter, despite their black coats, are reported to be descended from the original cattle of Caledonia, which were said to be white.

Thackeray tells us how when Charles Stuart's niece, Sophia, married Ernest Augustus of Brunswick, she 'brought the reversion to the Crown of the Three Kingdoms in her scanty trousseau.' The English princess, Margaret Tudor, when she crossed the Tweed to be united to James IV., brought along with her ample revenue the future succession to England's Crown. In her day, cattle were used instead of gold, and as part of her dower, her father, Henry VII., presented her with a herd of kine, which were long known as the Falkland breed. The park of Falkland Palace, on the shoulder of the Fife Lomonds, was the royal residence assigned to this four-legged portion of her 'providing,' a palace which to-day bears her monogram cut on its ancient walls. Cattle seemed to be current coin in those days, for Margaret's great grandson, James I. of England, repaid a loan from his subjects, in the kingdom of Fife, with black cattle. When the hornless race of 'doddies,' now known as Polled Angus, were nearly extinct, the descendants of the Fife or Falkland breeds, Queen Margaret's dower, and King Jamie's repaid borrowings, were sought after and crossed with the remnant of polleys. Samuel Johnson mentions in his famous Scotch tour, 'the black cattle are without horns called by the Scots hummle cows.' They have cousins on the hills of Galloway, but the Aberdeenshires, owing, maybe, to the smoother coats of the Anglified Falkland cows, are a sleeker race than those black skins that live so hardily on the heughs of the Stewartry.

The Shetland sheep and Shetland ponies tell of Norse and Spanish blood. The Fair Isle hosiery, which the natives knit so cunningly and dye such curious colours, are remains of the storm-dispersed Spaniards. The *murid*, or brown sheep, from which the soft wool is obtained, were welcome invaders, whether they came with Spaniards, or, as some say, with Norsemen. At the Edinburgh Exhibition, in 1886, alongside the peculiarly bright caps and jerseys from the Fair Isle, hung a pouch bought by a lady in Valencia market. The colours, and texture of the wools, of the fickle South and the dark North, were identical, verifying the tradition of the Islanders, that the secret of the special dyes was taught them three centuries ago by some survivors of the Armada. The Fetlar Island breed of ponies are said to have a strong strain of Arab blood in them, inherited from the horses cast ashore from the wrecks of our would-be conquerors in 1588. The big-headed, sure-footed steeds of Norway were the original progenitors of the diminutive ponies of the Shetlands. In Iceland, where they were unmixed with Southern blood, they remain to this day clumsy about the head, and wanting in that slim-limbed daintiness which makes the Shetlanders so much sought after. In Wales, the ponies are said to have inherited their dapperness from our earlier conquerors, the Romans, who left their horses behind them. In the Isle of Man, there used to be a breed of Manx ponies (not like the hens and cats peculiar to that unique place—namely, tailless) with a brown stripe down their creamy chestnut backs and a cross of brown on their shoulders. In the west of Ireland, which was also much frequented by the hardy Norsemen, the horses are often so coloured and marked.

The stout assistants to the Stewartry smugglers, the 'Nags of Galloway,' repudiate any Spanish strain. 'They were praised by Froissart two centuries before the building of the Armada,' says a this-century descendant of the hereditary Sheriffs of Galloway. Likely enough the old Manx ponies had a strain of Galloway blood in them, as well as Norse, for the Manx-men and the Stewartry folk had much communing and intercourse, and the 'Nags of Galloway' may, like the Welsh, have had Roman ancestors.

What strange fate or what foreign vessel introduced tailless cats and hens into Manx-land, I know not. Though the cats nowadays may be

manufactured into Manx to suit the inordinate supply of tourists, they used certainly long ago to be, like poets, born, not made. The fowls, now nigh extinct, were a handsome Spanish breed, looking like huge black partridges or guinea-fowls. The Channel Islands boast of very lucrative cattle peculiar to their shores. The small deer-headed dun Jerseys are not allowed to land among their bigger spotted sisters in Guernsey, who have an Ayrshire look about them.

The long-haired Skye terrier, which figured so much in Leech's pictures in *Punch* in the sixties, like to an animated shaggy door-mat, is said to have owed his long hair, as many beasts on the rock-bound shores on the west do, to an infusion of foreign blood from the Spanish castaways. Some poodles from out of the South, dogs of war following their masters, changed the breed of Skyes from a wiry-coated race into a long-haired one. The indigenous black terrier remained untainted by foreign extraction at Dunvegan. This short-legged, hard-haired breed has recently jumped into popularity, and reappeared on the show benches, as an Aberdonian. Spaniels were in fashion in Charles II.'s reign, and bear his name to-day. Blenheims were Marlborough favourites, but pugs came over from Holland with William and Mary, and ousted the silken darlings from court favour. Dogs, like dynasties, had their day.

Australasia can boast of its moas, emus, and other 'living fossils' among its indigenous live-stock; but the Mother-land has, stowed away in odd corners of her small domain, unique animals left by invaders, introduced by refugees, or brought from afar by her restless exploring sons, by means of which we can trace curious small waifs and strays of the history of this United Kingdom.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

The Corporation of Swansea are about to adopt a triple electric scheme, which, when carried out, will probably be regarded as a pattern for all other local authorities to copy. This scheme aims at destruction of town refuse, the production of electric light, and tram-car propulsion by one operation. Its very audacity is enough to startle those who have become used to old jog-trot methods of municipal administration; yet there is nothing utopian about the enterprise, bold as it is in conception, and it has the favourable opinion of no less an authority than Mr Preece. According to this well-known electrician, Swansea is in a fair way of becoming a pioneer town, and, to quote his words, 'Its finances would be improved by the profits that would arise from the successful administration of those purely local and municipal industries which the legislation has decreed should be in the hands or under the control of the rate-payers themselves.

Among the arts to which more attention was given in past times than in the present, is that of bookbinding, the finest examples of which are the product of this country, Holland ranking next in the variety of its book coverings. The subject was dealt with in a lecture recently given in London by Mr C. Davenport of the British Museum, who, in enumerating the principal substances used in English bookbinding, said that although leather was the chief material employed, many examples could be found of the use of silk, velvet, and other materials. In the middle ages, books were either very rich or very poor in their bindings, and during the Tudor period some very beautiful binding in velvet was executed, which might be compared in excellence with the wonderful goldsmith's work which preceded it. Laws had been passed to protect native binding from foreign competition, but in reality England had, as in other trades, gained by the invasion of foreigners, who brought with them fresh ideas, and were often men of taste and talent. The lecture was illustrated by a large number of coloured lantern slides, exhibiting the various styles of bookbinding peculiar to different countries and periods.

The Argentine Republic is now competing with Denmark, Sweden, France, and other countries as a producer of butter for the British market, and it would appear that the country is admirably adapted for such an industry. With abundant pasture land, and Gauchos to act as herdsmen to the cattle, the supply of milk is regular and abundant, although it is not so rich in butter fat as the product of Denmark, for example. The milk is conveyed to the butter factories, of which already there are no fewer than thirty fitted with the latest machinery, which we may mention is made in Britain and admitted free of duty by the Argentine Government. In these factories all the work is done by Europeans, mostly Italians and Basques from the south of France, who take readily to the dairy business, and are content with a wage of one shilling per day.

Another still more important new source of food-supply is represented by Canadian salmon, a first consignment of which has recently reached the London market. Tinned salmon we have had from Canada for many years, but the recent importation is of whole salmon brought over in refrigerator chambers like colonial mutton. It is well known that the Canadian rivers are well stocked with fish; so plentiful indeed are they that a halfpenny a pound for salmon is a common price in many of the towns. It remains to be seen whether the fish can be sent the enormous distance of eighteen thousand miles in a frozen condition without deterioration, and can be sold at such a price as to tempt purchasers who are ordinarily forced to regard salmon as a delicacy beyond their means. It is believed that when the new industry is thoroughly established, Canadian salmon in first-class condition will be sold in the principal English markets, and eagerly bought at about sixpence per pound.

This is not quite so cheap as the tinned fish, but there is a certain amount of prejudice against the latter, justified to some extent by reported cases of serious illness traceable to that method of preparation, which would always give a casting-vote in favour of the frozen variety. It must be remembered too, risk of illness apart, that tinned goods are more or less spoilt by the over-heating to which they are subjected.

Our national picture-galleries and museums have recently been exceedingly fortunate in the acquisition of valuable private collections, one of the most noticeable of these gifts being the important collection of birds left to the natural history branch of the British Museum by the late Mr Henry Seebohm. This gentleman had been during his life a generous donor to the same institution, constantly enriching its stores by some specimen in which it was deficient; but the bequest to the nation authorised by his will is of a far more important character, embracing as it does many historical collections which the energy and ample means of the testator had acquired. Among these may be noted Swinhoe's Chinese birds, Pryer's Japanese birds, and Anderson's Indian birds; but Mr Seebohm himself had been an industrious worker, and has been able to bequeath to the museum an example of nearly every known species of game bird, the finest collection of thrushes ever brought together, and nearly fifteen hundred skins of wading birds. This last series of specimens were those which furnished him with data for his great work on the geographical distribution of this group of birds.

The National Society for checking the abuse of public advertising has been organising a conference which was recently held at the Society of Arts, London. We have before in these columns alluded to the aims of this useful society, the principal one of which is to stop the defacement of rural scenery by the exhibition of gaudy posters, and the advertisement of proprietary medicines, &c. along our hedgerows. Such a movement must have the sympathy of every one who has an eye for the beauties of Nature, and the willing support which numerous artists, including the late lamented president of the Royal Academy, have given to the movement, gives some promise of ultimate success in stopping the evils complained of. We trust that the rural advertisement bill, when next presented to Parliament, may meet with the cordial support which it deserves.

For a long time it has been asserted that the British farming industry is unduly handicapped by the railway companies giving better terms to the foreign producer. The statement has in reality no foundation in fact, the truth being that the foreign farmers combine together and send large consignments by rail, while the native farmer is content to send small quantities, which are naturally subject to higher charges. For it stands to reason that a railway can run a ten-ton truck at a cheaper rate proportionately if it be full, than if it carry only a few hundredweight. But the Great Western Railway Company are now meeting English farmers in the most generous spirit, not only offering them favourable terms if they send their goods in sufficient quantities, but actually undertaking the collecting, transport, and consignment of the produce. To put it briefly, they will call at the farm for the goods, and when disposed of, will give the farmer a cheque for the amount due, less their own charges. Strange to say, the English farmer does not seem to appreciate this new policy on the part of the railway company, inquiries showing that he does not care to move from the customary groove, and is too jealous to co-operate with his neighbours. But he certainly can no longer complain with any reason of foreign competition. We may mention that the new departure is mainly due to the foresight of Viscount Emlyn, chairman of the Great Western Railway, who is a prominent member of the Royal Agricultural Society of England.

It has long been the complaint of artists who draw for our illustrated periodicals that much of the beauty of their work is lost in its translation to a form suitable for the printing-press. And although this is not such a crying evil as in pre-photographic days, when it was in the power of an engraver to hack a fine drawing into a very poor woodcut, the artists have still a good case. Professor Herkomer has recently introduced a method by which the artist himself has the ultimate fate of his work more under his own control. On a polished and silvered copper plate the artist makes his picture with a special kind of black pigment, using brush, dabber, stump, finger, or any tool which will produce the effect desired. The lightest shades naturally carry the least pigment, while in the deep shadows the paint is thick. The drawing is now powdered over with some body, like graphite, which forms a conducting surface, the finer particles attaching themselves to the lighter tones, and the coarser ones to where the pigment on the plate is at its thickest. This done, the plate is put in an electrotyping bath, and in course of time an intaglio plate is formed which can be printed from in the copper-plate press. The process, which it will be seen is not adapted for the typographic press, bears a strong resemblance to one introduced more than forty years ago.

We are extremely glad to record that the Dundee whaler *Active* last season had a most prosperous time, and that her owners made the largest profit realised in Dundee for the past two or three decades. The Greenland whale-fishery was the scene of action, and besides nine whales, a number of narwhals, seals, &c. were killed, the whales being estimated to produce four and a half tons of bone. After paying the cost of the outfit of the vessel, and meeting all the expenses of the trip, the lucky shareholders will receive a dividend of three hundred and sixty per cent.—which we should think is about as far beyond 'the dreams of avarice' as shareholders in any enterprise have yet gone. Some of the whalebone, we may mention, has been sold at the rate of two thousand pounds per ton.

A very valuable warning to householders was conveyed in a recent lecture by Dr W. H. Corfield, the medical officer of health, St George's, Hanover Square, London. The subject of his discourse was 'Defective Drains and

Sewer Air as Causes of Disease,' and cases were described which had come under the personal notice of the lecturer, in which disease had been directly attributable to the escape of sewer air into the dwelling-house. The most common symptom of mischief was sore throat, and if this did not appear, the members of a household breathing contaminated air suffered from 'general malaise.' It was mentioned incidentally that workmen employed in mending defective drains very commonly suffered from sore throat, and that an escape of coal-gas sometimes led to the same result. Diphtheria had been attributed to the presence of sewer air, and although this had not been proved, it was the fact that contaminated air was commonly found in houses where the disease appeared: it was fair to assume that sore throats caused by defective drains would make persons peculiarly liable to contract that complaint. Blood-poisoning and pneumonia were also occasionally produced by breathing bad air, and in infancy diarrhœa could often be traced to the same exciting cause. Typhoid fever, although mostly propagated by bad water, was also frequently spread by foul air, and instances were adduced in support of the statements.

Another paper recently read before the Liverpool Polytechnic Society, by Mr James Hargreaves, F.C.S., on sewage and zymotic poisons, contained some practical suggestions which are well worthy the attention of all sanitary authorities. Mr Hargreaves also assumes that zymotic disease is principally caused by sewer gas, which in many cases cannot be detected by its odour. He proposes to give it an unmistakable scent, and at the same time to kill all obnoxious organisms in the sewers, by pumping therein chlorine gas. This gas can be readily made by the decomposition of common salt, with the help of an electric-lighting plant, which can be run at light expense, being unoccupied in the daytime. Soda crystals would be formed as a by-product, and in large installations its sale would cover all cost of making the chlorine. Engineers may very possibly find objections to the process which are not apparent on the surface: we merely give a brief outline of the method for their consideration.

The often-discussed scheme for supplying London with a sea-water service is once more revived, and a bill to forward the enterprise will come before Parliament during the ensuing session. The idea is to obtain the water from Lancing, near Worthing, in Sussex, and to convey it by conduits to the metropolis, the cost being estimated at £450,000, and the time of construction two years. In a paper upon the subject read recently before the Society of Arts by Mr F. Grierson, many advantages were claimed for the enterprise. First comes the question of health and the great good accruing to invalids and others by sea-bathing. Then we are told that for street cleansing and watering, sea-water possesses many advantages over fresh, and that great economy would ensue from its use, forty million gallons of filtered fresh water being daily used in London for that and other non-domestic purposes. If it be true that twenty-five per cent. of the fresh water at present used by Londoners would be saved if sea-water were at hand, it would seem that we have here a potent argument in favour of the scheme. It may be mentioned here that powers were actually obtained from Parliament a few years ago to promote a similar scheme, but the matter was allowed to lapse, either from want of support, or because the promoters found out too late that their plans were drawn on too narrow a basis.

The author of the articles on Apple, Gooseberry, and Strawberry culture, which aroused much attention and interest on their appearance in this *Journal*, has just issued a little practical manual of *Cottage Gardening* (W. & R. Chambers, Ltd.). The author, a gentleman of great experience, who has long cultivated flowers, fruits, and vegetables with exceptional success, supplies just the kind of information necessary to instruct the amateur how he may best manage his garden, while the book is written in an eminently readable and interesting style.

Nearly a year ago, a committee was appointed by the Board of Trade 'to inquire into the extent to which goods made in foreign prisons were imported into this country, and to report whether any, and if so, what steps can be taken effectually to restrict the importation of such goods.' This committee, after hearing a mass of evidence, has now made its report, and it is satisfactory to find that the various allegations which led to its appointment had very little foundation in fact. It seems that only two trades, the brushmakers and matmakers, have made serious complaint of injury—and such complaints are confined to Belgian and German goods. These goods, the committee assert, are not imported in such quantities as to affect British trade generally. In both the trades named the injury is but slight, and affects only the cheapest class of goods. Brushes can, in fact, be made more cheaply by machinery in Britain than they can be made abroad by prison labour, and the trade is on the increase. Any steps to restrict the importation of prison-made goods would, the committee think, be productive of more harm than good. It would therefore seem that this committee have been set to work at the discovery of what is commonly known as a mare's nest.

'Every bullet has its billet,' says the proverb, but experience proves that happily the billet is not so often the human body as might be expected. The common estimate has been that on the field of battle one man falls for every hundred shots fired, but this waste of lead seems to have been much exceeded in the recent unfortunate skirmish in the Transvaal. A correspondent in the *Times* alludes to this in a letter headed 'Boer Marksmanship,' upon the boasted accuracy of which he throws grave doubts. The Boers, it will be remembered, numbered fifteen hundred men, and they were practically in ambush, waiting to attack a force one-third the strength of their own, consisting of utterly worn-out men incapable of much resistance. They each had forty rounds of ammunition, and were supplied with more during the thirty-six hours' fight. Supposing, however, they only used the forty shots per man, this would amount in the aggregate to sixty thousand bullets fired, with the result of

sixty-eight casualties—the total number of killed and wounded. For every man knocked over there were therefore nearly nine hundred bullets sent astray, to say nothing of the Maxim and artillery fire. Had the Boers been the expert marksmen they have been supposed to be, not a single member of Dr Jameson's band would have escaped without a wound.

The explosion of an aërolite is an occurrence which is so seldom witnessed, that the recent event reported from Madrid has naturally excited great interest. It was literally 'a bolt from the blue,' for the sun was shining at the time when the strange visitant made its appearance. It is, however, fair to assume that such things are far less rare than is commonly supposed; for when we consider that four-fifths of the globe is covered with ocean, and that the remaining fifth presents vast tracts of unoccupied country, it must be evident that meteoric stones might find many a resting-place on the earth without the cognisance of a single human being. Our museums contain many specimens of solid matter, weighing from a few ounces to as many tons, which have come from space. But it is known from the presence of meteoric dust on the surface of the highest snow, where dust of the ordinary kind is impossible, that these visitants are generally dissipated in that form when they enter our atmosphere.

## 'WHY I ENLISTED.'

### A REMINISCENCE.

By W. Forbes Mitchell,
Author of *Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny.*

I am a Scotchman from north of the Grampians, a descendant of one of the oldest Jacobite families of the memorable 1745, who risked and lost all for the House of Stuart and 'Bonnie Prince Charlie.' My great-grandfather fell at Culloden, and my grandfather was one of those for whose capture a heavy reward was offered in 1746. My father was born at Florence in 1769, and died at the age of one hundred and three in 1872—having been presented to Prince Charles Edward as titulary King of England some time before his death. It will thus be seen that I belong to only the second generation from 'Prince Charlie.'

In the days when I was young, whisky-distilling was a lucrative business, and towards the end of the first half of the present century I was apprenticed to learn its mysteries in one of the largest distilleries of the Highlands. Full of hope and a determination to work and become a master of my business, I entered on my apprenticeship, and was placed under the orders of a worthy old Highlander named Donald Macpherson, who was a relation of Cluny, the chief of the clan, but filled the post of head-brewer (a distiller in Scotland is called a brewer) and general superintendent of the distillery. Among the first lessons which Donald taught me was that it was not by any means a sin, but rather a meritorious act, to cheat the excisemen in every possible way.

I must now pass to about the year 1853, when the harvest proved to be unusually late in the Highlands, and there was a deal of mildewed or damaged barley. My readers will understand that malt made from such barley is inferior to that made from sound barley, and if used for brewing beer, it gives the liquor a disagreeable musty flavour. But this defect can be corrected to a large extent if a little powdered sulphur is thrown into the kiln fire when malt of this sort is being dried. I should explain that malt in the Highlands is dried on a perforated kiln over the fire, and the smoke passes up through the grain. This is what imparts to Scotch whisky its peculiar smoky flavour. At the time of which I write there was a heavy duty on malt, as well as on spirits, and the operations of malting were entirely separate from those of distilling or brewing. Besides, the excise officers were most particular, some of them annoyingly so, in gauging all raw barley put into the steep for malting, and again during the operations of malting, and when the malt was being dried on the kiln. But in spite of all their watchfulness, a few quarters of extra barley would occasionally pass over the kiln. About this time a new preventive officer joined the excise staff of our distillery, direct from England. This man took up the place of the most obliging gauger whom we had, and he soon showed himself to be more troublesome than any member of the excise staff who had been in the district for many years. In consequence, he was thoroughly hated, not only by the men employed in the distillery, but by his own fellow-servants of the Government; it being firmly believed that he had been sent as a spy on them as well as on the servants of the distillery. To add (if that were possible) to his other evil qualities in the eyes of distillers and gaugers, he was a strict teetotaler, and went by the nickname of 'Water Willie.' If any one hated Water Willie more than another, that man was old Donald Macpherson, who openly declared his belief that Water Willie was no other than a certain 'Gauger Gillespie risen from the dead.' The said Gillespie was a supervisor of the excise staff, highly unpopular throughout the north country, and hanged at Aberdeen.

However, if Water Willie watched the distillery staff closely, he was as well watched in return; and for months he was held at defiance and unable to even hint that anything was wrong. But a few days before Christmas he tried a *ruse*, by giving out that he had been invited to spend Christmas-eve with the family of an English gentleman residing some miles from the distillery; and this being believed, several quarters of extra barley were secretly malted and ready to be kiln-dried before the appointed evening. Late in the afternoon, the day before Christmas, Water Willie gauged the malt on the kiln and that in the malt loft ready to be dried, and sent in his daily report to his superior, apparently satisfied that everything was as it ought to be. After submitting his report, Water Willie dressed and left the premises, wishing every one, myself amongst the number, a hearty good-night and a merry Christmas. That evening it was my turn to take charge of the kiln, and in consequence of a few quarters of extra malt being on it that

had never been dipped by Water Willie's gauging-rod, I was keeping up a brisk fire. Towards eight o'clock I was about to lower the fire to clear the kiln when a boy, whom I had placed as an outlook, rushed in with the information that Water Willie was not only in the distillery, but that he was actually on the kiln dipping the malt with his gauging-rod. I was almost dumbfounded, but did not lose my presence of mind; I listened, and sure enough I heard some one stealthily moving about on the kiln above. What to do I did not very clearly know, but one thing I was certain of—the fine on the proprietor would not be less than £500, and the confiscation of all the malt on the kiln. And the hated Water Willie would get half of the total!

In my perplexity I glanced round, and my eye lighted on a small barrel of finely powdered sulphur, meant to be used in the case of mildewed barley. The only thing I thought of was my duty to the distillery. I did not for a moment think of the danger to the life of Water Willie. I could only think of the fine on the proprietor and the disgrace to all concerned in being outmanœuvred and caught by such a contemptible opponent. I seized the shovel in the barrel and threw a shovelful of the brimstone on the fire, not with the intention of suffocating or killing the gauger, but in the hope that the fumes of the sulphur would drive him off the kiln before he had time to fully gauge the malt on it. My pungent remedy was, however, more deadly than I intended, owing to the fierce fire which I was still keeping up. I had hardly thrown the sulphur on it than, to my horror, I heard a heavy body fall overhead. Rushing up to the kiln, I found the sulphur fumes so powerful that it would have been courting suspended animation, not to say death, to have entered on it. Fortunately there was a barn-yard pitchfork with a long handle near; so seizing this, in a moment I had inserted the prongs of it behind the hinges of the door, and bent them like a double boat-hook. With this I hooked Water Willie by the clothes, and with the assistance of the boy dragged his insensible body to the open air. I then sent the boy flying for my trusty friend and mentor, Donald Macpherson, who, to use a police phrase, 'was immediately on the spot.' Donald, as soon as he heard the word 'sulphur,' took in the whole situation at a glance; he at once stretched out the insensible gauger, opening out his collar and chest; and ascertaining that his heart still beat, he gave a grunt of satisfaction in Gaelic, and then gave orders for the immediate clearance and safe custody of the extra malt on the kiln.

These orders having been given to trusty subordinates, Donald turned his attention to the fumigated gauger, who still showed little appearance of returning to his senses. But luck was still in our favour. The village doctor had been dining with the proprietor, and had not left the house. Donald called the master and speedily informed him of the whole catastrophe. He in turn informed the doctor, and the still insensible gauger was soon consigned to his care and that of the mistress and female servants of the house. Donald regretfully hinted to the maid-servants that Willie had been at a party and broken his pledge. As if to confirm this view of the case, about a gill of whisky had been poured down Willie's throat, and his clothes well saturated with it, in the hopes of reviving him, so the idea was apparently converted into a fact beyond dispute. Matters having been thus arranged, the proprietor had time to learn how it had all come about, and my friend Donald told him with many emphatic ejaculations that, by my prompt action, I had saved both the honour of the distillery and the master's purse. He further swore in classic Gaelic—Donald always spoke in Gaelic when excited, English being too vulgar to express his meaning—that I was a rare boy, and would certainly become a distiller of renown, and would be—'Transported if not hanged,' broke in the proprietor in vulgar English; 'and the sooner he is out of the Glen the safer it will be for himself and all concerned.'

Donald tried to reason with the master to get him to change his opinion, arguing that all that was necessary was for every one about the distillery to maintain that Water Willie had gone away and returned drunk. But the master reasoned in return that such a course was impossible; that although the doctor with his wonted friendliness would assist as far as he could, still this case might have to go before a court of law, and he knew the good old doctor would not perjure himself for the value of all the whisky in the cellars of the distillery. Although the ill-used man was slowly coming round, he was by no means out of danger; and the master was confident that after the gauger came to his senses and remembered the facts, his word would be taken by the Inland Revenue authorities at Somerset House against the oaths of the whole population of the neighbourhood. It was therefore necessary that I should be turned out into the wilderness of the world, as the scapegoat for the sins of the distillery as well as my own.

My carpet-bag was soon packed, and I was instructed to make my way to the good city of Aberdeen, not by the direct route, but by crossing the mountains—no easy matter at that season of the year—to a roadside inn about sixty miles from the Glen, where I could wait for the stage-coach carrying the Royal Mail from the Central Highlands to Aberdeen. So with ten pounds in my pocket, and my carpet-bag on Donald's back, I started, and on the evening of the second day I reached the inn where I was to take the stage-coach. At 10 A.M., the third day from my adventure, I was an outside passenger by the 'Earl of Fife,' on my way to Aberdeen at the speed of ten miles an hour; and before night I was safely lodged in Dee Street in the house of a certain Janet Gordon, an aunt of my former master. Here I remained quietly for ten days.

At this juncture a letter came to Janet, informing her that Water Willie had fully recovered and had sent a special report to the authorities of Somerset House of the dastardly attempt on his life. An official of high position and experience in the Inland Revenue

department had been sent from London to thoroughly investigate the matter, and the local police had been directed to produce the young man who was in charge of the kiln the night that Water Willie was fumigated. This information was accompanied by £50 in £5 Bank of England notes, with the intimation that the next mail would bring a description of me to the police authorities of Aberdeen, so that it would consequently be prudent for me to visit a maternal uncle in France, till I should receive further instructions. The next morning I had secured a cabin on board the s.s. *City of Aberdeen*, and was on my way to London, intending to go thence to Dover and cross to France. I was not by any means joyful at the prospect before me. I had before this spent several years of my early life with this uncle, and although I was really fond of the old man and was much liked by him in return, still there was a *but* in the question. My uncle was married to a French lady, and although they had no children of their own, my aunt-in-law had a number of poor relations. Naturally, I was no favourite with either her or them; I was looked on as a dangerous interloper who might be remembered in my uncle's will. Consequently I did not relish the prospect before me. Whilst brooding over my prospects, promenading the deck of the steamer, I being almost the only first-class passenger, I espied a sergeant of the 93d Sutherland Highlanders returning from Inverness, where he had been on furlough, to join the depot of the 93d in the Isle of Wight. I made up to the sergeant, who was pacing the deck in the clear moonlight, and got into conversation with him as to the prospects of a war with Russia, the 93d having lately embarked at Plymouth for Malta as the advance guard of the future army of the Crimea. The gallant sergeant entertained me with a full and complete history of that glorious regiment the 93d Sutherland Highlanders, at that time the most thoroughly Scottish, and by far the most Highland of all the Highland regiments. They had over seven hundred men in the ranks who could speak Gaelic—and of those at least three hundred and fifty were the younger sons of Highland gentlemen, serving a short apprenticeship to qualify them for commissions in the Guards or the other famous corps of the army. He concluded by reciting an address by General Sir Harry Smith to the troops before embarkation.

Having drunk the sergeant's health and that of his gallant comrades, I told him that I had made up my mind to enlist. He at once produced a shilling—or rather he borrowed one from myself, assuring me that if I would condescend to receive it back in the Queen's name (God bless her!), I would be captain of a company before twelve months. I took back the shilling in all good faith, and the next day, on reaching London, I was brought before a magistrate and was attested, having first passed a medical inspection by a recruiting surgeon.

The following day the recruiting officer in London, taking advantage of the return of the sergeant of the 93d to the Isle of Wight, determined to forward a large batch of recruits under his charge to Portsmouth for the artillery and different corps in the Portsmouth garrison. So the next day we were marched to the railway station, and put into the train under the usual passage warrants for the transport of recruits. But it turned out that the train was rather crowded, and there was barely room in the third class for the whole batch. Meanwhile, as they were being packed in, an old gentleman of a military appearance, to whom I noticed the recruiting officer gave a most respectful military salute, walked along the platform taking the measure of each recruit as he passed. When he came to where I stood, with my Highland plaid around my shoulders and my carpet-bag in one hand and portmanteau in the other, he surveyed me from head to foot, and turning to the recruiting officer, asked if I was also a recruit. Being answered in the affirmative, and that I was for the 93d Highlanders in Parkhurst Barracks, he turned to a young gentleman, also in plain clothes, and said, 'Take him to our carriage.' So I was provided with a seat in a reserved first-class compartment, and before I had time to thank my courteous patron, or to think of my good luck, the train moved off. There were only four of us in the carriage, the old gentleman and two young ones, both of military appearance, but in plain travelling clothes, and one had charge of a well-filled luncheon basket.

Shortly after the train moved out of the station, my patron entered into conversation with me. On his asking me where I had enlisted and so forth, I told him that it was on board the Aberdeen steamer in coming from the north to London. He also asked if I had any objection to tell him what had led me to take this step, because I did not appear to be of the ordinary class of recruits. After pledging the party to secrecy, I gave a brief history of my escapade with Water Willie, and all three seemed to enjoy the history vastly. The old gentleman laughed till he had to hold his sides, and then congratulated me on the lucky circumstance, that Water Willie had only been fumigated and not suffocated. This led up to the history of my meeting with the sergeant of the 93d and my enlistment. Warming to my subject, I recited the whole of the sergeant's story as to the superior class of men in the 93d, and wound up with the address of General Sir Harry Smith to the regiment before their embarkation. The old gentleman roared with merriment, the tears running out of his eyes, and as soon as he could speak he shouted: 'Another such story will be the death of me.' Thus the time passed, and as the train sped along we were well supplied with refreshments from the luncheon basket—which, I need hardly say, I heartily enjoyed, for I had not eaten anything before leaving the recruiting rendezvous.

As we were nearing Portsmouth the old gentleman gave me some pieces of practical advice more in fun than in earnest. The preface to his advice was: 'Youngster, if you are not hanged or shot, you will yet cut some figure in the world or I'm much mistaken.' He then went on: 'When you join your regiment, always do what you are ordered to do, but

never volunteer for anything.' To this I replied that I had always understood that it was considered the correct thing in the army for soldiers to volunteer for a 'forlorn hope.' To this he replied: 'Yes, it may be considered the correct thing to volunteer for a forlorn hope, but don't you do it, unless under very exceptional circumstances, because the chances are a hundred to one that you may get knocked on the head, and even if you are lucky enough to escape with a whole skin, the chances are you will gain more ill-will than thanks for your pains.' The next advice was: 'Never ask a favour from the colour-sergeant of your company when you can go to the captain.' And as he helped himself from a bottle of excellent claret in the luncheon basket, he said: 'When you rise a bit in the world, as I'm sure you will do, always barring you are not hanged or shot, if it ever happens that you are at the saloon-table travelling on a passenger steamer, watch both the dishes and the bottle from which the skipper helps himself. Be sure you eat and drink from the same, and, as a rule, you will be sailing on the right tack and will reach port in safety.'

Shortly afterwards the train reached Portsmouth, and before leaving the carriage to join the other recruits, I asked the name of my affable patron; in reply he presented me with a visiting-card, telling me to take it to the captain of the depot, and 'tell him that it is my request that you may be sent to join headquarters of the 93d by the first draft.' On this he disappeared in the crowd, and I made my way to the nearest lamp-post to read the name on the card. The reader may judge of my surprise when I read thereon, 'Lieutenant-general Sir Harry Smith.'

We duly reached Parkhurst Barracks at about 10 P.M., and I was accommodated in a room which contained about twenty men, mostly recruits, with a few old hands to coach the young ones in barrack-room discipline. One of the old soldiers, named John M'Donald the fourth—there being three others of the same name in the company—slept in the next bed to me, and as soon as the pipers played the *reveille* next morning, John showed me how to fold up my bedding in proper order, and to make everything tidy for the inspection of the orderly officer.

Long afterwards I heard the result of Water Willie's report to Somerset House. In that report he committed an error of judgment in including the name of his supervisor, who was accused of being hand and glove with the proprietor of the distillery in endeavouring to cheat the excise. For this he was put on trial, when the distiller and supervisor were exonerated; but Water Willie was found guilty of certain irregularities in this and former reports, for which he was dismissed from the service. Twenty years after these events I met Water Willie serving as a convict in one of our Indian jails. He began a downward career by embezzling the funds of a Regimental Temperance Society, while employed as an army Scripture reader, and afterwards swindled several shopkeepers and jewellers in Calcutta. He was sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment by the High Court of Calcutta, and so far as I know, the end of his career was that he was deported from India as a vagrant about 1875. I heard afterwards that he was employed by the Italian Government at Brindisi, during one of our periodic cholera scares, fumigating all passengers from Indian ports passing through Italy, as a precaution to prevent the spread of Indian cholera to Europe, and here for the present endeth the history of Water Willie and why I enlisted.

## ONE HEART.

I SOMETIMES linger o'er the list
Of friends I lost in other days,
And still the question with me stays—
'When I am gone shall I be missed?'

I doubt if others think the same,
Or even wish to share my thought—
That men were foolish who have sought
To leave a never-dying name.

When thou hast run thine earthly race,
Thou wilt not 'leave a world in tears,'
Nor will men come in after years
To view thine earthly resting-place.

Thy poor remains will rest as well,
Thy spirit will be no less free,
Although it is not thine to be
A Milton or a Raphael.

Fret not thyself but Heaven thank
If all the good that thou canst do,
May be so done that only few
Need ever know thy place is blank.

Be thankful if but one true heart
Shall feel for thee the moment's pain—
Ere it can say 'we meet again'—
Of knowing what it is to part.

*One* loving heart thou mayest crave,
Lest all thou caredst for on earth
Should seem to have no lasting worth
And end for ever in the grave.

One faithful heart beneath the sky,
In which to leave a seed of love,
To blossom in a world above
And bear a fruit which shall not die.

C. J. BODEN.

## *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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# THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

*A SOUTH AFRICAN STORY.*

By H. A. BRYDEN.

## CHAPTER I.

It was a fine warm evening at Kimberley, and Frank Farnborough, just before the dinner hour at the 'Central,' was fortifying his digestion with a glass of sherry and bitters, and feeling on very good terms with himself. He had put in an excellent day's work at De Beers, that colossal diamond company's office, where he had the good fortune to be employed, and had that morning received from his chief an intimation that his salary had been raised to four hundred pounds per annum. Four hundred per annum is not an immense sum in Kimberley, where living is dear all round; but for a young man of five-and-twenty, of fairly careful habits, it seemed not so bad a stipend. And so Frank sat down to the excellent *menu*, always to be found at the 'Central,' at peace with the world and with a sound appetite for his dinner. Next to him was a fellow-member of the principal Kimberley cricket team, and, as they were both old friends and enthusiasts, they chatted freely. Everywhere around them sat that curious commingling of mankind usually to be seen at a Kimberley *table d'hôte*—diamond dealers, Government officials, stock-brokers, detectives, Jews, Germans, Englishmen and Scots, and a few Irish, hunters and traders from the far interior, miners, prospectors, concessionaries, and others. A few women leavened by their presence the mass of mankind, their numbers just now being increased by some members of a theatrical company playing in the town.

As for Frank and his companion, they drank their tall tankards of cool lager, ate their dinners, listened with some amusement to the impossible yarns of an American miner from the Transvaal, and, presently rising, sought the veranda chairs and took their coffee. In a little while Frank's comrade left him for some engagement in the town.

Frank finished his coffee and sat smoking in some meditation. He was on the whole, as we have seen, on good terms with himself, but there was one little cloud upon his horizon, which gave pause to his thoughts. Like many other young fellows, he lodged in the bungalow house of another man; that is, he had a good bedroom and the run of the sitting-rooms in the house of Otto Staarbrucker, an Afrikander of mixed German and Semitic origin, a decent fellow enough, in his way, who ran a store in Kimberley. This arrangement suited Frank Farnborough well enough; he paid a moderate rental, took his meals at the 'Central,' and preserved his personal liberty intact. But Otto Staarbrucker had a sister, Nina, who played housekeeper, and played her part very charmingly. Nina was a colonial girl of really excellent manners and education. Like many Afrikanders, nowadays, she had been sent to Europe for her schooling, and having made the most of her opportunities, had returned to the Cape a very charming and well-educated young woman. Moreover, she was undeniably attractive, very beautiful most Kimberley folks thought her. On the mother's side there was blood of the Spanish Jews in her veins—and Nina, a sparkling yet refined brunette, showed in her blue-black hair, magnificent eyes, warm complexion, and shapely figure, some of the best points of that Spanish type.

These two young people had been a good deal together of late—mostly in the warm even-

ings, when Kimberley people sit in their verandas—stoeps, they call them in South Africa—cooling down after the fiery heat of the corrugated iron town. It was pleasant to watch the stars, to smoke the placid pipe, and to talk about Europe and European things to a handsome girl, who took small pains to conceal her friendliness for the strong, well set-up, manly Englishman, who treated her with the deference of a gentleman (a thing not always understood in South Africa), and withal could converse pleasantly and well on other topics than diamonds, gambling, and sport. Frank Farnborough, as he ruminated over his pipe this evening out there in the 'Central' forecourt—garden, I suppose one should call it—asked himself a plain question.

'Things are becoming "steep,"' he said to himself. 'I am getting too fond of Nina, and I half believe she's inclined to like me. She's a nice and a really good girl, I believe. One could go far for a girl like her. And yet—that Jewish blood is a fatal objection. It won't do, I'm afraid, and the people at home would be horrified. I shall have to chill off a bit, and get rooms elsewhere. I shall be sorry, very sorry, but I don't like the girl well enough to swallow her relations, even supposing I were well enough off to marry, which I am not.'

As if bent upon forthwith proving his newfound mettle, the young man soon after rose and betook himself along the Du Toit's Pan road, in the direction of his domicile. Presently he entered the house and passed through to the little garden behind. As his form appeared between the darkness of the garden and the light of the passage, a soft voice, coming from the direction of a low table on which stood a lamp, said, 'That you, Mr Farnborough?'

'Yes,' he returned, as he sat down by the speaker. 'I'm here. What are you doing, I wonder?'

'Oh, I'm just now deep in your *Malay Archipelago*. What a good book it is, and what a wonderful time Wallace had among his birds and insects; and what an interesting country to explore! This burnt-up Kimberley makes one sigh for green islands, and palm-trees, and blue seas. Otto and I will certainly have to go to Kalk Bay for Christmas. There are no palm-trees, certainly, but there's a delicious blue sea. A year at Kimberley is enough to try even a bushman.'

'Well,' returned Frank, 'one does want a change from tin shanties and red dust occasionally. I shall enjoy the trip to Capetown too. We shall have a pretty busy time of it with cricket in the tournament week; but I shall manage to get a dip in the sea now and then, I hope. I positively long for it.'

As Nina leaned back in her big easy-chair, in her creamy Surah silk, and in the half-light of the lamp, she looked very bewitching, and not a little pleased, as they chatted together. Her white teeth flashed in a quick smile to the compliment which Frank paid her, as the conversation drifted from a butterfly caught in the garden, to the discovery he had made that she was one of the few girls in Kimberley who understood the art of arraying herself in an artistic manner. She rewarded Frank's pretty speech by ringing for tea.

'What a blessing it is,' she went on, leaning back luxuriously, 'to have a quiet evening. Somehow, Otto's friends pall upon one. I wish he had more English friends. I'm afraid my four years in England have rather spoilt me for Otto's set here. If it were not for you, indeed, and one or two others now and again, things would be rather dismal. Stocks, shares, companies, and diamonds, reiterated day after day, are apt to weary female ears. I sometimes long to shake myself free from it all. Yet, as you know, here am I, a sort of prisoner at will.'

Frank, who had been pouring out more tea, now placed his chair a little nearer to his companion's as he handed her her cup.

'Come,' he said, 'a princess should hardly talk of prisons. Why, you have all Kimberley at your beck and call, if you like. Why don't you come down from your pedestal and make one of your subjects happy?'

'Ah!' she said, with a little sigh, 'my prince hasn't come along yet. I must wait.'

Frank, I am afraid, was getting a little out of his depth. He had intended his last speech to be diplomatic and had manifestly failed. He looked up into the glorious star-lit sky, into the blue darkness; he felt the pleasant, cool night air about him; he looked upon the face of the girl by his side—its wonderful Spanish beauty, perfectly enframed by the clear light of the lamp. There was a shade of melancholy upon Nina's face. A little pity, tinged with an immense deal of admiration, combined with almost overpowering force to beat down Frank's resolutions of an hour or two back. He took the girl's hand into his own, bent his head and lightly kissed it. It was the first time he had ventured so much, and the contact with the warm, soft, shapely flesh thrilled him.

'Don't be down on your luck, Nina,' he said. 'Things are not so bad. You have at all events some one who would give a good deal to be able to help you—some one who'——

At that moment, just when the depression upon Nina's face had passed, as passes the light cloud wrack from before the moon, a man's loud, rather guttural voice was heard from within the house, and a figure passed into the darkness of the garden. At the sound the girl's hand was snatched from its temporary occupancy.

'Hallo! Nina,' said the voice of Otto, her brother, 'any tea out there? I'm as thirsty as a salamander.'

The tea was poured out, the conversation turned upon indifferent topics, and for two people the interest of the evening had vanished.

Next morning, early, Frank Farnborough found a note and package awaiting him. He opened the letter, which ran thus:

'Kimberley (In a dickens of a hurry).

'My dear Frank—Have just got down by post-cart, and am off to catch the train for Capetown, so can't possibly see you. I had a good,

if rather rough, time in Mangwato. Knowing your love of natural history specimens, I send you with this a small crocodile, which I picked up in a dried, mummified condition in some bush on the banks of the Mahalapsi River—a dry watercourse running into the Limpopo. How the crocodile got there, I don't know. Probably it found its way up the river-course during the rains, and was left stranded when the drought came. Perhaps it may interest you; if not, chuck it away. Good-bye, old chap. I shall be at Kimberley again in two months' time, and will look you up.—Yours ever,

HORACE KENTBURN.'

Frank smiled as he read his friend's characteristic letter, and turned at once to the parcel—a package of sacking, some three and a half feet long. This was quickly ripped open, and the contents, a miniature crocodile, as parched and hard as a sun-dried ox-hide, but otherwise in good condition, was exposed.

'I know what I'll do with this,' said Frank to himself; 'I'll soak the beast in my bath till evening, and then see if I can cut him open and stuff him a bit; he seems to have been perfectly sun-dried.'

The crocodile was bestowed in a long plunge bath, and covered with water. Frank found it not sufficiently softened that evening, and had to skirmish elsewhere for a bath next morning in consequence. But the following evening, on taking the reptile out of soak, it was found to be much more amenable to the knife; and after dinner, Frank returned to his quarters prepared thoroughly to enjoy himself. First he got into some loose old flannels; then tucked up his sleeves, took his treasure finally out of the bath, carefully dried it, placed it stomach upwards upon his table, which he had previously covered with brown paper for the purpose, and then, taking up his sharpest knife, began his operations. The skin of the crocodile's stomach was now pretty soft and flexible; it had apparently never been touched with the knife, and Frank made a long incision from the chest to near the tail. Then, taking back the skin on either side, he prepared to remove what remained of the long-mummified interior. As he cut and scraped hither and thither, his knife came twice or thrice in contact with pieces of gravel. Two pebbles were found and put aside, and again the knife-edge struck something hard.

'Hang these pebbles!' exclaimed the operator; 'they'll ruin my knife. What the dickens do these creatures want to turn their intestines into gravel-pits for, I wonder?'

His hand sought the offending stone, which was extracted and brought to the lamp-light. Now this pebble differed from its predecessors—differed so materially in shape and touch, that Frank held it closer yet to the light. He stared hard at the stone, which, as it lay between his thumb and forefinger, looked not unlike a symmetrical piece of clear gum-arabic, and then, giving vent to a prolonged whistle, he exclaimed, in a tone of suppressed excitement, 'By all that's holy! A fifty carat stone! Worth hundreds, or I'm a Dutchman.'

He sat down, pushed the crocodile farther from him, brought the lamp nearer, turned up the wick a little, and then, placing the diamond—for diamond it was—on the table between him and the lamp, proceeded to take a careful survey of it, turning it over now and again. The stone resembled in its shape almost exactly the bull's-eye sweetmeat of the British schoolboy. It was of a clear, white colour, and when cut would, as Frank Farnborough very well knew, turn out a perfect brilliant of fine water. There was no trace of 'off-colour' about it, and it was apparently flawless and perfect. South African diamond experts can tell almost with certainty from what mine a particular stone has been produced, and it seemed to Frank that the matchless octahedron in front of him resembled in character the finest stones of the Vaal River diggings—from which the choicest gems of Africa have come.

Many thoughts ran through the young man's brain. Here in front of him, in the compass of a small walnut, lay wealth to the extent of some hundreds of pounds. Where did that stone come from? Did the crocodile swallow it with the other pebbles on the Mahalapsi river, or the banks of the adjacent Limpopo? Why, there might be—nay, probably was—another mine lying dormant up there—a mine of fabulous wealth. Why should he not be its discoverer, and become a millionaire? As these thoughts flashed through his brain, a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a merry feminine voice exclaimed, 'Why, Mr Farnborough, what *have* you got there?'

Frank seized the diamond, sprang up with flushed face and excited eyes, and was confronted with Nina and her brother, both regarding him very curiously.

Otto Staarbrucker spoke first. 'Hullo, Frank! You seem to be mightily engrossed. What's your wonderful discovery?'

The Englishman looked keenly from one to another of his interrogators, hesitated momentarily, then made up his mind and answered frankly, but in a low, intense voice.

'My wonderful discovery is this. Inside that dried-up crocodile I've found a big diamond. It's worth hundreds anyhow, and there must be more where it came from. Look at it, but for God's sake keep quiet about it.'

Staarbrucker took the stone from Frank, held it upon his big fat white palm, and bent down to the lamp-light. Nina's pretty, dark head bent down too, so that her straying hair touched her brother's as they gazed earnestly at the mysterious gem. Presently Otto took the stone in his fingers, held it to the light, weighed it carefully, and then said solemnly and sententiously, 'Worth eight hundred pounds, if it's worth a red cent!'

Nina broke in, 'My goodness, Frank—Mr Farnborough—where *did* you get the stone from, and what are you going to do with it?'

'Well, Miss Nina,' returned Frank, looking pleasantly at the girl's handsome, excited face, 'I hardly know how to answer you at present. That crocodile came from up-country, and I suppose the diamond came from the same locality. It's all tumbled so suddenly upon me, that I hardly know what to say or what to think. The best plan, I take it, is to have a

good night's sleep on it; then I'll make up my mind in the morning, and have a long talk with your brother and you. Meanwhile, I know I can trust to you and Otto to keep the strictest silence about the matter. If it got known in Kimberley, I should be pestered to death, and perhaps have the detectives down upon me into the bargain.'

'That's all right, Frank, my boy,' broke in Staarbrucker, in his big Teutonic voice; 'we'll take care of that. Nina's the safest girl in Kimberley, and this is much too important a business to be ruined in that way. Why, there may be a fortune for us all, where that stone came from, who knows?'

Already Otto Staarbrucker spoke as if he claimed an interest in the find; and although there was not much in the speech, yet Frank inly resented the patronising tone in which it was delivered.

'Well, I've pretty carefully prospected the interior of this animal,' said Frank, showing the now perfectly clean mummy. 'He's been a good friend to me, and I'll put him away, and we'll have a smoke.'

For another two hours, the three sat together on the stoep at the back of the house, discussing the situation. Staarbrucker fished his hardest to discover the exact whereabouts of the place from whence the crocodile had come. Frank fenced with his palpably leading questions, and put him off laughingly with, 'You shall know all about it in good time. For the present you may take it the beast came from his natural home somewhere up the Crocodile River.* Presently the sitting broke up, and they retired to their respective rooms. Nina's handshake, as she said good-night to Frank, was particularly friendly, and Frank himself thought he had never seen the girl look more bewitching.

'Pleasant dreams,' she said, as she turned away; 'I'm so glad of your luck. I suppose to-night you'll be filling your pockets with glorious gems in some fresh Tom Tiddler's ground. Mind you put your diamond under your pillow and lock your door. Good-night.'

Otto Staarbrucker went to his bedroom too, but not for some hours to sleep. He had too much upon his mind. Business had been very bad of late. The Du Toit's Pan mine had been shut down, and had still further depressed trade at his end of the town, and, to crown all, he had been gambling in Rand mines, and had lost heavily.

Otto's once flourishing business was vanishing into thin air, and it was a question whether he should not immediately cut his losses and get out of Kimberley with what few hundreds he could scrape together, before all had gone to ruin.

This diamond discovery of Frank Farnborough's somehow strongly appealed to his imagination. Where that magnificent stone came from, there must be others—probably quantities of them. It would surely be worth risking two or three hundred in exploration. Frank was a free, open-hearted fellow enough, and although not easily to be driven, would no doubt welcome his offer to find the money for prospecting thoroughly upon half profits, or some such bargain. It *must* be done; there seemed no other reasonable way out of the tangle of difficulties that beset him. He would speak to Frank about it early in the morning. Comforted with this reflection, he fell asleep.

* The Limpopo River is in South Africa universally known as the Crocodile.

## THE FAR DISTANCES OF OUR UNIVERSE.

By Agnes Giberne,
Author of *Sun, Moon, and Stars; Radiant Suns*, &c.

It is not accidentally, but on purpose, that the word 'our' is used in the name of this article. 'The' universe would be quite as correct, because 'our' universe is 'the' universe to us who live in it; and yet the distinguishing adjective might here mislead men's minds through failing to carry out its own proper office. Those who hear 'the universe' spoken of as descriptive of the stellar system do not always distinguish between this universe and other universes, between 'our' universe and universes which are not 'ours.'

It seems to be somewhat of a pity that the word has been allowed to fall into this particular use, as descriptive only of a starry system. Its original meaning, as defined in an etymological dictionary, is 'the universal or whole system of created things;' and until recent years 'the Universe' included the idea of all creation. Then the fact began to dawn upon astronomers that our particular starry system was *not* all creation, and one and another began to apply the word 'universe' to our starry system in particular, while other possible starry systems were also spoken of as 'other universes.' The alteration is somewhat of a pity, because there would seem to be no other word equally good to take its place in the old sense. One may speak of 'Creation' as inclusive of all universes or starry systems; but it might perhaps have been better had 'universe' been allowed to retain its proper meaning, as synonymous with 'all creation,' and as inclusive of all starry systems. Possibly we may yet in the course of years revert to this older signification of the term.

That such other starry systems do exist can hardly be questioned. Wide as are the limits of the stupendous system of stars, within which our little earth finds a home, that system has limits; it is not infinite in extent. Far, very far, as its distances reach, there is a surrounding belt of space, wherein the stars of our universe grow thinner and yet more thin, dying slowly out, like the scattered trees on the verge of some vast forest. And beyond those scattered border-stars is a mighty and dark void. But beyond the void other universes surely lie; not *our* universe, but brother universes to ours; perhaps greater in extent than the one in which our lot is cast. Whether the faintest gleam of light ever travels to us from those starry systems is a question which cannot be answered, because it depends upon other questions which still remain unsolved;

but that they actually exist we can hardly doubt. All astronomical analogies point in that direction. Beyond granting their probable existence, however, we know positively nothing about those outer systems of stars. We have enough to do in trying to explore our own.

The universe—our universe—the one starry system of which we can know anything definite, is composed of our sun with his attendant worlds; and of all the stars visible to us in the sky, whether seen by the naked eye or through telescopes, together with their attendant worlds; and of most if not all of the star-clusters and nebulæ scattered among the stars.

'How far off are the stars?' asks somebody of an inquiring mind; and he is perhaps told in answer that such a star is so many thousands of millions of miles away, that such another is so many billions of miles away, that yet another is so many hundreds of billions of miles away. And very likely he shakes his head over the information, feeling that all three figures are alike to him. Millions are millions, and billions are billions; but the idea conveyed by both expressions, as applied to measurement of distance, is simply one of enormous extent. Millions and billions are much the same in one's imagination. If we wish to form any definite notion as to the extent of our starry system, it is best to begin with objects nearer at hand, and to widen the distance gradually in thought to those objects which lie farther off.

In all the heavens, with the exception of passing meteors or meteorites, not one body occupies a position closer to earth than the moon, which is some two hundred and forty thousand miles away. Very far, of course, side by side with any earthly distances, but a mere fraction side by side with other astronomical distances. Next to the moon our nearest occasional neighbour is Venus, and then Mars. Both Venus and Mars, however, are often farther away from us than the sun, which remains always at somewhere about the same distance, roughly at from ninety to ninety-three millions of miles. This dividing space between sun and earth is of great importance in thinking about the stars, and it should be clearly impressed upon the mind. Next to the sun, in point of nearness, come the more distant planets; Jupiter, which is about five times as far from the sun as our earth is; Saturn, nearly twice as far as Jupiter; Uranus, nearly twice as far as Saturn; and Neptune, nearly three times as far as Saturn. All these planets belong to our sun, all are members of his family, all are part of the solar system. The size of the solar system as a whole, consisting thus of the sun and his planets, including our earth, may be fairly well grasped by any one taking the trouble to master two simple facts. They are these—that our earth is roughly about ninety-two millions of miles away from the sun, and that Neptune, the outermost planet of the solar system, is nearly thirty times as far distant from the sun as our earth is.

Despite the actual greatness of the Solar System, as expressed in miles, it may be looked upon as something very small indeed, compared with the vastness, the immensity, of the Stellar System—that 'universe' of which our entire solar system forms but one insignificant spot. To gain any true idea of the universe, it has been needful to begin with our sun's system; and a small beginning it is. Small in one sense. Our earth's diameter, eight thousand miles, is large if compared with the distance which divides London from St Petersburg, but it is a trifle compared with the gap which separates our earth from the moon. And the space between earth and sun, though vast if compared with that which divides earth from moon, is a mere *bagatelle* compared with the abyss which intervenes between our solar system and the nearest star.

Some people find a curious difficulty in mentally distinguishing between stars and planets. Again and again they hear that stars are suns, and that planets are worlds, that a sun is not a world, and that a planet is not a star; and their confusion of mind on the subject remains untouched. Yet the distinction is not really difficult to grasp, and to see it clearly is quite essential to any understanding of the heavens. Our sun is a star, brother to all those twinkling points which lie scattered over the night-sky. Our world is not a star but a planet, sister to the few shining but non-twinkling bright bodies which appear to wander slowly among the stars. The planets belong to our solar system—all of them, without exception, that we are able to see. Other planets belonging to other stars may and doubtless do exist in countless millions through the universe; but we have no power to detect their presence. They, like the planets which belong to our sun, shine by the reflected brightness of their particular star, not by their own intrinsic radiance; and so they cannot be seen at a very great distance. Any watcher, with eyesight and telescopes such as ours, gazing from the region of any star in the sky, outside our solar system, would see nothing whatever of the planets or the moons of our system. He might make out the sun, as a more or less dim star; he would not be able to detect Jupiter or Saturn, still less our little earth.

And it must be remembered that every single star in the whole universe lies outside our solar system, with only one exception. That exception is our sun. So by the Solar System we mean the little family or kingdom of one star, known to us as the sun; and that star is one of tens of millions of stars which all together make up the enormous Stellar System; and that stellar system is doubtless one of very many—perhaps millions—of stellar systems, all of which together make up the created Universe, using that word in its older and not in its more modern sense.

It is worth while making an effort to picture to ourselves the vast extent of the starry system, in which we reside. Having gained some faint notion of the extent of the lesser solar system, which occupies a small corner of the stellar system, we must work outward from that beginning. Let us take for our unit of measurement the space which separates earth from sun;

and let the ninety-two millions of miles of this distance be represented in our minds by one single inch. In proportion, the sun himself must be pictured by a tiny ball, less than one-hundredth of an inch in diameter; while our earth must be a mere speck, less than one-ten-thousandth of an inch in diameter. And this little sun and this minute earth must be just one inch asunder.

Following out the same idea, Mercury and Venus, being closer to the sun than we are, have to be less than one inch away from him; while Jupiter will be five inches off, Saturn will be ten inches off, Uranus will be over nineteen inches off, Neptune will be almost thirty inches off. Then the solar system as a whole, leaving only out of the question certain comets which travel farther, will be enclosed in a circle, less than *two yards in diameter.*

The question arises next—what will be the proportionate size of the stellar system on this same scale of measurement? If the solar system is to be comprised with a hoop, not two yards across, how wide a space should we allow to the surrounding system of stars, 'our universe?' How near will be the nearest of outlying stars? And the answer is sufficiently startling. If the sun is reckoned to be one inch away from our earth, if Neptune is reckoned to be less than three feet away from the sun; then, on the same scale, the star which lies closest of all outer stars in the whole universe to us, Alpha Centauri by name, must be reckoned as lying at a distance of about *three and a half miles!* And between the two—nothing! At least, nothing in the shape of a star. An occasional comet may lag slowly along in the darkness, finding its way from one sun-system to another; and dark bodies, cooled suns, may possibly float here or there unseen by us; but of stars, radiant with heat and light, none are found in that wide area.

Astronomical writers sometimes talk of stars 'in the vicinity' of the sun; and this is what is meant by 'vicinity.' Think of the distances implied. Our whole solar system is first brought down into a small circle, two yards across—every inch in those yards standing for more than ninety millions of miles—and then, on every side and above and below, is an encompassing void of three and a half miles; every inch of those miles again representing more than ninety millions of miles. And then we come upon one gleaming star! Only one quite so near. Another star in the sun's 'vicinity,' known as 61 Cygni, would lie at a distance of seven miles; and the brilliant Sirius would be over ten miles off. Others must be placed at distances of twenty miles, fifty miles, one hundred miles. It is easy to start with a list of these figures; it is not easy to say where one should stop. That the starry system has limits we do not doubt; but to define those limits is not possible. On such a scale as is given above, those limits certainly would not lie within a distance of one hundred miles, nor of one thousand miles. It is believed that some dim stars, barely to be detected, may be ten thousand times as far away as our sun's nearest neighbour, Alpha Centauri; and this at once gives, even on our very much reduced scale, a line from the centre of thirty-five thousand miles. Suppose that the limits of the stellar system lay somewhere about there. Thirty-five thousand miles each way from the centre would mean a diameter for the whole of seventy thousand miles. Imagine a starry system, seventy thousand miles across from side to side; each inch in those miles representing ninety-two millions of real miles; and somewhere in the midst of it our small solar system, just two yards across, separated from all other stars by a wide blank of three or four miles!

That would be stupendous enough. But we have no reason whatever for supposing that the limits of our universe do lie there. The true boundaries of the stellar system may be twice as far, four times as far, ten times as far. We do not even know with certainty that our solar system is placed anywhere near its centre, though this seems rather likely. Far off as the boundary reaches in one direction, it may reach much farther in another direction.

An illustration very commonly used, to convey some idea of star distances, is that of the passage of light; and an allusion to it here may tend to enforce the illustration already used. A ray of light travels at the rate of about one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles in one second. Light coming from the sun reaches us in less than nine minutes; and from Alpha Centauri in about four years and four months. Here again we have the wide surrounding void between our sun and all other stars. Here again we have to remember that beyond the nearer stars are multitudes of more distant stars, and that the light from them arrives here, not in four years, but in ten years, in twenty years, in fifty or a hundred years, in a thousand or five thousand years, and so on. Here again no limit can be definitely placed. It has been roughly calculated that the whole stellar system may perhaps consist of somewhere about one hundred millions of stars; but no doubt it may equally well consist of two hundred millions. It has also been roughly calculated, or conjectured, that the light of a star on one outer verge of the system may perhaps travel across the whole breadth of the system to the opposite outer verge in the course of some thirty thousand years—each instant of those thirty thousand years, darting through one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles of space. But the length of time occupied in this journey might equally well be fifty or sixty thousand years.

The entire universe must, one would think, be a marvellous tangle of star-beams; all these millions of suns sending forth each moment all their millions of light-rays; and all those rays, once started, travelling onward and onward in a direct line to the utmost extent of the system—how much farther still, who shall say?—unless stopped in mid-career. But although the rays are there in a sense, they are not visible as light, except when they strike upon and are checked by some object in their path. Space itself, through which these rays are hastening, may be said to be dark. The light is hidden till the beams are captured.

Another curious fact in connection with this

subject is the *historical* nature of starlight. What we see, when we look at the heavens, is the stars as they once were, not as they are at this moment. This is an oft-told truth, yet it can hardly be too often told, because it is not easy of realisation. Suppose that you are gazing at a distant lamp. You see that lamp as it was when the ray which now strikes your eye left it. No matter that the time between is very short; still it exists; for light always takes time to travel. If that lamp is put out, you continue to see it for a fraction of a second after its light has ceased to be. In the matter of a lamp, the fraction of time is too small to be appreciable; but in the matter of light from the stars, matters are widely different.

Here is a ray of sunlight resting on your face. That ray tells you of the state of the sun close upon nine minutes ago. It brings you a picture of the sun, as the sun was then. It does not tell you of the condition of the sun now, at this instant.

Look at bright Sirius, shining and twinkling in the sky. The ray of light that impinges on your eye-ball tells you what Sirius was like, more than ten years ago. It is quite conceivable that Sirius may no longer be exactly like that. Within the last six months Sirius *might* have undergone a collision with some other star, and might have blazed up in consequence with a tenfold splendour. Not at all likely, of course; but not among events utterly impossible. If things were so, the news would come to you, brought by star-beams travelling from Sirius—not to-morrow, or next year, but somewhere about ten years or more hence. From now till then all rays coming in from Sirius would have started before the collision took place, and so they would be able to say nothing about it. Speaking in human language, they would not know anything of that collision.

Or look through a telescope at some tiny star, invisible to the naked eye. The light from that star perhaps left its surface before the time of William the Conqueror. It may be—it is not quite impossible—that the tiny star has since those days actually left off shining; but still we see it in our sky, because the rays which started while it yet shone are arriving moment by moment, telling us the story of what the star was like, hundreds of years ago, before it parted with its brightness.

Perhaps again we are examining through a large telescope a faint and far-off nebula; a mass of whirling gases, the light of which has taken, say, ten thousand years to get here. We see what the nebula was like in prehistoric ages. It may since then have lessened in size and changed in shape. It may now wear a very different aspect; and men looking from earth, ten thousand years hence, will be able to see what that nebula was like in our days. All these things help us to understand what the immensity of the stellar system is—and yet more, to imagine dimly what the measureless extent of all creation must be, if many such star-systems float side by side throughout the vast domains of space.

One other fact must not be lost sight of; and this is, the rapid and incessant motion of all the stars. Our starry system is no fixed and rigid mass. We talk indeed of 'fixed stars,' and our ancestors believed in them; but we now know better. The constellations keep their respective shapes through ages, yet such a phenomenon as an immovable star is not found in the universe. Not a star in the heavens remains ever for two consecutive seconds in the same place. Every distant sun is on the steady rush toward some goal; and each sun carries with him, wherever he goes, all his attendant worlds and satellites.

Our sun is speeding through space at the rate of many hundreds of thousands of miles each day; nevertheless, the enormous distance which separates us from the nearest star is not apparently thereby diminished. That is to say, we cannot see, we cannot take cognisance of, the diminishment. So wide and vast is the dividing chasm, that if our sun were to continue steadily onward at his present rate, and if the motion were straight towards Alpha Centauri, and if Alpha Centauri remained for ages where he is, we should not approach the actual neighbourhood of that star in less than one hundred and fifty thousand years.

And with other stars it is the same. They, too, are hastening onward, this way and that way. Most of them are doubtless held in and controlled by the whole mass of their companion-stars, each exerting a measure of attractive power over all the rest. Some few stars are known to be whirling along at speeds so terrific, that it has been seriously questioned whether all the stars in the stellar system can possibly hold them in—whether they are not mere passing visitants from some other starry system or universe, coming out from the black vista on one side, passing through our midst during a few millions of years of journeying, then plunging into the dark vista on the other side, never to return.

Things may be so. We know little about the matter; and until we can at least roughly number the stars of which our stellar system is formed, we cannot possibly calculate the power of control which they unitedly possess over any individual in their midst. If things were so, it would be, on a much vaster scale, somewhat analogous to the visitations of strange comets, often known in our solar system—comets coming from other sun-systems, passing among the planets, then rushing off in a new direction. We are a great deal more at home in affairs of the Solar System than in those of the Stellar System.

These wondrous 'far distances' of the universe, using the word in either its narrower or its wider sense, bring a sense of oppression and of bewilderment. Not miles upon miles, but millions of miles upon millions of miles are heaped together, till the brain refuses to accept the offered load. But, while it is not possible to picture to ourselves the reality of those immeasurable wastes, amid which distant stars at wide intervals are found to float, it is possible, by some such method as is offered above, to gain a notion of the *comparative* proportions of the world we live in, of the smaller system to which our world belongs, of the vaster system of which that little system forms a part, and of the

stupendous Universe of all creation, throughout which stars and star-systems innumerable are scattered like fine gold-dust by the Hand of the Divine Creator.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By Sir Walter Besant.

### CHAPTER XII.—MUTINY.

In this manner was the emancipation of Isabel begun. It was effected, you have seen, by making her physically strong and well, by giving her courage, by providing her with something to think about, by relieving the monotony of her life, and, lastly, by the introduction, the treacherous introduction, of Love the Rebel.

'You've done wonders for the girl,' said the Captain one day. 'Wonders, you have. I don't hardly know her, she's so changed. Why, she sings now, and she plays her music half the day and every day. She that used to be such a shy and timid thing, afraid of her own voice. Perhaps, Sir George,' he would never abandon the title, it gave him a sense of self-importance to be talking with a baronet; 'perhaps you don't notice these trifles, but you must have seen the change that's come over the puddings.'

'No—really? Over the puddings?'

'There's a lightness about them, more jam, since the girl got brighter. Ah! It's quite natural. When the soul is heavy, the pudding comes out heavy too. And the teas are quite remarkable compared with what they were. There's a spiciness about the cake now.'

'Well, Captain, do you think that Robert has noticed any change?'

'No. He never notices anything.'

'Don't you think, Captain, that a word from you'——

'No, sir. He won't listen to one word, nor a thousand words, from anybody.'

'Consider, your daughter's happiness is at stake. Can any girl like to go on year after year engaged to a man who treats her with absolute neglect and icy coldness? Is it fair to keep a girl going on in this way year after year? Could he not, at least, take back his promise and set her free? You are her father; it is for you to interfere.'

The Captain froze instantly. 'Perhaps, Sir George, under ordinary circumstances that might be so. But you forget that we have eaten Robert's bread and slept under his roof for five years, and you forget besides that he is the most masterful man in the world, and he means to have his own way.'

'Still, to marry a girl against her will'——

'How do I know that it is against her will? To be sure she's a little afraid of him—many women are afraid of the man before they marry. Afterwards it's different, and let me tell you, sir, that most women like a man to be masterful. They get their own way fast enough; but they like him to be masterful.'

'Perhaps; but this neglect of Robert's'——

'Never mind that. He'll make it up when they do marry. It's all there, only bottled up. These bottles do pour it out when the time comes—in the most surprising manner. You'll see what an appreciative husband he'll make some day. Let things be, Sir George. You've brought her health and roses; Robert, who will be grateful when he notices it, will do all the rest. I daresay she frets and peaks a bit for want of the kissing and the fondling that all girls naturally expect. Let her have a little patience, I say. And don't let's disturb things when they are comfortable, especially the puddings.'

We spoke no more of love. We continued to go about together with free and unrestrained discourse. As the evenings began to close in, we ceased the long journeys to villages and village churches, and took picture-galleries and concerts instead on Saturday afternoon. Or I remained in the evening at the house, while Isabel played and sang to me; she played much better already, and she sang with untrained sweetness. One evening, when the pianoforte was loaded with new music and new songs, and the books she was reading—she laid her hands upon them all. 'You have given me everything,' she said. 'But these things are only alleviations. The future is always before me—dark and horrible. Oh! I pray that it may be postponed so long as to become impossible. I shall grow old and ugly, and then I hope he will take back his promise.'

'Unless,' I said, 'he can be induced to take it back before.'

Then an incident took place which disquieted me very much indeed—a very dangerous incident. It was this: Robert was in his study after dinner forging an oration. Isabel was in the parlour practising. On the table was a bundle of papers and certain blue-books. He took up the books and began to turn over the leaves, marking passages. He wanted these passages copied to be used in his speech. He took paper and pen and began to copy. Then Isabel's playing reminded him of her. He got up, opened the door and called her.

She came obediently. That afternoon she was dressed in some light blue stuff with a ribbon and a flower, because she now loved a little touch of finery. The soft cheek, the depths of her eyes, her light feathery hair, her ethereal look might have moved the heart of St Anthony. So far they had produced no impression at all upon her lover.

He nodded when she appeared: nodded pleasantly: he had a very fine speech nearly ready: he had learned it by heart: it was certain to carry the people away: he only wanted these extracts copied.

'Take these blue-books,' he said, with the old tone of command. 'You will find the pages marked with a red pencil. Copy out all the

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passages marked, and let me have them by to-morrow morning.'

'I am no longer your clerk, Robert.'

'What?'

'I say that I am no longer your clerk. You released me three months ago. Had I continued, I believe I should have been dead by this time. I will not copy passages for you.'

'Isabel?' He was amazed.

'Let us understand each other. I am your housekeeper. I will do for the house anything and everything. I am not your clerk or your private secretary or your accountant. You must get some one else to do that work for you.'

'Isabel?'

'I am grateful to you for taking us in, and keeping us all these years. If you think I ought to do more for my father's maintenance and my own, I will give up and try for another place.'

'You are a fool, Isabel,' he said roughly.

'Very likely. Is it polite to tell me so? You have learned a great deal about the world of late, Robert; do you think it is polite to call the girl you are engaged to—a fool?'

'No—no—no—of course, I didn't mean that. But—Isabel—what in the world has come over you?'

He actually saw the change at last, or something of the change; not all of it, otherwise the subsequent history would be different. It was the very first time that the girl had ever refused work, or objected, or complained. For four or five months there had been slowly going on under his eyes the transformation of which you have heard; but because it was so slow and gradual, and because he was always completely absorbed in himself, and because he had never thought it necessary to consider the appearance of the girl at all, having still in him so much of the working man as not to desire beauty in his wife, and not to think about it—he had observed nothing. Now, however, when the word of resistance and refusal opened his eyes, he was amazed to see standing before him in the place of the mild, meek maiden, who humbly took whatever he gave, and humbly executed whatever he commanded, always with downcast eyes and hanging head, a lovely, airy, fairy creature, too dainty altogether for such a man as himself, a beautiful, bright, sunny girl, a head held upright, and steady eyes that met his own without the least fear or show of humility.

'Isabel!' he repeated, 'what in the name of wonder has come over you?'

'I don't know. You have been thinking about your own affairs, I suppose. But oh—it is nothing.' She turned to leave him, being, in fact, frightened at the admiration expressed in his eyes for the first time—quite a new expression, and it terrified her horribly.

'No, no; don't go, Isabel;' he leaned back in his chair. 'You are looking so wonderfully well, and—and pretty this afternoon.'

She began to tremble. Robert to say things complimentary?

'There is nothing more to say, is there?'

He leaned his chin in his left hand, and replied slowly. 'I remember now. George talked to me about you, Isabel, when he first came. He said you were overworked. I don't always remember, perhaps, that you are only a girl. I may have given you too much to do.'

'I am only housekeeper now.'

'Very well, then. I don't mean to be unkind, you see. But, of course, I can't be always thinking about your health, and your whims, can I?'

'Of course not.'

'George said you wanted fresh air, and a change, and exercise, and all kinds of fiddle-faddle stuff, and to see how other girls carry on—so as to take your proper place when I have advanced myself. Well, I told him I wished he would take care of you, and take you about a bit, seeing that I couldn't afford the time myself. Has he taken you about?'

'Yes. All the summer. He has been most kind and generous.'

'George is that sort of man, I believe. Ready to waste any amount of time in dangling after a girl. Well, Isabel, as I could not dangle after you, I am very much obliged to him. And I must say that the change is wonderful. You look ever so much better. Your face, which used to be too pale, is full of colour, and your eyes are brighter—and—why, Isabel, give me your hands.'

He held out both hands, but Isabel made no response. And there was that look in his eyes which frightened her. He got up, not hastily, not like a Passionate Pilgrim, but slowly and with the dignity of possession and authority. Isabel trembled and shook. Between herself and the door stood Robert. She could not run away. She thought of crying for help—her father was in his own room—but a girl can hardly call out for protection against the threatened kiss of her engaged lover. And perhaps he didn't mean it after all. Yet his eyes looked hungry.

In the corner beside the fireplace stood one of those revolving bookcases filled with books; a heavy thing which turns round when pushed with zeal and vigour. Isabel retreated behind this bookcase. 'Let me go,' she cried. 'Do not touch me.'

'I don't want to hurt you,' he said. 'Come out of that corner, Isabel. Why, you are not a baby, and you are my girl. Come out quietly, and don't be silly.'

'No—you promised—you said that there should be no—no'——

'Oh! yes. Stuff and nonsense! I said so, I daresay. I couldn't interrupt work and distract my thoughts with fondling and kissing. Not to be expected. Besides, that was a year ago and more, and you were not the girl then that you are now. Come, Isabel, don't be shy.'

'No—no—I won't have it. I couldn't bear it. Oh, horrible! Let me go.' She gave the bookcase a vigorous shove, and it revolved ponderously with its weight of a hundred books. Robert fell back.

It is not pleasant for one's sweetheart to speak of a threatened kiss as horrible. His face grew dark.

'You are going to marry me, Isabel, I believe.'

'Not yet: not for a long time yet. Not till

you are an Archbishop of Canterbury, or something. And until we do marry, Robert, I will take you at your word. There shall be no fondling, as you call it.'

'When you marry me you will have to obey me. There can only be one master in one house.'

'I am not your wife yet, remember. I am not at your orders except as your housekeeper. Pray do not imagine that you have any right to command a woman because she has promised to be your wife. After I am your wife—if ever I am'——

He wavered. 'Of course,' he said, 'I cannot command your obedience so long as you are not my wife. But come out from that retreat and sit down and let us talk. I will not attempt to command you in anything. Perhaps we need not wait so long as first we thought. Perhaps—as soon as I am in the House'——

'No,' she replied. 'You must promise to let me go, or I will stay behind this bookcase all night.'

'You can go then, Isabel,' he replied, flinging himself into his chair. 'I will not stop you.'

She passed out without a word. But she was shaken: she went to her own room and sat down to think. Was Robert, too, changing? Was his ancient indifference turning into admiration: and though her experience of the manly heart was small, she felt by instinct that admiration might at any moment leap into passion: and passion into a demand for the fulfilment of her promise. 'Oh!' she groaned and cried, 'I cannot marry him—I cannot—I cannot—I would rather die.'

But she told no one, not even her physician. And that evening the furrow reappeared on her brow, and the cloud on her face, and Robert coming into tea saw again the maiden meek and mild, and wondered what had become of the princess, and why he had experienced, if only for a brief moment, that novel and singular feeling of admiration.

'George,' said Robert after tea, when we were alone. 'Women are queer, skittish creatures. There's Isabel now.'

'Yes. There is Isabel.'

'Formerly I had only to lift my little finger and she ran. She'd do just as much work as I pleased to order. To-day she flatly refused to do anything.'

'Quite right.'

'And when I told her—a man may surely say so much to his own girl—that she was changed and improved—which she certainly is—thanks to you—she wanted to run away.'

'Did she?'

'And when I offered to kiss her—a man may surely kiss his own girl—she shrieked out and ran behind the revolving bookcase.'

'Oh! Did she. But, I say, Robert, didn't you promise that there was to be no kissing and fondling and stuff?'

'Well—well—I did, I daresay. But who wanted to kiss the girl a year ago? It's different now. She's become an amazingly pretty girl. If it wasn't for this election business I would—I certainly would'——

'Better not,' I said solemnly. 'Much better not—yet.'

And now you understand how disquieting this incident was.

## REMINISCENCES OF TYNESIDE.

Up to little more than half a century ago, the population, wholly seafaring, of the weather-beaten, salt-encrusted, muddy little seaport of Shields 'knew less of England and its people than of countries across the ocean and their multifarious inhabitants.' An isolated position, bad roads, and intense local jealousies were accountable for this; these hardy and unruly townsfolk were indeed a people apart, embittered by centuries of battling for their rights, sometimes even their very existence, with their big bullying neighbour up the water, Newcastle. If these North Sea sailors, fishers, smugglers, or whatever else they might be, knew little of England, England for its part knew as little of them, and likely enough cared less. Nevertheless, North Shields has a romance and a history all its own, interesting even for those who know nothing of the town save the name. In *The 'Maister,' a Century of Tyneside Life*, by George H. Haswell (Walter Scott, 1895), although mainly a biography of Mr Haswell's father, Thomas Haswell, for fifty years a well-known and respected citizen of Shields, we have a most interesting and curious account of the seaport and its tempest-tossed life. While giving an historical account of Shields from the earliest times, the book deals more particularly with the last hundred years.

At the beginning of the century, when the Great War was in full swing, the 'sentinel of the Tyne' enjoyed an importance it never had before, and has barely had since. Shields, at that time, consisted of a single long narrow street, composed of old-fashioned, high-peaked houses, jumbled together in no particular order. One side of the street rested against the high 'Banks' of the river; the other, on the water's-edge, was propped up by wooden piles slanting out into the stream. 'Scarce a house on the river-side but had its ruinous wharf or its gaudy-painted balcony, on which a few fresh herring, "split and peppered," were hung out to dry among the newly-washed duds which bellied out in the wind. Here and there a ship's bowsprit, reaching across the street from a vessel in one of the graving-docks, might be seen hospitably accommodated by an opened window into which it projected, the good woman at her housework or toilet chatting nonchalantly with the sailor who, busied with some mending of its gear, sat astride the spar.'

Squalid and dirty as it was, Shields was an uproarious place. It had then, as now, a large coal trade, and the crews of the colliers, with men-of-wars' men, and seamen of almost every

nationality, crowded the wharves, streets, and closes. From the tap-rooms of the many public-houses 'came the scratching rhythm of a horn-pipe, the discordant uproar of a sea-song with tipsy chorus, or the clamours of a drunken fight. Jack-tars capered to wretched fiddle or hurdy-gurdy, or leaned out of crazy casements to squirt the well-churned succulence of a sapid quid at the bumboat woman, who was chaffering below with a mate or stevedore, or bandying unfeminine compliments with a sister crafts-woman.' The stay-ashore part of the community—most of those who did not go to sea had something to do with ships—were as roistering and riotous as their seafaring brethren; and, altogether, noise, riot, and confusion generally, reigned from morning to night, and just as often from night to morning.

Strange and exciting sights were to be seen here too, as was to be expected in a seaport situated in the very thick of the fight, as it were. In the end of 1799 seven transports, carrying upwards of one thousand Russians and Cossacks—a remnant of the Duke of York's expedition to Holland—were driven into the Tyne through stress of weather. These truly strange foreigners, decidedly uncleanly, 'but very religious, strong, and robust,' came ashore in droves, and the Cossacks especially were objects of absorbing interest, being followed about by admiring groups, and the gorgeous and dazzling uniforms of the officers completely turned the heads of the female portion of Shields. This is, perhaps, the only instance of a Russian descent in force (although fortunately a friendly one) on our shores; always excepting, of course, these unfortunate Muscovites, who, more than fifty years afterwards, were compelled to accept our hospitality, much against their will. The fear of a hostile descent was ever present, and to guard against surprise, a heavy chain was stretched across the river-mouth, with windlasses at each side to haul it taut on occasion. Vessels were frequently chased into the Tyne by the enemy's cruisers or privateers; once, five hundred Schaeveningen fishing-boats found refuge there. The boom of hostile guns was no unusual sound to a Tynesider's ears; the inhabitants of Shields would often hasten down, or rather up, to the 'Banks' to watch a desperate sea-fight, or to follow the frigate 'under tremendous press of sail, mark down some unlucky foreign cruiser.'

Such was Shields at the beginning of the present century. Like other seaports, it had its full share of the attentions of the press-gang, and that institution was as cordially hated here as elsewhere. Many were the fierce and sometimes bloody encounters between the pressgang and the infuriated citizens; now and then the former came badly off, especially at the hands of the ship-carpenters, a resolute and pugnacious body, who had constituted themselves the special protectors of the harassed and persecuted Shields mariner. A tender or war-vessel was permanently stationed at Shields to receive the involuntary recruits for his majesty's service; some of these, however, managed to escape, either by cunning or by strategy. 'A sharp old South Shields "salt," on being impressed and taken on board the tender, ran up against the lieutenant on deck and instantly begged pardon—"he couldn't help it, he was so short-sighted." He was in consequence ordered over the ship's side and got off.' The lieutenant, apparently, was also short-sighted, else he would have seen through such a shallow artifice. Another man showed more daring and presence of mind. 'A smart young sailor sauntering one day along the "Banks" was seized by the chief of one of the gangs, who, pointing a pistol at his head, pressed him in the king's name. "I have a protection," said the sailor, putting his hand into the breast of his jacket. "Let me see it then," demanded the other. "Now, you thief," retorted Jack, as he drew out a pistol and pushed the muzzle of it into the face of his discomfited captor, who was thus obliged to relinquish his prize.' Thomas Haswell's father, a Shields seaman, had in his time the misfortune to be pressed into the frigate *Lizard*. While off the coast of Ireland, he and another pressed man determined to escape by swimming to the shore, close to which the frigate at the time was anchored. On the first dark night, when the sentry's back was turned, they slipped into the sea from the port side and swam silently off. They swam on and on, but no land was reached; at last, hopeless and utterly exhausted, they were compelled to turn, and with the utmost difficulty regained the ship, luckily getting on board unobserved. Nothing would induce Haswell to try the venture again, but his messmate made the attempt next night, and was never more heard of. The cause of their failure to reach the land was a simple one, perfectly well known, but in the excitement of attempted escape, had been entirely overlooked. The ship swung with the ebb and flood, and therefore presented opposite sides to the land at each change. Just at that time the port side was next the land during the day, but at night the starboard occupied that position; they had, consequently, been swimming *out to sea*, and thus, no doubt, the unfortunate man who went off alone on the second night perished.

It was in the midst of this war, tumult, and riot, that the first free school was founded, at the instance of a few enlightened citizens of Shields, who thought this a better way of celebrating King George's jubilee, than by spending the money collected for that purpose in fireworks. But 'eddicashin' was in those days looked upon by many as a thing not to be countenanced in any degree whatsoever. As a Shields shipowner indignantly exclaimed, 'Eddicashin! eddicashin? Noa! we'll syun hev nee sarvints!' Another weighty argument against education, especially in a place like

Shields, whose seafaring inhabitants at that time had more risks to encounter than they were subjected to by the elements, was

> For mickle waste he counteth it would be
> To stock a head with bookish wares at all,
> Only to be knocked off by ruthless cannon-ball.

The Royal Jubilee School was opened in 1811, but, owing to the almost universal objection to educating the masses, the learning which the trustees thus freely offered was so hedged in by restrictions that it was very poor plant indeed. Spelling, the Bible, and Watts's Hymns were about the only things taught, for the trustees, as the only means of surmounting opposition, availed themselves literally of good King George's desire that every poor child in the kingdom should be able to read his Bible.

After the Peace, Shields quietened down, and in the course of years was enlivened by few noteworthy events. The town grew, and spread over the 'Banks;' shipbuilding and the coal trade flourished, and the Low Street, in face of desperate opposition, was stormed by the sanitarians. But it was the beginning of the forties before the railway penetrated to Tyneside. Being thus cut off from the outer world, old customs and old traditions lingered long. The French feud was not yet forgotten, and a visible remembrance was the number of old cannon, which perchance in their day had breathed death and defiance against the enemy from the decks of doughty Tyne colliers, but which now, stuck muzzle downwards in the ground, served as convenient boundary marks or mooring posts. There were certain occurrences, however, all too frequent, which never lost their vital import to the wives and mothers of Shields, whose husbands or sons manned the fleet of colliers and other craft belonging to the Tyne. These were the North Sea gales. During winter, especially, a sudden north-east or south-east gale would strew the iron-bound coasts with the wrecks of unfortunate vessels caught on the lee-shore, or in a futile effort to seek the shelter of the Tyne.

Such scenes, as before remarked, were and are to some extent still to be witnessed, even in this age of steam. At the height of a gale the lifeboat may be of no use, and the ship goes to destruction. And in the Jubilee School, when the 'Maister' would call the roll next morning, Dixon, or Boyce, or little Thomson, will be returned absent, and some small shrill voice will utter the quite familiar explanation, 'Please, sir, his father's droonded.'

For in the year 1839, and in his thirty-second year, Thomas Haswell had returned as master to the school in which he had received the elements of his education. The general system of education at this time 'was dull, monotonous, and stereotyped, lacking every element of vitality. The lesson-books were written by persons devoid of capacity for (to say nothing of experience of) teaching; many were couched in a tone of ponderous priggishness and turgid self-satisfaction wholly detestable to any healthy mind.' It may readily be supposed that there was no sort of attraction here for the average boy, and especially for the untamed boy of Shields. Mr Haswell saw that something besides this kind of 'education' was required, and he gradually established a system of his own; he, in fact, anticipated by more than a generation, modern methods of education. But he had many and great difficulties to contend with, for, the school being kept afloat by voluntary subscriptions which did little more than meet current expenses, there was no money to spare for innovations or 'crazes;' and all that he did was by his own contrivance or at his own cost. The first 'craze,' introduced in his first year, was vocal music, which was a tremendous success, and gave the boys a new interest in school. His next innovation was maps, but, being unable to buy them, he painted, in gigantic proportions, the two terrestrial hemispheres on the wall. This gave the lads a living interest in geography, and the subject became a favourite one with them. 'For years the Jubilee lads were recognised, and feared, by Shields skippers, as tartars at geographical cross-examination.' Astronomy next was introduced; astronomy led to geometrical drawing, but Mr Haswell had to manufacture his own instruments. Free-hand drawing, on black-boards and slates, had by this time established itself. Reading the newspapers, for the advanced boys, was early introduced. 'The "Maister" perceived the inestimable advantages to be derived from the systematic use of the newspaper as a source of fluent idiomatic English.' As time went on, Mr Haswell introduced new scientific subjects, and even drill and gymnastics, as soon as he could procure the necessary apparatus. The success of these experiments in education was speedily apparent. In a very few years the number of scholars increased from forty (the number when Mr Haswell became master) to two hundred. There was no more playing truant; the boys were as anxious to attend school as parents were to have their children admitted.

Affairs were thus progressing most favourably for master and scholars, and to the great satisfaction of the trustees, when the passing of the Education Act in 1870 brought matters to a sudden crisis. Some of the subscribers refused to continue their subscriptions to the up-keep of the school, on the ground that they could not both pay taxes and give voluntary subscriptions for the same object. This compelled the trustees, if collapse was to be averted, to put the school under Government inspection in order to secure the Government grant. There was no help for it, and Mr Haswell had the humiliation of having to undergo an examination, after being for thirty years a successful master, as to his fitness to conduct a school! He passed. But the golden days were over. For now commenced a system of 'narrowing down,' and amazing schemes and codes were invented, which at first harassed the 'Maister,' and eventually disheartened him. In 1880 the Jubilee School was turned over to the Tynemouth school board, and in 1886, the 'Maister,' in his eightieth year, and the forty-ninth of his mastership, laid down the reins, to pass the short remainder of his days in well-earned rest. He died in 1889; no man in Shields more respected or regretted, by high or low,

rich or poor, than he. The ruling passion was strong in death, and the closing formula of each day's work was the closing words of his life, 'Slates away, boys!'

## WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO FIGHT A DUEL.

By C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne.

### I.

Though I am perhaps the least quarrelsome man in the world, it has been my fate to fight no less than two duels. One I confess to have sought; the other was thrust upon me: both occurred during the nineties of this nineteenth century. In each I received some bodily hurt.

The first of my duels took place in a small town of southern France. I was a resident there for the winter, had a tiny bachelor villa, and (through former acquaintance with the place) was on pretty intimate terms with a good many of my neighbours. There was an English element in the place, but the French of course predominated, and it was with the Frenchmen I usually found myself. The man with whom I fought was a *Provençal*, born close by.

He was a big, straggling fellow, lean, and with a bright bird's eye that was always glittering on you. He was a gentleman undoubtedly, had been educated in Marseilles, and had never wandered fifty miles from the Riviera coast. He was probably the most narrow-minded man that ever lived, and, on a diet of books and Anglo-phobe newspapers, he had imbibed a blind and poisonous hatred for the British nation that was unique in its completeness. His name was D'Arblay, and he called himself my friend.

That was the funny thing about the man. He cultivated the society of Englishmen, and individually (I think) he liked them. He was eternally running down *perfide Albion*, but nobody took much notice of that. The Englishman who lives abroad is so entirely confident about the superiority of his own Island that he doesn't often break out in the patriotic vein. It isn't his way. Besides, he finds that one short pitying smile often serves his purpose better than a whole volume of talk.

Now for two years I had endured D'Arblay's revilings of my native land with no more forcible retort than a series of these pitying smiles; and I think in the end he began to hate me, for one day, without warning, he started on a fresh topic which he must have known was calculated to wound me deeply. He commenced to talk mild evil about some one I cared for very much indeed, and that in a club-house before the ordinary mixed gathering of other men.

I warned him once, twice, and a third time; and he always said he meant no harm, and turned off what I had said with easy badinage, and continued his theme. But at last I saw, or thought I saw, his motive, and a hot anger boiled up in me.

'D'Arblay,' I said, 'if you want to fight, say so like a man. But drop talking about that girl, or I shall throw this inkstand at your head.'

'M'sieu,' he retorted, 'I dispute your right to be the censor of my conversation. The lady in question'——

I threw the inkstand.

The glass missed him, but the black fluid spirted over his face, and the technical insult had been given and received.

He bowed formally and left the club-house. I spoke to a couple of my friends and followed his example. Later, he appointed two seconds, and they consulted with mine; and a time was fixed for the meeting, and swords were chosen as the weapons.

D'Arblay was an average swordsman. I had seen him practise with a *maître d'escrime*, and had gauged his powers pretty well. For myself I knew of the art of fencing absolutely nothing whatever; and when everything was snugly arranged for the duel, I thought of this fact with something more than annoyance. I particularly did not want to be killed, because—well, because a certain lady had promised to marry me within a short time, and I—well, I did not want to disappoint her. And there was no backing out of the duel. One could afford to laugh at such a meeting in England. But in France it is another matter. Even the English winter residents would have looked askance at me if I had tried to disentangle myself. Moreover, there was another thing, more dangerous than wounds or death, and that was ridicule. A man may put up with being killed, but he cannot endure being laughed at. So I made up my mind that if D'Arblay did not disable me first, I would leave my mark on him in a way there was no mistaking. Mind I did not want to kill the fellow, only I did not intend to be mixed up in an affair which the newspapers could define as 'Another bloodless encounter,' and dismiss with a jeering paragraph.

So to sum up: I went on the field determined on forcing a serious fight, and a good deal fearing lest I myself should be the one to suffer.

We drove out to the place of meeting in the early morning, with a keen mistral blowing which chilled one to the bone. The others arrived simultaneously. There was quite a congregation of us: four seconds, two doctors, and the principals. But D'Arblay, being a Frenchman, liked a crowd, and I had to bow to the etiquette of the country whether I fancied it or not.

No politeness could have been more punctilious than ours, and none more icy. We two principals stripped to shirt and trousers, and I stood on the frost-rimed grass in my stocking feet. D'Arblay was opposite me, smiling grimly. We saluted one another with the bare glittering rapiers, and a second took up position behind each of us, standing ready with a walking-stick to knock up the blades at the least sign of a foul stroke. At least so I was warned. To myself I was wondering what a 'foul stroke' might be, so ignorant was I of the very elements of fencing. But I said nothing about this, and when D'Arblay crossed blades

with mine, I engaged him with whirling fury.

The blue steel flashed and stabbed a thousand circles in the chill morning air, and a pang of fear gripped me by the heart. I seemed to feel his blade passing through me in a hundred places. Death appeared inevitable. Every second I marvelled at finding myself alive.

To myself I accepted a mortal wound as inevitable; but I lusted to get my own blade through D'Arblay's body before I was killed. I could hardly see him. Our panting breath hung gray under the cold morning sun, so that we fought in a clammy mist. I lunged and *passadoed;* barely guarding at all; fighting on the offensive only, through sheer greed of getting in my own blow before I was *hors de combat.*

Then, before I knew what was happening, the duel ended. I was conscious of a feeling somewhere or other of a sear as with a hot iron. I understood that it meant I was wounded, and dully wondered where, though without being able to locate the hurt. I saw the walking-sticks of the seconds up-rise to beat down our weapons, and at the same moment I heard D'Arblay utter a shriek of pain. A heavy cane clashed down on my blade, and I drew back nearly burst for want of breath. These things take long to tell, but the whole of them had happened simultaneously—within one tick of a clock.

The surgeons rushed up to us with lint and bandages. Blood was running from my fingers on to the rapier's hilt. D'Arblay had scored my right fore-arm with a shallow gash a dozen inches long. He himself was in a worse case: I had run him through the shoulder.

My seconds tried to hold me back, but I was too warmed up to care much for the etiquette of the French duello then. I strode across to where D'Arblay lay in the surgeon's hands, with the blood pattering from my fingers on to the grass.

'M'sieu will apologise, I hope? I may mention that the lady is engaged to me.'

'I didn't know it,' said my opponent. 'Why didn't you tell me before? My dear fellow, I am most abominably sorry for having chattered. You have given me a pig of a stab, and that ought to settle accounts between us. Will you come and breakfast with me when we're both tied up?'

One of the seconds murmured at this informality.

'Sir,' I said, 'if you have anything to complain of, may I hear it?'

'Monsieur,' he replied, 'I think we had better consider this affair as ended now.'

II.

The other duel in which I took part was none of my seeking. It happened last year in Florida, where my wife and I were spending the winter, and was thrust upon me in a manner little short of murderous.

The beginning was in this wise: I detected a man cheating at cards. I was not playing myself, but the cheating was done to swindle a fellow who was my friend; and because I saw it, beyond shadow of doubt, I called out to him to stop play. Of course there was a row, and (if the sharper had not been in a minority of one) there might well have been shooting, after the custom of the country. But as it was, the thing was utterly flagrant; indeed, the man himself did not attempt to deny it; and he went away scattering nothing more dangerous than venomous wordy threats. We were left triumphant possessors of the field, and I waxed pedantic to my friend over the danger of playing games of chance for coin of the realm with casual hotel acquaintances. Three days later I went off into the Everglades alligator shooting, and for deer also, if I could come across any.

Now what the sport was like will not be spoken of here in detail. Sufficient to mention that amongst other things I came upon an orchid which I imagined to be new, and all thoughts of shooting were for the time submerged beneath the ardour of the collector. I laid down my rifle (a Remington ·400) against the stem of a magnolia tree, and began to feast my eyes upon the trails of hanging blossom.

I suppose I must have dawdled there a full hour, sketching, measuring, taking notes, culling specimens, when of a sudden something went *wisp* past the top of my head, and then close to, sounded the noisy crack of a heavy rifle. By a sort of useless instinct, the first thing I did was to start backwards and to duck my head; the next, to stare wildly round me. A glance showed beyond question where the bullet had come from. Down a glade of live-oaks, not sixty yards away, a man was busily engaged in slipping a fresh cartridge into the breech of a rifle, which had gray smoke-wreaths still crawling slowly from its muzzle. It was the fellow I had exposed for cheating at cards.

As I gazed, he finished loading, and sharply raised his weapon. I turned and ran like a frightened dog, zigzagging in my course to confuse his aim, and making for the magnolia tree. There I snatched up my own rifle, and darted behind the trunk.

I stopped and listened. Not a sound was to be heard which rose above the warm hum of the insects and the other never-ceasing noises of the forest. I could not doubt but that the man was watching me and waiting for his next opportunity to pick me off. My gorge rose at the thought of him. Brute! If he could fire a sitting shot at an unsuspecting man, I knew what I had to expect, and what I must do, if my own life was to be saved. I had got to depend on myself alone. In that solitude the next human creature might be twenty miles away.

*Thud!*

A bullet had struck the tree, and the noise of the shot came close upon its heels. I swung out from behind the trunk and lifted my rifle, when another shot whistled out from beneath the live-oaks, and I was poorer by the loss of an ear-lobe. My own bullet rattled harmlessly amongst the tree-twigs, and I strode back to shelter raging and bleeding.

The passion of murder burned in me then like

a torch. The heat of the day seemed to have passed completely away. The perspiration which stood on my body turned cool as an ice-douche. Never before had my thoughts gushed up with such clearness and strength. It was a duel to the death between me and the sharper, and he had drawn first blood, and I had got to win.

The words seemed floating in the hot air before me—'*Kill! kill! kill!*'

I had reloaded the Remington, and stood with ears strained to catch the slightest sound which told of my enemy's moving. Till that moment I had supposed that his rifle was a repeater. Now another idea came to me. There had been two reports; one short and sharp, the other heavier, and more noisy. Of course, the thing was clear. He had fired a revolver shot first, to draw me from my cover; had dropped the smaller weapon the moment he pulled trigger; and had fired on me with the rifle directly I emerged from cover. The fiendish cunning of the man made my hate for him glow in me like a draught of raw spirit.

All idea of fairness (if indeed such had ever occurred to me) was completely swept away by that time. I would fight him by his own methods. The only question was one of means. As matters stood, I lay ensconced behind the stem of the magnolia, and if I stepped out of its shelter I should have to take his fire before I could get in my own. As a snap-shot I was very conscious of my own deficiencies; from observation I had gained a high estimate of *his* skill.

But a brain working at the pressure which mine was put to then, yields up unexpected fruits; and when the idea did at last come to me, I could have sung for very joy. But there was too much danger in it to increase the risks unnecessarily. I slung my rifle by its strap across my shoulder, and turned round and commenced to climb the magnolia.

The stem had been split by lightning, or I could not have got up without my hands being seen round the sides, and as it was, the climb to the first branch was desperately hard; but I had the strength of ten men in me then, and the silent wiliness of a Seminole; and I gained the cover of the foliage without having made a slip, or cracked a twig.

With the caution of a lynx I made my way up the ladder of branches, going higher and higher till there was barely one layer of the dark green shining leaves between me and the burning sky above; and then I looked about me till I found a steady seat; and then I unslung the Remington from my shoulders. I brushed the rustling curtain of leaves softly aside with the muzzle, and peered out. My enemy was on his old ground, standing beneath the live-oaks with his rifle at the ready. Some indefinable suspicion must have got hold of him, for at that moment he looked up.

The reports of the two rifles rang up into the heated air simultaneously—but—mine was the better aim. His bullet whistled through the dark green leaves a foot from my head: mine broke his right elbow-joint.

I reloaded and hailed him. There was a pool of black water on the nearer side of the live-oaks, and the snout and eyebrows of an alligator showed upon the surface like two knots of dead-wood.

'Take your rifle,' I said, 'and that revolver, and throw them into the water.'

He hesitated, nursing his wounded arm in the palm of the other, and glaring at me like a fiend.

'Quick!' I said. 'If you take time to think twice more, I'll shoot you dead.'

He picked up the weapons one by one, and then dropped them into the water with sullen splashes. The reptile in the pool, frightened by the noise, sank down to the mud below, where they lay.

'Now,' I said, 'go!' and he went, and I watched till he was out of sight amongst the tree-trunks and the saw-grass.

Then I climbed down, and gathered my orchids, and went home by another way, keeping a very sharp lookout. I trusted little to that man's chivalry.

I have seen another fellow cheat at cards since then, but that was in South America, and I did not feel called upon to interfere. Two duels have been quite enough for me.

## KAURI GUM.

Probably not very many of our readers have heard of kauri gum. It is a kind of fossil resin, the product of the giant kauri, a tree only to be found in the extreme north of New Zealand, and which at the present rate at which it is being destroyed, will probably soon be extinct. The gum is found in the ground, in lumps from the size of a pea to that of a man's head, or even larger. Its principal use is for making varnish, a great deal of it being shipped for this purpose to Europe and the United States. The extraction of the gum from its native soil gives occupation to many thousands in New Zealand who would otherwise be reckoned among the unemployed. To start as a gum-digger no great capital is required, nor is any experience necessary. A spade, a tent, some few utensils, and a fortnight's rations are all that is necessary, and these can often be obtained on credit from the local shopkeepers. Some diggers use a spear for piercing the ground to ascertain the presence of gum. If the spear, in its course through the ground, encounters any obstacle, the experienced digger can tell from the feel whether the object so struck is gum, and can distinguish it from a stone, root, or any other obstacle. Equipped only with his spade, and a bag on his back to hold the gum which he may find, the digger sets out in the early morning, and returns at night with a quantity of gum which may vary from fifty-one to two hundred and one pounds, or more; one hundred and one pounds a day is considered a good average.

The average earnings of the digger may be twenty or twenty-five shillings; some gain more, and many gain less. In this, as in every other business, of course, the most experienced are the most successful. The life is a hard one, and, as a general rule, none but those who have

been used to hard work make a success of it. Yet it is a life that for many is not without its charms. To a person of a roving disposition it presents many attractions, not the least of which is, that the digger is his own master. He works when he likes, and leaves off when he likes. Whenever he feels inclined for a holiday, he takes it, and there is no one to say him nay. Among the diggers are to be found all classes of men. Many of them are educated, and some formerly occupied a good position in society. On more than one occasion we have seen men born to a title working on the gum-fields. In every camp of gum-diggers, professional men are to be found, many of whom have had a university education. As a rule, the gum-diggers are an orderly and law-abiding population. The professional criminal seems to avoid the gum-camps; perhaps the work is too hard, and the excitements too few for him. I have known many people who lived in close vicinity to the gum-fields, and although it was not the custom to lock any of the doors at night, nothing was ever missed.

The gum-fields are an invaluable resource to New Zealand, for so long as they last, there need be no cry from the unemployed. Any able-bodied man can make a living on them, if nothing more. The life of the digger is a monotonous one in many respects. As a rule, the gum-fields are situated in somewhat inaccessible localities, those nearer to the towns having long since been worked out. He has no society beyond that of his mates, and may go for months without seeing a newspaper, which the average New Zealander accounts no small hardship. On the other hand, he is safe from the temptations of the city, and it is seldom that the dram-shop is near enough to secure his daily custom.

He sees few new faces, unless it be the messenger sent out weekly or monthly by the nearest shopkeeper who supplies him with rations. The digger, be it noted, is extremely particular as to the quality of his supplies; nothing but the very best will suit him. Cocoa is much used on the fields, but none but the best brands find any sale there; the same applies to all other articles of food.

On Sunday the digger is generally kept busy cutting firewood for the week, washing clothes or repairing them, and sundry other jobs. He may also employ his spare time scraping the gum so as to fit it for the market; this is generally done in rainy weather, when outdoor employment is impossible. And here it may be noted that the gum-fields of New Zealand are among the rainiest places on earth. The writer spent more than a month on them, and there was not a day (of twenty-four hours) in which rain did not fall, and about two days out of every week were such as to preclude the idea of work.

We would not advise any one to go out to New Zealand with the express intention of turning gum-digger. Besides the hardship of the life (which, however, may have its attractions to a young man so long as the novelty lasts), the gum-digger is universally looked down on and despised by every other class of colonist. New Zealand as a country is democratic enough, more so, perhaps, than any other country on earth, and labour is not held in contempt as in England. Every man is considered as good as another so long as he gains his living honestly. Perhaps the only exception is in the case of the gum-digger. 'He is only a gum-digger,' you will hear a colonist say, and this is intended to stamp the man referred to as an outcast.

Of late years a number of Austrian labourers have emigrated to New Zealand with the express intention of taking to gum-digging, and have thereby incurred the hearty dislike of all professional diggers. These Austrians are notorious on account of their laborious and thrifty habits, their only fault in the eyes of the colonists. A man who can live on sixpence a day is not a fair competitor in their opinion, and the Austrians are boycotted accordingly.

The gum-fields are rapidly becoming exhausted, and in a few years more the gum-digger will be as extinct as the dodo. Even now the size of the pieces of gum to be obtained is becoming smaller every year, and the digger is glad to pick up fragments of gum now, which in the earlier days he would have passed over with contempt, as not worth the trouble of lifting. The fields have also been dug and re-dug, until in most parts it is impossible to find a patch of ground the size of an ordinary room (unless it happens to be an absolutely barren patch) which has not already been turned over; and the best results are now being obtained by digging under the former workings, which entails a great deal of labour. Notwithstanding these facts, the number of diggers increases every year, though most competent authorities consider that the gum deposits, at the present rate of working, cannot last another thirty years, and they will probably cease to be remunerative before this time. The competition of other gums, such as Manila gum, also threatens the product of the kauri.

## RESURRECTION.

I WRAPPED around me tight a cloak of scorn;
'Thou fool! Believe no more,' I, mocking, said,
Dragging my weary feet o'er paths forlorn,
Not heeding how they bled.

For I had trusted, therein there lay the smart,
Had trusted one who, smiling, did me wrong,
Entering the singing places of my heart
To silence all its song.

Not all earth's loveliness bade me rejoice,
Life's fairest flower lay stainèd with disgrace;
And, when I heard the music of Love's voice,
I turned away my face.

Yet this May morn she comes, as oft of yore,
And, lo, from my dark soul a veil is rent;
She lays my tired head on her breast once more,
And speaks her old content.

MARY DANIEL.

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## THE ELECTRIC SUPPLY OF LONDON.

It has often been remarked how little the citizens of a great city know of the immense undertakings and of the capital and labour involved in order to supply them with the necessaries and luxuries of life, the constant enjoyment of which has caused them to be looked upon as commonplace. Of the citizens of Greater London how few have any adequate idea of what is required to afford and maintain for them the regular supply of gas and water which they now enjoy! And how few have any knowledge at all of less obvious supplies—for example, of the miles of pipes under our streets which convey, from the pumping station at Wapping, water at a very high pressure, by means of which some 3400 horse-power is available for operating the hydraulic lifts in our large warehouses, hotels, and elsewhere?

Even *savants* are ignorant of the nature of electricity, and therefore term it an 'imponderable fluid,' whilst the more modern among them prefer the simple (!) phrase 'a vibration of the ether.' Hence it is not surprising that erroneous notions are rife as to the supply of electricity, the more so as the generating stations, where the 'electric current' is produced, are generally built in some out-of-the-way spot. Consequently, they are seldom seen by the man in the street, and he will no doubt be surprised when he is informed of large generating stations being dotted about all over the city and suburbs.

The first station for the public supply of the electric current was opened as recently as the year 1885, and was situated in the basement of the Grosvenor Gallery. The company—now known as the London Electric Supply Corporation—which began the supply there, has been supplying current continuously ever since, except during a short interruption caused by a disastrous fire at its station.

Ten years have elapsed, and now in London itself there are some fourteen companies or local authorities, each with one or more generating stations in its respective district. They control an almost incredible number of miles of wire and cable laid underneath our streets, upon which they have actually expended the large sum of over *four and a quarter millions sterling*. Of this sum the City of London Company is alone responsible for £1,100,000, and the London Electric Supply Corporation, which has now a huge station at Deptford, has spent about £900,000; the former company supplying the E.C. district, and the latter the S.E. and Westminster districts. The number of lamps connected to the mains of these companies had reached at the end of the past year the equivalent of nearly 1,200,000, each of eight candle power—a number which is exclusive of the many arc lamps. The revenue therefrom cannot be much less than £535,000 per annum.

Eight of the undertakings supply what is known as a low tension direct or continuous current at a pressure of 100 to 110 volts on the consumers' lamps. In this system the lamps are connected direct through the street mains to the generating station where the dynamos generate at a slightly higher pressure. Recently, however, two important companies—the St James and Pall Mall, and the Charing Cross and Strand—have inaugurated a new method in connection with the direct current supply. They now generate a portion of the current they supply at a much higher pressure and transmit it to suitably located sub-stations where the pressure, by means of 'motor generators' or 'rotary transformers,' is reduced to the standard 100 to 110 volts at which it is distributed to the consumers. By this means the amount of copper in the mains is considerably reduced, and the interest on the capital expended on mains forms a not unimportant item in the total cost of the current supplied. It is chiefly for this reason that the remaining six stations generate what is termed a high-pressure alternating current, five generating at a pressure

of about 2000 volts, which, at sub-stations, is reduced to low pressure by passing it through 'alternate current transformers.' The London Electric Supply Corporation, however, with the same object, among others, generate at the extra high pressure of 10,000 to 11,000 volts at Deptford, and this alternating current is 'transformed down' in two stages before it reaches the consumer.

Coming now to the question of cost, the statement that the price of electrical energy to the consumer varies from fourpence to sixpence per Board of Trade Unit, conveys no definite idea to the non-technical reader. But perhaps it will be made clearer by the two following illustrations: One Board of Trade Unit will (1) supply a sixteen candle power lamp for about sixteen and a half hours; or (2), if used for running an electric motor, it will develop about one and a quarter horse-power for one hour. The charge for the current for power purposes is usually less than for lighting, owing to the power in general being required during those hours in which the lamps are not being used. It is naturally the dream of the generating-station engineer to obtain a good 'day load,' so that his expensive machinery and mains may be earning revenue for a longer period than the few brief hours of lighting, especially as an increased 'day load' entails no extra staff.

Compared with other large towns, London is easily at the head for the magnitude of its electrical supply. Paris, for instance, has only an equivalent of about 500,000 eight candle power lamps as compared with the 1,200,000 lamps in London as stated above. Manchester and Liverpool have respectively about 92,000 and 54,000; Glasgow, 70,000; Edinburgh, 43,000; Dublin, 16,000; and Cardiff, 9000. Of the total capital expended in the whole of the United Kingdom for supplying electricity, London has spent more than one-half.

This industry is developing at a very rapid rate—a kind of statement often thoughtlessly made, but in this case true nevertheless. New undertakings are springing up all over the country, and old undertakings are everywhere extending their plant. Of rapid extension a most extraordinary instance has occurred at Edinburgh. The station there, although it has been supplying current for not quite a year, has been compelled to order new machinery, so as to nearly double the present plant, already overloaded.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XIII.—DISSOLUTION.

It came the very next morning—the day after this lovers' quarrel. The thing happened which Robert had been expecting so long. You all remember how everybody said it was coming—coming—coming. And it came not. The Government, with its narrow majority, still hung on; it still discussed and passed bills. All the papers on one side declared that the dissolution must come: they said it must come in a month—a week—the day after to-morrow at latest. How could a Cabinet go on with their absurd little majority? But still the Government continued. Then—lo! The thing came—and it seemed to burst upon the world as quite an unexpected thing. We received it as if we had had no idea of its possibility.

Robert took his paper, like most of us, as a part of his breakfast. This morning he opened it with less eagerness than usual, because his mind was disturbed by that little rebellion in the study. He was uncertain, I believe, how to comport himself with the culprit, who now sat opposite him with looks still mutinous. But the thing that he read in the forefront of the paper drove all other thoughts out of his head. And so far as concerned Isabel, they never came back again, as you shall hear if you have patience. There it was, in big letters, 'DISSOLUTION.'

He read the announcement, and the lines that followed, first swiftly, as one always reads things that are surprising. The plain, bald intelligence of an event can be mastered in a moment. The bearings, and meanings, and possibilities, and certainties, and doubtfulnesses of the event take a second and a third reading for fuller comprehension. It is a strange power, that of reading a whole column of news in one glance down a column. We all have it in moments of excitement. The first time, then, that Robert read the news he grasped it all at that one glance; the second time and the third time he read it more slowly, turning over in his mind at the same moment the possible relation of the dissolution of Parliament to himself.

Then he laid down the paper, and gazed across the table at Isabel, who was still under the terror of yesterday, and feared new developments. There was, however, no cause for any such anxiety.

'It has come,' he said solemnly. And then she knew that she was safe for that time, because she divined what had happened.

'What has come?' asked the Captain, astonished, looking up from his plate of bacon.

'What I have been looking for, what is going to make my fortune—the general election has come. That's all. Only the general election! At last!' he sighed. Then he threw the paper across the table. 'You can have it,' he said. 'Any one can have it. There's no more news in it so far as I care. The dissolution of Parliament! That's news enough for me. Quite enough.'

He swallowed his tea and retreated to his own den without more words.

'Oh!' said the Captain thoughtfully, 'it's a general election, is it? Then they'll have an election at Shadwell, I suppose. Ah! And Robert will get in. They all tell me he'll get in. And they say he'll work wonders when he does get in. Very likely. I don't know much about these things, Isabel, but I've lived for sixty-five years, and they've been looking for wonders all the time, it seems to me. When I used to come home—which was once in five years or so—I used to say, "Well, what

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are you doing?" "Looking for wonders." That's what they always said, or words to that effect. And the wonders never came, and, what was more wonderful, we got on quite as well without them. One after the other I remember them all. There was Palmerston and Johnny Russell, and John Bright, and Gladstone, and Bradlaugh, and Balfour—but the wonders never came. Next it's going to be Burnikel, if he's lucky and can make 'em believe in him. Well, well. Burnikel will bring the Wonders. Robert's as good as any of 'em. You'll see. Give me some more tea, my dear.'

'Since Robert wants to get into the House, I hope he will. I don't understand why he should want it.'

'I hope so too. Because you see, Isabel, since we are alone—it's a delicate subject to talk about—but as I say, since we are alone'—the Captain approached the subject with some difficulty—'we may talk a bit about what we can't talk about very well either with George or Robert.'

'What is it, father?'

'Well, my dear, it's about this engagement of yours. I confess I don't like the way it's going on. There! Four years is a terrible long time for a young man to wait. It isn't natural for a young man to wait so long. Do you suppose I would have waited four years?' The Captain laughed. 'Four days was nearer the mark. Isabel, do you suppose there's—there's some one else—up the back stairs—some other girl—another wife in another port?'

'If Robert was in love with some other girl he would very soon make an end of his engagement,' said Isabel.

The Captain shook his head dubiously, as one loaded with sad experiences, but refrained from pursuing that branch of the subject.

'To be sure,' he went on. 'Robert's a bookish man; he reads a good deal, reads something every day. It's the only use many of them get of their eyes. But even the readingest of young fellows can't be always thinking about his books. Then he speechifies a good deal—makes 'em up, learns 'em, and fires 'em off; but a young fellow can't be always thinking about his speechifying. Mostly the young fellows of the present day are like those of my day. They are fond of a song and glass, and they like to shake a leg now and again, and to kiss a pretty woman.'

'Robert is not one of that kind. He never wants either a song or a glass. And as for shaking—oh!'

'But to wait for four years—four long years! To go on waiting as if he liked it! It sticks in the gizzard, my dear.'

'It was to come off, he told me, when he had done something or other. The election, I expect, was what he meant.'

The Captain took up the paper again and read the leading article in the paper twice over, slowly.

'There is no doubt, I suppose,' he said, 'though the papers do reel off lies every day, that they have got the right end of the stick this time. There will be a general election, and Robert will get in and'——

'Father, do you suppose he really meant the election?'

'What more could he mean? And, as I said before, no man likes to go on being engaged for ever. Wedding bells will be ringing, Isabel. Wedding bells, my dear.'

She rose and fled.

When I arrived at ten o'clock, Robert was still in his study, pacing the room in uncontrollable agitation. 'The time has come,' he cried. 'It has come. My chance has come. I feel as if it was my only chance.'

'All right. You shall get in. I know nothing whatever about the matter, because I never assisted at an election before; but here I am; take me; take all my time; I will live here if you like; I will look after the yard for you. I have heard of Nottingham lambs being wanted. I will become a lamb. Platforms are sometimes rushed and candidates hustled off. I will get up a stalwart party of hustlers if you like. Candidates are heckled out of their five senses. I will become a heckler of the most venomous kind for your opponents. I can't write epigrams and verses, because that part of my education has been neglected. But here I am, Robert—one man, at least, at your service.'

'Thanks, a thousand times. You shall join my committee to begin with. I must make haste to get my committee together; they shall all be working-men except you. I must sit down to prepare an address. I shall have to arrange for an address somewhere or other every night till polling day. It's going to be a splendid time—a magnificent time. By ——!' He swore a great oath, for the first time in his life. 'My chance has come—my chance has come!'

His voice softened; he sank into his chair and leaned his head upon his hand. Robert was, for the moment, overcome. The spectacle of this emotion pleased me. I suppose no one likes to think of another as altogether composed of cast iron. When any ordinary human being sees the thing for which all his life long he has worked and longed, actually within his reach, that ordinary or average human being is generally a little overcome. Remember that in this case ambition had devoured nearly all other passions. The man had had no youth; none of the delightful freaks, fredaines, and frolics of youth could be recorded of this young man; the unfortunate Robert had never kissed a girl to his subsequent confusion; nor scoured the streets; nor painted Wapping red; nor passed his midnights over cups; he had worked and trained himself for this end and none other. He would have been more than human had he shown no sense of the crisis or juncture of events.

While he sat there, head in hand, Isabel stole in softly like a ghost, and stood beside his chair. I made as if I would go, but she motioned me to stay. By the two red spots in her cheeks I was made aware that something decisive would be said.

He seemed not to observe her presence. She touched his shoulder. 'Robert!'

'Isabel!' he started, and sat up, with a quick frown of irritation.

'I have come to congratulate you, Robert,' she said timidly.

'Yes, thank you, Isabel. Thank you. Don't say any more.'

'When the general election is over, you will have done what you proposed to do, I suppose. I thought it would be years first. Your ambition, I mean, will be achieved.'

'Achieved? Why Isabel, you understand nothing. That is only a beginning.'

'Oh! Only a beginning?' She looked at first bewildered. Then a smile gleamed in her eyes. And then she sighed—no sigh of satisfaction. 'Only a beginning?' she repeated.

'Why, what else should it be? No one would want to be a member of Parliament only for the pride of it, I suppose.'

'Oh! I thought'——

'Look here, Isabel. I'm glad you came in. After the little misunderstanding of yesterday, it's as well to have a talk. You won't mind George: he knows all about it. Sit down there.' Such was the improvement in his manners that he actually got up and placed a chair for her. As for me, I retired to the seat in the window, not proposing to interrupt the conversation.

'I will just tell you exactly what is the meaning of the situation. I have told no one—no one except George, so far. I didn't tell you because you wouldn't understand. It isn't in your way to see. You've changed a bit since you took to going about with George'—there was not a touch of jealousy in his mind—'straightened yourself, and filled out and improved so, that I hardly know you any more. You're bigger than you were, Isabel—I like a woman to look strong—but still I don't think you can quite understand.'

'I suppose you want to do something great in the House of Commons?'

'Put it that way if you please. I will give you details and particulars.'

Isabel sat facing him. There was now no look of passion or admiration on his face. The hungry look had left his eyes, which, instead, were filled with the eagerness of the coming struggle. There was nothing to fear from him. Indeed at such a moment as this it is not of love that a man can be expected to think: he may most lawfully and laudably think of nothing but himself, even before Helen of Troy herself. But I thought, looking at the two of them, What a strange pair of lovers! The man who had never said a kind word: the girl who looked forward to her marriage with terror!

'Now, Isabel,' he said. 'I will tell you. I am going to enter the House as a plain Master Craftsman, not a gentleman, except that I know their tricks and phrases—I shall be a man experienced in industrial questions and in everything concerned with work practical and theoretical. They want such a man badly. I am going in as an Independent member, like John Bright. When I have made my mark in the House and am a power in it, as John Bright was, I shall perhaps join a party in order to enter the Cabinet. And not till then. And perhaps not at all. As for being one of the rank and file; saying what one is told to say; put up to defend the incompetence and the blundering of the commanders; calling the Irish members, for instance, all the names under the sun one day, and all the opposite names the next day, just to catch votes; to be everything and all things for votes—votes—more votes—I won't do it. That kind of work will not do for me.'

'Well?' Either Isabel did not understand the point or else it had no interest for her. She looked unconcerned and spoke coldly.

'I told George at the outset: I called upon him on purpose to tell him when he was a stranger. And he fell in with it as soon as he saw that I meant business. At the first go off he thought I was a conceited windbag—one of the ignorant lot turned out by every local Parliament. I could see very well what he thought. When he saw that I was a determined kind of chap, he fell in with it, I say, and helped me all he could.'

'Yes?' Isabel showed no manner of interest in this revelation of political ambition.

'And thought about this and about that thing wanted. Oh, the essentials of the thing were all right—the knowledge and the appearance and the power of speech. But there was one thing wanting. I had never thought of such an omission, and without him I could never have repaired that omission. I'm not ashamed to say, not as things have gone, that what I wanted was manners.'

'Manners!' cried Isabel, showing interest at this point. 'You to want manners?'

'Just what I said myself. But George was right. There's a thousand little ways in which the fellows at the West End are different from us. They are mostly tricks invented to show that they are a superior race. I've learned these tricks, and now, I believe, I can pretend to be a gentleman.'

'You never were anything else.'

'There are gentlemen and gentlemen, Isabel. Have you noticed any change in me?'

'Well, Robert,' she replied timidly, 'I have thought that you were gentler.'

'Of course. One of the things is to repress yourself and pretend not to care. That's what you call being gentle.'

'Power is what you desire more than anything else in the world, Robert. You have always desired it.'

'Always. There is nothing in the world worth having compared with power, Isabel. I want to be a leader—nothing less than that. These are my ambitions. I understand now how it must seem to other people a wild and presumptuous dream, for a man in my position. I don't care a straw what it seems. I realise how great a thing it is, and I am just all the more confirmed in my resolution.'

'And when you are a leader?' It was quite impossible to make Isabel understand the audacity of this ambition. She thought that Robert would simply stand upon the floor of the House of Commons in order to receive the distinctions that would be showered upon him; that everybody would immediately begin to offer him posts of honour, because he was so strong and masterful a man.

'Well, one thing, Isabel. As soon as I am in the Cabinet—say Home Secretary—my first ambition will be achieved. Then as regards a certain promise'——

'How long,' she interrupted quickly, 'do

you think it will take before you arrive so far?'

'No one can say. A party gets turned out or keeps in. At the quickest time possible for a new man to work his way and be recognised, and put over the heads of other men, one can't very well expect such success in less than five years.'

'It can only be done in five years,' I interposed for the first time, 'under the most favourable circumstances possible—if the present Government gets returned again, if it stays in five years, if you meet with immediate success, if vacancies occur among the chiefs, if you are able to serve in some subordinate capacity. If I were you, Robert, I should say ten years.'

'Say ten years,' he replied cheerfully. 'A year or two is neither here nor there if a man is advancing all the time.'

'And a woman is waiting,' I added.

'Ten years,' said Isabel. 'But your side may get turned out.'

'They may. Then it might be longer. Of course if a man once becomes a power in the House, he becomes also a power in the country. His influence may go on increasing.'

'Ten years. That is a very long time. There will be many changes in ten years.'

'Changes? I daresay—I daresay. I hope so. I shall make some changes myself.'

'Changes in your own mind, Robert?'

He saw what she meant. 'I think not, Isabel. A promise is a promise. When my word is passed, the thing is as good as done.'

She got up. 'I won't waste your time any longer, Robert. I am glad to hear what your ambitions really mean. It was about that—promise—that I came to see you. I thought the time was come when you might want to fulfil that promise.'

'Not yet, Isabel.'

'Not yet. I came to set you free—if you wished to be set free.'

'To set me free?'

'Because a man like you should not be hampered by an engagement, especially with a woman whom—I mean—you ought to be free. So Robert, I do set you free—if you desire it.'

'What makes you think that I desire it, Isabel? I don't desire it.'

'That is because you don't know other women. So, Robert, it shall be always and at any time as you desire. We owe so much to you that this is due to you in return. I will wait for the fulfilment of that promise for ten years, twenty years, all my life—if you please. I will cheerfully set you free whenever you desire to be released. That is all, Robert.'

'Why,' said Robert, 'there spoke a good and reasonable girl. But you've given me quite as much in work as I've given you in board and lodging. You owe me nothing. As for being released, ask me if I want to be released when I am the Right Honourable Robert Burnikel, Secretary of State for India. And now let's make an end of thanksgivings and explainings, and get to business. There's lots of work before us.'

'Let me help you, Robert. My shorthand and typewriting ought to be of some use to you.'

'I wouldn't ask you, Isabel—but you can be of the greatest use. I take it very kindly of you after yesterday'—he held out his hand in token of forgiveness. Isabel accepted it, smiling graciously. 'I do, indeed, Isabel, after yesterday's little misunderstanding.' He held her hand and looked her straight in the face. And not one touch of softening in his eyes: not the slightest look of love.

Then Isabel took her old place as shorthand clerk, and Robert walked about his room dictating to her and talking to me. I understood for the first time how a man may come to regard a woman as a mere mechanical contrivance for working purposes. He spoke to Isabel, once more his clerk, as if she were a senseless log: he ordered her to write this—to write that. I think that I could never bring myself to forget the sex or the humanity of a girl clerk.

'My career is beginning,' said Robert, at eleven o'clock, after the first great speech had been delivered. 'It is beginning. Well, I am not afraid. I am not in the least afraid. The House of Commons is no more difficult to move than the music hall of Shadwell. There's only one way to move any class of hearers. You must first talk to interest them—that's grip. I've got the grip of a bulldog. Then you must talk to make 'em cry. I can make 'em cry.'

'If you make the House of Commons cry,' I said, 'they'll shove you up into the House of Lords as fast as they can.'

'And you must be able to make 'em laugh. I can make 'em laugh.'

'If you can make the House of Commons laugh, Robert, they'll never let you go up to the other House at all.'

## SCRAP-IRON.

Every household has some pieces of scrap-iron which will sooner or later find their way to the furnaces and be again melted up. These may be old rusty locks, a child's broken hoop, a worn-out spade, and old fire-irons, once so well polished and highly cherished. What becomes of it all? Probably this material may be sold to the ragman, in the first place, for a mere trifle. He goes round from house to house getting rags and bones and old iron, in fact, anything that is marketable, until he has got his cart full. Then he makes his way to a scrap-iron yard, where he disposes of his iron for so much per hundredweight according to quality.

A scrap-iron yard is a curious place, where almost every conceivable article of iron finds its way. Iron spoons, kettles, frying-pans, tea-trays, locks, keys, horse-shoes, nails, nuts and bolts, hinges, window-frames, steam-boilers, and thousands of other things besides. About two years ago the scrap-yard with which I am connected had about twenty thousand bayonets, which were quite bright, lying in the yard at one time. They had been made at the time

of the Franco-German war, and had never been used, so they eventually found their way into the scrap-yard.

Roughly speaking, there are four classes of iron: (1) wrought iron; (2) cast iron; (3) malleable iron; (4) steel. Wrought iron is iron that can be beaten out on an anvil and welded; such as blacksmiths use. Cast iron cannot be beaten out, nor welded, for it is too brittle. It has to be poured into moulds whilst in a molten state, and cast into such articles as grates, fenders, pots, pulleys, &c. Malleable iron is different in its nature from either, for it may be poured into moulds like cast iron, but is not nearly so brittle, and comes, so to speak, between the two. It possesses something of the toughness of wrought iron, but cannot be hammered out. It has, however, this quality —it may be dropped on the floor, or even struck with a hammer, without breaking. We all know that if we were to drop a cast-iron pot, or strike it with a hammer, we might crack it and render it useless. Wrought iron may be hammered out, but cannot be run into a mould. Malleable iron, therefore, answers a very important purpose, and is used chiefly for small work. It is largely used for buckles for braces, handles for coffins, and nails for boots. The tips on the heels of boots, and Blakey's boot-protectors, are made out of this metal. If a boot-protector were made of cast iron, as soon as the shoemaker attempted to hammer it on to the boot, it would snap in two.

All the iron that is brought into the yard has to be carefully sorted by an experienced person, and each kind kept by itself. All the *wrought iron* has to be sent into the Black country, or wherever there are works which make that class of iron. The iron that is made from old wrought scrap is the very best, and is quoted on the market as 'marked bars.' There is no necessity for sending any *cast iron* out of any large manufacturing town, for there are innumerable places where castings of every description are made, and there is, generally speaking, comparatively little difficulty experienced in disposing of it.

Malleable iron is much more difficult to sell, and there are only a few dealers who will buy it. Steel, like wrought iron, has to be sent to the large iron and steel works to be manufactured over again. Considerable difficulty is experienced in disposing of steel, for it is made of so many different qualities, and for such different purposes, that very few firms care to take it. Those large firms that turn out a particular quality of steel do not care to purchase steel of a very different nature to what they themselves produce.

There are, of course, many other kinds of iron besides those enumerated which come into the yard, and which have to be dealt with. There is a great deal of *swarf* produced, which is of many different qualities, from half dirt up to good clean rough turnings from a lathe. Then there is *galvanised* iron, such as buckets, coal-hods, and corrugated sheeting, used for roofing purposes, &c.; and also enamelled iron.

For marketable purposes, enamelled iron is entirely worthless, and galvanised iron is very little better. The proprietor of the yard sets such a small value on either, that he would not buy them at sixpence a cart-load. Still, some of this iron finds its way into every yard and has to be dealt with. It frequently happens that the ragman brings into the yard two or three buckets along with his other iron, and, if he gets the chance, will put these on the weighing-machine with the rest of his material. When the proprietor notices this, he either throws them off the machine, or orders the ragman to do so. After some considerable debate between the ragman and the proprietor, it usually ends with the ragman requesting that he may leave them in the yard, which the proprietor usually permits. This kind of material takes up much room and is very unprofitable. Every bit of galvanised iron has to be put into the fire, and all the coating must be burnt off. Then hollow iron has to be hammered flat, and, after it has been sent away, the price obtained is just about sufficient to cover the expenses incurred.

Enamelled iron is still more difficult to deal with, for the enamel cannot be burnt off. The only thing that can be done with it is to hammer it off the plate, and this never pays. Enamelled iron is, whenever detected, almost invariably sent back with the ragman, no matter how he may entreat to leave it behind. Some large plates are, however, saleable for roofing purposes. As a rule, short, small material is more valuable than long; for long and bulky iron has to be cut up before it can be sold; and of course all extra work means extra expense. Thus, a steam-boiler, after having been worked as long as it was safe to do so, is taken out and sold to some scrap dealer, who has it cut into plates before he can sell it to the ironworks. The expense incurred is so great that (at the present price of iron) a boiler intact is only worth a little more than half what it is when cut into plates.

It is surprising how many sets of iron bedsteads come in, and how they are disposed of. The prices they usually fetch are from eleven to fifteen pence, according to weight. Many of these sets are in a very good condition; in some cases only the casters are gone, and a lath or two broken, or sometimes a socket casting broken off. In many instances the housewife, on obtaining a superior set of bedsteads, sells the old ones to the ragman for a mere trifle. In the same way useful articles of various descriptions come into the yard. I know a couple of men who come regularly to the yard to look for any bargains in the bedstead line. There are a large variety in stock, sometimes as many as forty or fifty sets. They look among these and pick out some of the best sets, getting sides and laths to fit; these, when complete, cost from one and ninepence to half-a-crown, according to the weight.

They then paint them up and put them into a saleroom.

There are, however, comparatively few bedsteads sold in this way; by far the greater number being broken up, sorted, and sent to the ironworks. The laths are usually sold to men who come into the yard and purchase them for the purpose of cutting out small washers. There are many other useful things found in the yard, such as gas-piping, pulleys, lengths of shafting, broken vices, scales, &c. These are bought by men who call at the yard, and sometimes get good bargains. Two or three blacksmiths call frequently and pick out useful iron that they can work up; and, as they can buy this at reasonable rates, it pays them for their trouble.

A word now about the *ragmen* who bring the scrap-iron to the yard. They are a very ignorant, drunken, dissolute set, belonging to the very lowest grade of society; but they are cunning at a bargain, and disposed to quarrel over the merest trifle. Our weighing-machine is sufficiently large to weigh a wagon and load up to ten tons, and all the stuff that passes over the machine is weighed to seven pounds. The machine-house is a large one, and to satisfy those who bring the material, we invite them in to see it weighed. But, as a rule, they do not need an invitation; they come in on their own account, and I have known them, when I have been away for a few minutes, walk in and weigh the stuff for themselves.

On one occasion, I found two rough-looking customers in the place. Their cart was on the machine; they had weighed it and made it come to about eight and a quarter hundredweight. 'That's the weight,' I was told. However, I was not prepared to take their weight, although I saw that the beam was up, and seemed to indicate it correctly enough. As I ran the ball up and down the beam I was surprised to find that it was still up, and that somehow or other the machine was not acting properly. It was some time before I found out what was the matter; they had placed some old files in such a position under the hanger that, when the beam was pushed up, it could not come down again. Having cleared away this obstruction, I reweighed the stuff, and found that it was two hundredweight less. These men usually run their cart on to the machine, and weigh it, *gross weight*, cart, bag, and anything else. After they have emptied their stuff out of the bag, if you are not watching them, they throw the bag on one side and do not have it weighed back, and then when they are going away pick it up and throw it into the cart so unconcernedly that one might suppose it had not been done designedly. I have many a time weighed a cart, and then, after the iron has been tipped up, the cart has been run into the street so that it might not be weighed back again. These tricks are, however, practised only by fresh comers.

How often I have watched them through the window build up a nice little pile, very presentable to the eye, with all the rubbish at the bottom! If there should be any enamelled plates, or other unsaleable stuff, it is sure to be well covered over. But as a rule these little tricks are easily discovered; we make a practice of pulling the pile about, so as to show the nature of its materials.

## THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

### CHAPTER II.

They breakfasted betimes at the Staarbruckers, and after the meal, Nina having gone into the garden, Otto proceeded to open his proposal to the young Englishman, who had stayed this morning to breakfast. He hinted first that there might be serious difficulty in disposing of so valuable a diamond, and, indeed, as Frank already recognised, that was true enough. The proper course would be to 'declare' the stone to the authorities; but would they accept his story—wildly improbable as it appeared on the face of it?

No one in England can realise the thick and poisonous atmosphere of suspicion and distrust in which the immense diamond industry of Kimberley is enwrapped. Its miasma penetrates everywhere, and protected as is the industry by the most severe and brutal—nay, even degrading—laws and restrictions, which an all-powerful 'ring' has been able to force through the Cape Parliament, no man is absolutely safe from it. And, even Frank, an employé of the great De Beer's Company itself, a servant of proved integrity and some service, might well hesitate before exposing himself to the tremendous difficulty of proving a strong and valid title to the stone in his possession.

'Well, Frank,' said Staarbrucker, 'have you made up your mind about your diamond? What are you going to do with it?'

'I don't quite know yet,' answered Frank, taking his pipe out of his mouth. 'It's a deuced difficult puzzle, and I haven't hit on a solution. What do you advise?' Here was Otto's opening.

'Well, my boy,' he answered, 'I've thought a good deal over the matter, and in my opinion, you'd better keep your discovery to ourselves at present. Now I'm prepared to make you an offer. I'll find the expenses of a prospecting trip to the place where your crocodile came from, and take a competent miner up with us—I know several good men to choose from—on the condition that, in the event of our finding more stones, or a mine, I am to stand in halves with you. I suppose such a trip would cost three hundred pounds or thereabouts. It's a sporting offer; what do you say to it?'

'No, I don't think I'll close at present,' returned Frank; 'I'll take another few hours to think it over. Perhaps I'll mention the matter to an old friend of mine, and take his advice.'

Staarbrucker broke in with some heat: 'If you're going to tell all your friends, you may as well give the show away at once. The thing will be all over "camp,"* and I wash my

* Kimberley is still called by its early name of 'camp' among old inhabitants.

hands of it. Let me tell you, you're doing a most imprudent thing.'

'Really,' said Frank, coolly enough, 'the stone is mine at present, and I take the risk of holding it. I haven't asked you to run yourself into any trouble on my account.'

'No,' returned the other, 'but you are under my roof, and if it became known that I and my sister knew of this find, and of its concealment, we should be practically in the same hole as yourself. Now, my dear boy, take my advice, keep your discovery to yourself till we meet this evening, and let us settle to run this show together. You won't get a better offer, I'm sure of it.'

'Understood; I promise nothing,' said Frank, who scarcely relished Staarbrucker's persistency. 'I'll see you again to-night.'

After dinner that evening, the two men met again. Frank reopened the topic, which had meantime been engrossing Staarbrucker's thoughts to the exclusion of all else.

Frank at once declared his intention of going to see the manager next day, to tell him of the find and take his advice.

Otto Staarbrucker made a gesture of intense annoyance. 'You are never going to play such an infernal fool's game as that, surely?' he burst out. 'I've made you a liberal offer to prospect thoroughly at my own expense, the place where that stone came from, on half shares. If you accept my offer, well and good. If you don't, I shall simply tell your little story to the detective department, and see what they think of it. Think it well over. I'll come and see you to-morrow morning, early.'

He turned on his heel, and went out of the house.

Frank had felt a little uncomfortable during Otto's speech, but now he was angry—so indignant at the turn affairs had taken, and at the threat, idle though it was, held out to him, that he determined next day to quit the house and have done with the man altogether. He had never liked him. True, there was Nina. Nina—so utterly different from her brother. He should be sorry indeed to leave her. She had a very warm corner in his heart. He would miss the pleasant evenings spent in her company. What should he do without her merry *camaraderie*, her kindly, unselfish ways, the near presence of her bewitching face, and her evident preference for his company? At that moment Nina entered the room. Frank looked, as he felt, embarrassed, and the girl saw it at once.

'What's the matter, Mr Farnborough? You ought to look happy with that eight hundred pound diamond of yours; yet you don't. Aren't things going as you like, or what is it?'

'No,' answered Frank, reddening, 'things are not going quite right. Your brother has made me a proposition, which I don't quite see in his light, and we've rather fallen out about it. However, my tiff with Otto need make no difference between you and me. We haven't quarrelled, and I hope you won't let our old friendship be broken on that account.'

'Indeed, no,' returned Nina, 'why should it? But I shall see Otto and talk to him; I can't have you two falling out about a wretched diamond, even although it is a big one. Since you came here, things have been so much pleasanter, and'—— the girl paused, and a flush came to her face, 'well, we can't afford to quarrel, can we? Friends—real friends, I mean—are none too plentiful in Kimberley.'

Nina spoke with a good deal of embarrassment for her, and a good deal of feeling, and she looked so sweet, such an air of tenderness—not unusual to her—shone in her eyes, that Frank was visibly touched.

'Nina,' he said, 'I'm really sorry about this affair. Perhaps in the morning it may blow over. I hope so. I have had something on my mind lately, which perhaps you can guess at, but which I won't enter upon just now. Meanwhile, don't say anything to your brother about this row. Let us see what happens to-morrow. Heaven knows I don't want to quarrel with any one belonging to you.'

Early next morning, while Frank sat up in bed sipping his coffee and smoking a cigarette, the door opened, and Otto Staarbrucker entered the room. He had been thinking over matters a good deal during the night, and had made up his mind that somehow he and Frank *must* pull together over this diamond deal. His big, florid face was a trifle solemn, and he spoke quietly for him. But he found Frank as firm as ever, against his utmost entreaties.

'I've thought it all out,' Frank said; 'I don't like your plan, and I mean to show our manager the stone to-day, and tell him all about it. I think it will be best in the long-run.' He spoke quietly, but with a mind obviously quite made up.

The blood ran to Otto's head again; all his evil passions were getting the upper hand. 'Frank, take care,' he said. 'You are in a dangerous position about this diamond. I don't think you quite realise it. Once more I warn you; don't play the fool. Make up your mind to come in with me and we'll make our fortune over it.'

Frank began to get angry too. 'It's no use harping on that string further. I'm *not* coming in with you under any circumstances, and you may as well clearly understand it, and take no for an answer.' Then, half throwing off the light bed-clothing, 'I must get up and have breakfast.'

Otto glared at him for a second or two before he spoke. 'For the last time I ask you, are you coming in with me?'

There was clear threat in the deliberation of his tones, and Frank grew mad under it.

'Oh, go to the deuce,' he burst out, 'I've had enough of this. Clear out of it; I want to get up.'

Otto stepped to the door. 'I'm going now to the detective office; you'll find you've made a big mistake over this. By Heaven! I'll ruin you, you infernal, stuck-up English pup!'

His face was red with passion; he flung open the door, slammed it after him, and went out into the street.

Frank heard him go. 'All idle bluff,' he said to himself. 'The scoundrel! He must have taken me for an idiot, I think. I've had enough of this, and shall clear out, bag and baggage, to-day. Things are getting too unpleasant.'

He jumped up, poured the water into his bath, and began his ablutions.

Meanwhile, Otto Staarbrucker, raging with anger and malice, was striding along the shady side of the street, straight for the chief detective's house. Despite his tinge of Jewish blood, there was in his system a strong touch of the wild ungovernable temper, not seldom found in the Teutonic race. It was not long before he had reached the detective's house, and announced himself. Carefully subduing, as far as possible, the outward manifestation of his malicious wrath, he informed the acute official, to whom he was, at his own request, shown, that his lodger, Mr Farnborough, was in possession of a valuable unregistered diamond, which he stated he had found in a stuffed crocodile's interior, or some equally improbable place. That to his own knowledge the stone had been unregistered for some days, although he had repeatedly urged Farnborough to declare it; that the whole surroundings of the case were, to his mind, very suspicious; and, finally, that, as he could not take the responsibility of such a position of affairs under his roof, he had come down to report the matter.

The detective pricked up his ears at the story, reflected for a few moments, and then said: 'I suppose there is no mistake about this business, Mr Staarbrucker. It's, as you know, a very serious matter, and may mean the "Breakwater." Mr Farnborough has a good position in De Beers, and some strong friends, and it seems rather incredible (although we're never surprised at anything, where diamonds are in question) that he should have got himself into such a mess as you tell me.'

'I am quite certain of what I tell you,' replied Staarbrucker. 'If you go up to my house now, you'll find Farnborough in his bedroom, and the stone's somewhere on him, or in his room. Don't lose time.'

'Well,' responded the detective, 'I'll see to the matter at once. So long, Mr Staarbrucker!'

Mr Flecknoe, the shrewdest and most active diamond official in Kimberley, as was his wont, lost not an instant. He nosed the tainted gale of a quarry. In this case he was a little uncertain, it is true; but yet there was the tell-tale taint, the true diamond taint, and it must at once be followed. Mr Flecknoe ran very mute upon a trail, and in a few minutes he was at Staarbrucker's bungalow. Staarbrucker himself had, wisely perhaps, gone down to his store, there to await events. Vitriolic anger still ran hotly within him. He cared for nothing in the world, and was perfectly reckless, provided only that Frank Farnborough were involved in ruin, complete and utter.

Mr Flecknoe knocked, as a matter of form, in a pleasant, friendly way at the open door of the cottage, and then walked straight in. He seemed to know his way very completely—there were few things in Kimberley that he did not know—and he went straight to Frank's bedroom, knocked again and entered. Frank was by this time out of his bath, and in the act of shaving. It cannot be denied that the detective's appearance, so soon after Staarbrucker's threat, rather staggered him, and he paled perceptibly. The meshes of the I.D.B.* nets are terribly entangling, as Frank knew only too well, and I.D.B. laws are no matters for light jesting. Mr Flecknoe noted the change of colour.

'Well, Mr Flecknoe,' said the younger man, as cheerily as he could muster, for he knew the detective very well, 'what can I do for you?'

'I've come about the diamond, Mr Farnborough; I suppose you can show title to it?'

'No, I can't show a title,' replied Frank. 'It came into my possession in a very astounding way a day or two since, and I was going to tell the manager all about it to-day and "declare" the stone.'

Frank then proceeded to tell the detective shortly the whole story, and finally, the scene with Staarbrucker that morning.

Flecknoe listened patiently enough, and at the end said quietly: 'I am afraid, Mr Farnborough, you have been a little rash. I shall have to ask you to come down to the office with me and explain further. Have you the stone?'

'Yes, here's the stone,' replied Frank, producing the diamond from a little bag from under his pillow, and exhibiting it on his palm. 'I won't hand it over to you at this moment, but I'll willingly do so at the office in presence of third parties. Just let me finish shaving, and I'll come along.'

'Very well,' said Mr Flecknoe, rather grimly, taking a chair. 'I'll wait.'

That evening, some astounding rumours concerning a De Beer's official were afloat in Kimberley. Farnborough's absence from his usual place at the 'Central' *table d'hôte* was noticed significantly, and next morning the whole camp was made aware, by the daily paper, of some startling occurrences. Two days later it became known that Frank Farnborough had been sent for trial on a charge of I.D.B.; that his friend Staarbrucker had, with manifest reluctance, given important and telling evidence against him; that bail had been, for the present, refused, and that the unfortunate young man, but twenty-four hours since a universal Kimberley favourite, well known at cricket, football, and other diversions, now lay in prison in imminent peril of some years' penal servitude at Capetown Breakwater. The camp shook its head, said to itself 'Another good man gone wrong,' instanced, conversationally over the bars of the 'Transvaal,' 'Central,' and other resorts, the cases of many promising young men who had gone under, victims of the poisonous fascination of the diamond, and went about its business.

But there was a certain small leaven of real friends, who refused utterly to believe in Frank's guilt. These busied themselves unweariedly in organising his defence, cabling to friends in England, collecting evidence, and doing all in their power to bring their favourite through one of the heaviest ordeals that a man may be confronted with.

The morning of the trial came at last. The season was now South African mid-winter;

* I.D.B., Illicit Diamond Buying, a highly criminal offence in South Africa.

there was a clear blue sky over Kimberley, and the air was crisp, keen, and sparkling under the brilliant sunlight. The two judges and resident magistrate came into court, alert and sharp-set, and proceedings began. Frank was brought in for trial, looking white and harassed, yet determined.

As he came into court, and faced the crowded gathering of advocates, solicitors, witnesses, and spectators—for this was a *cause célèbre* in Kimberley—he was encouraged to see, here and there, the cheering nod and smile, and even the subdued wave of the hand, of many sympathising friends, black though the case looked against him. And he was fired, too, by the flame of indignation as he saw before him the big, florid face—now a trifle more florid even than usual from suppressed excitement—and the shining, up-turned eyeglasses of his arch-enemy and lying betrayer, Otto Staarbrucker. Thank God! Nina was not in the assembly; she, at least, had no part or lot in this shameful scene. And yet, after what had passed, could Nina be trusted? Nina, with all her friendliness, her even tenderer feelings, was but the sister of Otto Staarbrucker. Her conduct ever since Frank's committal had been enigmatical; her brother, it was to be supposed, had guarded her safely, and, although she had been subpœnaed upon Frank's behalf, she had vouchsafed no evidence, nor given a sign of interest in her former friend's fate.

Counsel for the prosecution, a well-known official of Griqualand West, opened the case in his gravest and most impressive manner. The offence, for which the prisoner was to be tried was, he said, although unhappily but too familiar to Kimberley people, one of the gravest in the Colony. One feature of this unhappy case was the position of the prisoner, who, up to the time of the alleged offence, had borne an unimpeachable character, and had been well known as one of the most popular young men in Kimberley. Possibly, this very popularity had furnished the reason for the crime, the cause of the downfall. Popularity, as most men knew, was, in Kimberley, an expensive luxury, and it would be shown that for some time past, Farnborough had moved and lived in a somewhat extravagant set. The learned counsel then proceeded to unfold with great skill the case for the prosecution. Mr Staarbrucker, an old friend of the prisoner, and a gentleman of absolutely unimpeachable testimony, would, with the greatest reluctance, prove that he had by chance found Farnborough in possession of a large and valuable stone, which the prisoner—apparently surprised in the act of admiring—had alleged, in a confused way, to have been found—in what?—in the interior of a dried crocodile! One of the most painful features of this case would be the evidence of Miss Staarbrucker, who, though with even more reluctance than her brother, would corroborate in every detail the surprising of the prisoner in possession of the stolen diamond. He approached this part of the evidence with extreme delicacy, but in the interest of justice, it would be necessary to show that a friendship of the closest possible nature, to put it in no tenderer light, had latterly sprung into existence between the prisoner and the young lady in question. Clearly then, no evidence could well be stronger than the evidence, wrung from Miss Staarbrucker with the greatest reluctance and the deepest pain, as to the finding of Farnborough in possession of the diamond, and of the lame and utterly incredible tale invented by him on the spur of the moment, when thus surprised by the brother and sister. The evidence of Mr and Miss Staarbrucker would be closely supported by that of Mr Flecknoe, the well-known Kimberley detective, who had made the arrest. Mr Staarbrucker, it would be shown, had urged upon the prisoner for two entire days the absolute necessity of giving up and 'declaring' the stone. Finally, certain grave suspicions had, chiefly from the demeanour of Farnborough, forced themselves into his mind. One more interview he had with the prisoner, and then, upon his again declining absolutely to take the only safe and proper course open to him, Mr Staarbrucker had, for his own protection, proceeded to the detective department, and himself informed the authorities of the presence of the stone. No man could have done more for his friend. He had risked his own and his sister's safety for two days—he could do no more. The prisoner's statement to the Staarbruckers and to Mr Flecknoe was that the crocodile skin came from the Mahalapsi River in North Bechuanaland, and that the stone must have been picked up and swallowed by the living reptile somewhere in those regions. He, counsel, need hardly dwell upon the wildness, the ludicrous impossibility, of such a theory. Three witnesses of the highest credibility and reputation, well known in Kimberley, and in the markets of London and Amsterdam, as experts in diamonds, would declare upon oath that the so-called 'Mahalapsi Diamond'—the learned counsel rolled out the phrase with a fine flavour of humorous disdain—came, not from the far-off borders of the Bechuanaland river, but from the recesses of the De Beer's mine—from Kimberley itself! *

Here there was a visible 'sensation' (that mysterious compound of shifting, whispering, and restless movement) in court. 'Yes,' continued the advocate, 'the stone is beyond all shadow of a doubt a De Beer's stone. It is not registered. The prisoner has no title to it; the diamond is a stolen diamond; and if, as I have little doubt, I shall succeed in proving my facts to you clearly and incontestably, the prisoner must take the consequences of his guilt. If indeed he be guilty, then let justice, strict but not vindictive justice, be done. Kimberley, in spite of the severest penalties, the most deterrent legislation, is still eaten up and honeycombed by the vile, illicit traffic in diamonds.'

The advocate warmed to his peroration, and, as he was a holder of De Beer's shares, he naturally felt what he said. The court was already becoming warm. He took out his handkerchief

* It is perfectly well known in South Africa that diamond experts can at once pick out a particular stone and indicate its mine of origin. Practice has created perfection in this respect, and stones, whether from De Beers, Du Toit's Pan, Bultfontein, the Kimberley mine, or the Vaal River, can be at once identified.

and wiped his brow. It is hot work delivering an important speech in South Africa. 'In the name of Heaven, I say,' he continued, striking the desk with his clenched fist, 'let us have done with this vile and monstrous traffic, that renders our city—the foremost city in South Africa—a byword and a laughing-stock among the nations.'

## SHOEBURYNESS.

A FEW years ago we gave in the pages of this *Journal* (No. 380, April 11, 1891) some account of Woolwich arsenal, the birthplace of *Woolwich Infants*, as the great guns there manufactured are sometimes fancifully called; and a little later (No. 452, August 27, 1892) we described the small-arms factory at Enfield. It may not be now uninteresting to our readers if we say something about the portion of the county of Essex in which experiments are carried out with the guns, large and small, manufactured at these two places, and briefly mention some of the experiments themselves, and their results.

A ness may be best described as a blunt-shaped, low-lying tongue of land running out into the sea, hardly a point, much less a promontory or headland. The entrance to the estuary of the Thames is guarded by two such natural features, exactly opposite to one another. That to the north is known as Shoeburyness, and that to the south is called Sheerness. Between the two the great river finds its way to the German Ocean, amidst, especially on the northern side, shoals and sandbanks. Sheerness is a protected arsenal and dockyard which guards the mouth of the Medway, and has been selected for this purpose on account of the excellent anchorage which the mouth of that river affords for large ships of war. Shoeburyness, on the other hand, has become a military station, not because of any advantages afforded by its position on the sea, but because it consists of a large tract of dreary marshes, flanked to the south and east by the far-stretching Maplin sands, which are almost entirely uncovered at low-water. These sands form the attraction from a scientific point of view, and why so, we shall see later on. The place is said to take its name from the words Sceo and Byrig, which signify—the Byrig, or settlement, in the shaw or wood. Here Hastings, the viking, constructed one of his sea-coast fortifications or camps, the lines of which may still be traced. Of other ancient history of Shoeburyness there is none.

The first connection of Shoeburyness with modern military matters appears to have been made so lately as the time of the Crimean war, when the flat, rough marshland was used as a camping ground for men and horses with the view of accustoming both to the hard work which lay before them in the east. This tract of country has thus become the property of the War Department, and that administrative body soon found another use for it, in which the half-submerged sands were to bear an important part. The idea was conceived that targets might be erected on these sands, and that the projectiles which were fired at them might be recovered at low water. Hence the first connection of Shoeburyness with the artillery of the present day. A safe range can be found across the sands to almost any distance, and these marshes have therefore become the stage on which our great guns, such as Armstrongs and Whitworths, have made, so to speak, their first debut.

To reach Shoeburyness we take the railway which runs along the south coast of Essex and the northern bank of the Thames. As we near the mouth of the estuary we pass Southend, beloved of *trippers*, with its pier stretching out in its length of over a mile, and then cross the base of the ness itself, until we reach the sea again. On the south-eastern face of the ness we are at our journey's end, and the railway also, so far as the general public is concerned, has come to a full stop. We walk through the little town or village, and on the further side find what we may call the original settlement of gunnery experiments, now for the most part a group of barracks and quarters such as we might find at any military station. A few differences we notice, however, for as we pass through the barrack-yard we observe that one building is labelled 'Lecture-room,' and other evidences there are here and there that the artillerymen who are quartered here are not altogether engaged in their ordinary duties. We shall probably not linger long at the barracks, but we shall not fail to observe that the officers' quarters and mess-room occupy an extremely pleasant position on a wooded bank above the sea, and that at high-water the waves come rippling up to the very trees themselves. Further on are the houses appropriated to married officers, all alike situated on the pleasant sea-bank. We note many rowing and sailing boats lying off the mess-buildings. Alas! these craft sometimes prove a source of fatality to some of the young officers who, however well instructed they may be in their professional duties, yet know nothing of practical seamanship. Parties of young men in the prime of life, and just entering one of the finest branches of the British service, have gone off in high spirits for an afternoon's sail, and, caught by tide, or current, or squall, have never returned. More fortunate are those who have been able to make their way from a capsized boat to the Nore lightship, and there, perhaps, have remained a day or two until the gale had abated and they could be taken off.

But it is time we should leave the officers' quarters, and walk round the outside of the domain. We see in front of us huge wooden erections standing on the edge of the shore. These are conning towers from which, when practice is going on, a view is obtained of the direction of the shot. Beneath them are the batteries from which the guns are fired, and here go on the courses of instruction in practical artillery work, which are necessary for newly-joined officers.

But we have by no means seen the most important part of Shoeburyness when we have visited the barracks and the batteries. We notice that a line of rails winds its way in and out amongst guns and storehouses, and if we

have timed our visit right, we shall find a little miniature train just about to start for what is called *The New Range*. Taking our places in this train, we shall be carried first through the village and past the terminus of the public line, and then by a private railway which winds along amongst the corn-fields, until we reach a retired spot on the sea-shore hemmed in by lofty trees. In this private place are carried on all the experiments for which Shoeburyness is famous, and here both guns and explosives are tested to their utmost capability.

It is not altogether an unpicturesque spot at which we have arrived. Grouped together in the shaw to which we have already referred, are certain nice old farmhouses and other buildings which have been taken possession of by the military. The space in front would no doubt be an admirable rabbit-warren, only the whole ground is now covered by guns of various sizes, targets, shields, breast-works, and models of portions of iron-clad and other vessels. Amongst these run lines of rails by which guns and materials can be moved to any part of the ground; and in places there are overhead travelling cranes by which heavy cannon may be hoisted on to or off from their carriages, or into trucks, as need may require; and we again see lofty conning-towers, though target practice at a distance is not carried on here to the same extent as it is in that portion of the establishment which we first visited. The work at *The New Range* is connected rather with experiments as to the force of explosives and the penetrating power of projectiles, than with accuracy of aim and the direction of the shot.

We ought first to say a few words about modern explosives. Old-fashioned gunpowder, or *black* powder, as it is now usually called, is composed of saltpetre, charcoal, and sulphur, mixed together in the proportion usually of seventy-five, fifteen, and ten parts respectively. But explosives of the present day are composed of other substances. Cordite (*Journal*, No. 605, August 3, 1895), of which we now hear so much, is made of nitro-glycerine, gun-cotton, and mineral jelly in the proportion of fifty-seven, thirty-eight, and five parts. It is also steeped in a preparation of acetone. Gun-cotton itself is dipped in a mixture of three parts of sulphuric to one of nitric acid. The force of cordite over gunpowder may be judged from the following facts. A cartridge containing seventy grains of black powder fired in the ordinary rifle of the army will give what is called a muzzle velocity of one thousand three hundred and fifty feet a second, while thirty grains only of cordite will give a velocity of two thousand feet. In larger arms, a little less than a pound of cordite fired in a twelve-pounder gun will give more velocity than four pounds of black powder fired in the same weapon. It need hardly be said that in the experiments at Shoeburyness it is the new-fashioned explosive which is chiefly used.

And now having some idea of what we are to see, let us walk round *The New Range*, and examine what is to be found there a little more in detail, bearing in mind that the work carried on is first the erection of bulkheads and iron plates, and then the knocking to pieces, or piercing of these erections. There is no regular order or arrangement in these matters. A target is built up in any convenient spot, and then a gun is brought to bear upon it from any suitable position.

Let us examine one of the guns, a breech-loader, and see what improvements have been made which may conduce to rapidity of fire. We see that in the older pattern three motions were necessary to open the breech. First the bar which is fixed across the base of the block had to be removed, then a half turn had to be given to the block to free it in its bed, and then it had to be pulled forward. Lastly, it had to be thrown back on its hinge so as to open the gun from end to end. We are shown that in later patterns the cavity or bed into which the block fits, is made in the form of a cone, so that the breech block itself can be turned outwards without any preliminary motion forward. In artillery work time is everything, and any one motion of the gunner's hands and arms saved is a point gained. Now let us look at the mechanism by which the recoil or backward movement of the gun is checked at the moment of firing. The gun slides in its cradle, and its recoil is counteracted by buffers which work in oil, something in the fashion of the oil springs which we see on doors. Iron spiral springs push the gun back again into place. Another interesting piece of mechanism is the electric machinery by which the gun is fired. When the recoil has taken place, the wire, along which runs the electric current, is pushed out of place, so that it is impossible to fire the gun, even though it be loaded, until it has been again fixed in its proper position on the cradle. Truly a modern cannon is a wonderful machine, and yet it is only a development from the sort of iron gas-pipe which was used in the middle ages. Hard by is a gun which has come to grief. In experiments which are carried on at Shoeburyness, guns are charged to their full, or, as in this case, more than their full strength. There is an ugly gash running down the outer case or jacket, as it is called, of the gun, and the latter has broken, and nearly jumped out of, its cradle. Nursery phraseology certainly comes in strongly in the technical slang of gunnery when we have to do with *Woolwich Infants*.

Let us turn now to some guns of quite a different pattern. They are old muzzle-loading ships' guns which have been rifled, and are now fitted on carriages which can elevate them at an angle of about seventy degrees. At this elevation they are capable of throwing a shell of four hundred pounds on to the deck of a ship which may be some thousands of yards distant. Such a projectile descending from above would be an unpleasant surprise to an iron-clad which had been putting confidence in her armoured turrets and sides alone. We can also see close by a specimen of the ingenious Moncrieff gun-carriage, in which the recoil of the gun is made to serve a useful purpose, and lowers the weapon into a sunk pit in which it can be safely loaded, and even sighted by means of mirrors, before it again pops its muzzle over the edge of the protecting bank or breast-work.

After looking at the guns we naturally go on to look at the targets at which they are fired.

Targets at *The New Range* are not so much marks as specimens of armour plates and other protections. Some of these are built up with a strength which to the uninitiated appears to be proof against any attack. Here, for instance, we find a steel plate of eighteen inches in thickness, and behind this, six inches of iron, the whole backed up by huge baulks of timber. But notwithstanding its depth, the enormous mass has been dented and cracked, and in places pierced. When we look at plates which are not quite so thick, we see that the shells have formed what are pretty and regular patterns, for small triangles of metal have been splintered off and turned back, so that the aperture is decorated with a circle of leaves, and resembles a rose with the centre cut out. Where the shell has entered the plate before it bursts, the pattern remains very perfect; but when it explodes as it touches the surface, some of the encircling leaves are entirely cut off.

One target is pointed out to us which represents the iron casing of the vulnerable portions of a torpedo boat, consisting of engine-room, boilers, and coal-bunkers. These compartments have been riddled again and again. Even a service-rifle bullet can penetrate one side, and a shell of the smallest size will go through both, for torpedo boats are not very heavily built.

Although the experiments which are carried on at Shoeburyness have almost entirely to do with ships' guns and ships' sides, yet they are carried on by officers and men of the Royal Artillery, though there are some naval officers amongst the experts who have to do with the professional secrets and inventions. That is to say, the guns are manned and fired by artillery gunners under the direction of artillery officers. That they should do so seems to be one illustration, amongst many, of their motto *Ubique*. They were probably the first occupants of the ground when the Government acquired it, and they have remained in possession of it. And yet considering to what end the experiments are directed, we may say that Shoeburyness is a point of junction between the two services. Perhaps the day is not far distant when the army and navy may be fused together in one body which, whether it operates by land or by sea for the defence of our rights and the safeguard of our country, will, we trust, ever remember that it exists for defence and not for defiance.

## MR SOWERBY'S PLOT.

By John K. Leys, Author of *The Lawyer's Secret*, &c.

### CHAPTER I.—HOW THE MINE WAS LAID.

Mr Alfred Moulton, the editor and proprietor of *Financial Echoes*, lay back in his chair one hot July day, chewing the cud of a rather bitter reflection. His journal, in which he had invested every penny he possessed, had not proved a success. He longed to sell the paper; but purchasers were shy, very shy. Meantime, he was carrying it on at a slight loss, in the hope of being able to sell it by-and-by.

As Moulton was wondering how he was going to pull through the dead season, which was close at hand, the door opened, and a lanky youth, who filled the various posts of manager, cashier, and sub-editor of the *Financial Echoes*, ushered a tall, well-dressed man into the room. The appearance of the stranger was such as to convince the beholder of his prosperity; and Moulton pulled himself together and bowed before asking his visitor to sit down.

'I didn't give my name to the clerk,' said the stranger, 'because I am here merely in the capacity of agent; and I should not wish it to be known that I ever visit the office of a financial newspaper. You will understand this when I tell you that my name is Sowerby—George Sowerby, the financier.'

This announcement did not make any great impression on the editor. He had heard of Sowerby as a clever and not very scrupulous fisher in the troubled waters of the City; and that was all. He looked at the financier now with some interest, and saw a large face, smooth shaven but for a heavy black moustache and very short coal-black whiskers. The man's manner was of that keen, self-assertive, aggressive type common among the worshippers of Mammon. The habit of trampling on everybody who would submit to the process had given Mr Sowerby the look of a bully, though it was veiled under a varnish of politeness.

He waited a moment, as if to give Mr Moulton time to be impressed by his personality, and continued: 'A friend of mine, named Smithson, wants to purchase a financial journal; and as I heard some time ago that your paper was for sale, I thought I would look in and see if terms could be arranged.'

This was good news to Mr Moulton; but he knew that it would never do to snap at the bait too readily. 'Well,' he replied, pulling his moustache with an air of indecision, 'some little time ago I did think of selling the paper. But I'm not quite sure now what I shall do. My own belief is that a financial crisis is at hand. The storm may burst at any moment; and in that case the *Financial Echoes* would be a very valuable property.'

'How so?'

Mr Moulton smiled and said nothing.

'What do you call valuable?' demanded the financier.

'I should say it would be worth five or six thousand pounds.'

'Let us talk sense,' said the City man coolly. 'You have hardly any circulation, and no advertisements worth speaking of. Three hundred pounds I should consider an outside price.'

'If you call that talking sense, you are mistaken,' said the proprietor of the *Financial Echoes* with some heat.

'What *will* you take, then?'

'I'll take a thousand pounds.'

'I'll give you seven-fifty.'

'Done!'

In five minutes more a memorandum of the bargain was signed; next day the price agreed on was paid; and the day following, the lanky youth was promoted to the post of editor *pro tem.* That afternoon, Mr Sowerby, acting (as he said) as agent for the new proprietor, handed to his new editor—whose name was Daniels—an article to be printed as leader, in leaded type. It was rather a

peculiar sort of article, as Daniels observed at the time. It began by discussing the sinister rumours which had been circulating in the City for some days concerning the credit of various banking establishments. Then it went on to say that at such a crisis a financial journal had a heavy responsibility laid upon it, a duty to its subscribers and to the public; and that a sense of this responsibility compelled 'us' to say that these rumours, far from exaggerating, had understated the truth. As an example of the unsoundness of some bank in the City, an instance was given of one which was living literally from hand to mouth. The bulk of its capital was lent out at high rates of interest to Chinamen, South Americans, and Spaniards, who could not possibly pay up on demand, if at all. This was, as a matter of fact, the sort of security upon which credulous Englishmen lent their money, blindly trusting to the magic power of the word 'bank' to save them harmless. It was evident enough that the writer of the article had a particular establishment in his eye. A specific bank was referred to, though no name was given; and details of the assets and liabilities of the concern were quoted in such a way as to leave on the reader's mind a strong impression that they had been copied from a private balance-sheet that actually existed. It was plain from these figures that the bank aimed at was in a very risky state; but no hint was given as to which particular establishment it was.

The article was put in type; and Mr Sowerby condescended to ask Mr Daniels—as if entirely for his own amusement—some details as to the way of 'making up' a paper. This was on the afternoon of the day on which *Financial Echoes* went to press.

### CHAPTER II.—HOW THE TRAIN WAS FIRED.

On the evening of the following day, Mr Benjamin Buddicombe was sitting in his library alone, smoking his post-prandial cigar. It was a good cigar; and Mr Buddicombe deserved it, for it had been a hard day with him. He was the only acting partner in the banking house of Buddicombe Brothers, and things had not been going well with the bank of late. People kept very small balances, as a rule; and to get decent interest in this country on good security seemed impossible. Hence Mr Buddicombe had been tempted to invest a good deal of money in South American securities; and the result was that the bank, though perfectly solvent, was in a position of unstable equilibrium. What Mr Buddicombe feared was a sudden demand on his resources; and just then storms were brewing in the City which made the banker anxious.

In addition to this, Mrs Buddicombe had that evening increased his anxieties by informing him that his eldest daughter, Claribel, the beauty of the family, was, or fancied herself to be, in love with the music-master. This intelligence put Mr Buddicombe into a rage. He knew nothing about any music-master. True, he had occasionally, when he happened to be going late into the City, met in the avenue a pale-faced, long-haired young man carrying a violin case; and had dimly conjectured that he was on his way to give the children dancing lessons. Now he was told that the young man was a 'professor' of the violin; that he had been instructing Claribel in the use of that instrument for some months; that the two had 'occasionally' been left alone together for short periods; that something roused Mrs Buddicombe's suspicions; and that on inquiry these suspicions had been amply confirmed.

Of course all this made the banker very angry. He cursed Signor Rolfini with great heartiness, scolded his wife, blew up his daughter, and finished off by sending a cheque with a letter of dismissal for the musician, and issuing a decree that Clare—as she was generally called—was to set out for Ireland the very next day on a visit to her Aunt Bridget. This Aunt Bridget was a Miss O'Feely, a maiden lady, who lived all by herself in a great, gaunt, stone house, standing in a bog in the wildest part of County Galway. She was in reality Clare's grand-aunt, being Mrs Buddicombe's aunt, not her sister. If any of Mrs Buddicombe's children behaved very badly, they were packed off at once to Ballykilbeg—the gaunt stone house above mentioned—by way of punishment. In the present case, the sentence had the additional advantage that it would effectually prevent the two young idiots—as Mr Buddicombe regarded them—from meeting one another.

The banker had caused his wife to write a note to Miss O'Feely then and there, begging leave to send over dear Clare for a few days' change. Having despatched this missive to the post, and thus settled matters to his satisfaction, he sat down to dinner. Under the influence of food, wine, coffee, and tobacco, he soon attained a happier frame of mind. Mr Buddicombe was getting near the end of his after-dinner cigar, when a footman entered the room bearing a card on a salver.

'What the dickens can this mean?' he muttered to himself as he took up the card. 'Sowerby! —Sowerby! Show him in.'

Mr Buddicombe was more than surprised; he was agitated by this visit. Not twelve months before, Mr Sowerby had been his friend, and a frequent visitor at his house. More than this, Mr Sowerby had been a suitor for Claribel's hand; he had been madly in love with the girl; and at one time it seemed likely enough that his suit would be successful. The banker, however, had found out things about Mr Sowerby, and had cooled towards him perceptibly, finally going so far as to hint that his visits had better be discontinued.

And here was this man, without a word of warning, paying a visit at a quarter to ten o'clock at night, as if he had been a most intimate friend of the family. It was very strange, so strange that the banker had at once ordered the visitor to be admitted.

The two men met face to face in the middle of the large room.

'Buddicombe, have you an enemy?' was Mr Sowerby's greeting.

'Not that I know of; and yet—— I don't know. Why do you ask?'

'You *must* have an enemy, a bold and a powerful one too. I have this very night, by the merest accident, discovered an infernal plot

against you—a plot to ruin you. It *may* be that I am able to prevent it, though I doubt it.'

'What on earth do you mean?'

'First tell me this: do you promise me absolute inviolate secrecy as to what I may say to you?'

'Yes; of course.'

'And do you promise that you will do your best to keep my name out of it, and—in fact—save me harmless?'

'Certainly.'

'Then I'll tell you.—You know *Financial Echoes?*'

'I have heard of the paper.'

'This is a copy of the next issue which is to come out to-morrow morning. That is the leading article. Just sit down and cast your eye over it and tell me what you think of it.'

With these words he handed a copy of the journal to the banker, who sat down and began to read the article, which was marked with a long blue-pencil line. The banker read the first few sentences; and then something made him start. He read a little further, and his face became white as his shirt-front; still he read on, and the beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, while the hand that held the paper trembled, so that he could hardly see the words.

'That wretch Harrington, my manager, has betrayed me!' he gasped out at length.

'Is it possible?' cried Sowerby. 'Then these figures are correct—they do really show the state of your business?'

Mr Buddicombe saw too late that he had made a fatal admission. He hung his head over the paper, and went on reading the article to the end, while Sowerby sat by in perfect silence. When the banker had finished the article, his eye, led by a continuation of the blue-pencil line, lighted upon a paragraph immediately under the closing lines of the leader, the first of a series of notes headed 'Straight Tips.' This paragraph contained the poison for which the preceding article served as vehicle. Taken by itself it seemed harmless enough. Placed where it had been placed, it made known to all men conversant with the City that the bank referred to in the article was that of Buddicombe Brothers.

The unhappy victim sprang to his feet with an oath. 'This shall not go forth to the world!' he shouted. 'This is a criminal conspiracy—I shall have the scoundrels arrested and brought up at the Old Bailey. There is law in England yet. The villains shall smart for this!'

'Yes; but meantime you will be irretrievably ruined!' cried Mr Sowerby. 'Just think a moment. You may apply for an injunction, or a warrant, or whatever you like, at ten o'clock to-morrow morning. But copies of *Financial Echoes* will be all over London, Liverpool, and Manchester by that time. More than that—the scoundrels tell me that they have got a list of your customers, from the treacherous clerk, no doubt, who supplied the figures for their libellous article. And their plan is to post a copy of the paper, marked like that, to each one of them.'

Again the banker sprang to his feet; but this time his cry of rage and terror was inarticulate.

'Sit down, Buddicombe; calm yourself. Look the thing in the face,' said Mr Sowerby.

'Perhaps it's a lie,' gasped the quivering wretch.

Sowerby shook his head. 'Morrison & Sons were named to me,' he said, 'and Burtons, and Druce, and MacGregor, and'——

'There—that'll do. That's enough for me. I am ruined. I see that clearly enough. Some wretch'—— He stopped, and threw a suspicious glance at his friend.

'How came *you* to know all this, Sowerby?' he asked.

'Partly by accident; and then when I found you were the man aimed at, I ferreted it out, in the hope of being able to serve you. I tried to bribe the conspirators; but it was of no use. One of them was quite determined. The other, I could see, wavered a bit. I spoke to him afterwards, and found that he *could* stop the impression from being posted. But when I talked of buying him, he named a sum so far beyond my powers, that'——

'How much was it?' asked the banker hoarsely.

The answer was given in a whisper; and it was received with an oath. 'That's as much as half my fortune!' cried Mr Buddicombe.

Mr Sowerby sighed, and mournfully shook his head. There was a minute or two of silence.

'Look here, Buddicombe,' he said, laying his hand on the banker's knee—'let me be your friend in this. We used to be friends, before somebody set you against me; why, I don't know. Perhaps I had a secret enemy as well as you. Never mind. Let by-gones be by-gones. Take me back into favour. Promise me your daughter—you know how I love her; and she was getting to be fond of me when you put your foot on it. Make me your son-in-law, and take me into partnership, and I'll crush these vipers for you. I will, even if I have to shoot them through the head.'

'That's nonsense!' said Buddicombe.

'Well, I'll spend every penny I have in bribing the one I know to be bribeable. But you must give me a bill to be discounted in case of accidents—in case of his wanting more money than I can find. I will not cash it without telling you. But I positively must have an acceptance for eighty thousand pounds—say seventy-nine thousand nine hundred odd pounds to make it look like a trade bill. With that in my pocket, I can make sure of stopping the libel. What do you say?'

The banker contented himself with shooting another suspicious glance at his visitor.

'Your bill won't be touched,' said Sowerby emphatically. 'Understand me; I'm not going to fight for a stranger; but I'll fight like a fiend incarnate for you as my father-in-law, and for a partnership in your house. The bank will weather the storm, I know, if we can only get over this pitfall. Once the settlements are signed and the marriage is celebrated, you shall have back your acceptance; never fear.'

Mr Buddicombe put his elbows on his knees, dropped his head into his hands, and tried to think. He more than suspected that Sowerby

was himself the prime mover in this diabolical plot, in spite of all his protestations. But what then? The banker knew that Sowerby was a determined, vindictive man, quite capable, if he were balked of his desire, of ruining the man who had stood in his way, for the mere pleasure of the thing. If he refused the scoundrel's terms, this too true libel would be in everybody's hands in the morning. There would certainly be a run on the bank, and the shutters must be put up at once. No doubt about that. Then, if he pretended to agree to the man's terms, to gain delay, meaning to cheat him of the promised reward, Sowerby would discount the bill, and he would be ruined in that way, just as certainly as he would be in the other. That, no doubt, was the object of the bill. But what was he to do? Oh, what was he to do?'

'Time is passing, sir,' said Sowerby. 'I made it a point that the newspapers should not be posted before two o'clock; but it is getting late.'

'I cannot decide without consulting my daughter,' said the banker, in a voice hoarse with excitement.

He rang the bell and asked for his wife.

Ten minutes later, Claribel, in a lovely blue dressing-gown, her shining yellow hair coiled up anyhow on the top of her pretty head, her blue eyes wide open with astonishment, came into the room.

'Sit down, my child,' said the banker, leading her gently to a sofa. 'You remember Mr Sowerby?'

The girl blushed as she gave her old admirer her hand.

'Clare,' said her father gravely, 'I am on the brink of ruin; and, so far as I can see, you alone can save me. But you must not do violence to your inclinations. Understand that clearly. I would rather spend my old age in a workhouse than sacrifice you to a man whom you positively disliked.' With this prologue the banker proceeded to tell his daughter of the frightful danger that threatened him, and of the way of escape that had been suggested. He even told her of the bill of exchange arrangement, so that she might not be tempted to make an engagement that she did not mean to keep.

Of course the poor girl was dreadfully agitated, torn, as it were, by conflicting emotions.

'If you really loved me,' she said through her tears, turning to Mr Sowerby, 'you would not wish to—to'——

'Dear Miss Buddicombe! Dear Clare! It is the very strength and—and fierceness of my love that forces me to make this a condition of my helping your father. I shall have to pay away almost all I have to bribe this villain into silence. Why should I do that for a stranger? But if you promise to be my wife, what is there I would not do for you or yours?'

The painful scene lasted for some time; but finally the girl said that she could not stand by and see her father ruined, while she had power to prevent it. She had never disliked Mr Sowerby; and if he insisted on it, she would do what he asked her.

'But when?' cried the enraptured lover. 'In a fortnight?'

'Oh no! no! No!'

'In three weeks, then? A month? Really, I don't think I could wait longer than a month,' said Mr Sowerby; and, as he was clearly master of the situation, he had his way. The wedding-day was fixed for the 7th of September; and Mr Sowerby produced a slip of blue paper with a very heavy stamp at one end of it, and began to fill in the necessary words. This incident convinced the banker that Sowerby was himself at the bottom of the plot. But he was helpless—caught in a vice. He and his daughter sat side by side, gazing on the bit of paper which was to bind them as with an iron fetter.

The bill was signed. Claribel allowed her lover to kiss her cheek; and as the clock struck twelve the trio separated.

Next day the subscribers to *Financial Echoes* did not receive the paper as usual. The journal had ceased to exist.

## NEW RAYS.

Will men still say the light is good,
When nothing lies from it concealed;
When, thrown on living flesh and blood,
It shows a skeleton revealed?

We aye have loved the softened rays
Which will not let us see too much,
But wrap, as in a kindly haze,
The things that shrink from human touch.

We hide our skeletons away
When they have played their living part,
And shut them from the light of day
Within the twilight of the heart.

And all the wrongs that shock and shame
Our tender feeling or our pride—
The sullied honour, tarnished name—
In dim forgetfulness we hide.

But now we dread lest some fierce beam
More strong than our resistance prove,
And make us look where only seem
Unlovely relics of our love.

And yet, it may be, we were wise
To welcome each new ray of light,
And face with frank, courageous eyes,
What now we bury out of sight.

'Tis not, perchance, true self-control,
Nor any part of charity,
To shut the windows of the soul
'Gainst all we do not choose to see.

New light, which shines on earth, may tell
How brighter rays, which shine above,
Can touch the lowest depths of hell,
Yet touch with tender tints of love.

C. J. Boden.

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## THE TOP HAT.

Living as we do in times when so much attention is directed to rational and hygienic dress, it seems curious that the top hat still survives, and has not gone the way of the crinoline and powdered wigs. But in spite of its admitted liability to be blown off by sudden gusts of wind, or crushed by contact with some unseen projection, it retains with much firmness its long-established position. It is true that during the height of summer a few attempts were made to replace this stuffy headgear by the lighter and airier straw hat, but the attempts fell rather flat, and exposed the wearers to more attention than was altogether pleasant. For so many years has the appropriate costume for professional men been narrowed down to the black coat and top hat that any variation from this offends the eye. It is entirely a matter of association. This can be shown by reference to the undoubtedly bad effect of a frock-coat and cap for civilians. Yet, strange to say, if the scene be changed and the same combination applied to the uniforms of naval officers, no sense of incongruity remains. It may or may not be the tasteful ornamentation of the latter's get-up that serves to please the eye; suffice it to say that no smarter or more gentlemanly looking object can be named than a well-groomed naval officer.

The top hat, like most other things, was not evolved in a sudden moment of inspiration. It is the product of many centuries' follies and fashions, and, unless we are much mistaken, will for some time outlive the vituperation of those who wear them. Even so far back as the twelfth century, the beaver was worn by the 'nobels of the lande mett at Clarendon.' Felt hats were known long before that, for to St Clement are we indebted for their discovery—a debt which is annually recognised in festivals still held in his honour on November 23. The 'topper' is probably traceable not to his agency, but to the subsequent dealings with the beavers of the time of the Charles's. The Puritans of the reign of Charles I. adopted lofty steeple crowns, typical perhaps of their soaring aspirations. With these crowns they combined brims of portentous widths, which their best friends could scarcely now contend were typical of their breadth of view. The Cavaliers, on the other hand, by rejecting the steeple crown, symbolised their less lofty principles, and by their yet broader brims adorned with feathers typified more wide and worldly sympathies. So matters ran on until the next step in their evolution was taken in the reign of Charles II. Brims grew broader and broader until the slightest breath of wind disorganised the wearer's headgear altogether. A happy idea then struck some hatter, for he elaborated the device of looping. This simple expedient gave a grand opportunity for the artistic-minded traders of the period, and there consequently ensued all sorts of 'cocks.' The old-fashioned low-crowned beaver, with a broad brim looped up equally on three sides, became the cocked hat which prevailed until comparatively recent times.

After years and years of varied cocking and other alterations in the shapes of the beaver, there came from Florence specimens of silk hats. It would be more correct to say that they came from Paris, for although manufactured in Italy they were exported in the first instance to France. They appear to have taken the British fancy, for the sale increased, and the profits were such as to induce manufacturers to start the business here. Now, as may be imagined, it is an enormous industry, employing in Stockport alone many hundreds of men, women, and children, aided by elaborate and costly machinery. To say that this country alone exports over a million annually to all parts of the world is sufficient to testify both to their quality and quantity. The exports from France will be very considerably greater, for that country has had for many years the lead in supplying an ever-extending market.

The last words are used advisedly, for not only is the demand growing in countries with temperate climates, but the inhabitants of tropical and semi-tropical lands are also adopting them. Twenty or thirty years ago the 'topper' was practically unknown in Argentina, the free and comfortable soft felt hat being found perfectly satisfactory. Nowadays the self-respecting Buenos Airean suffers tortures rather than dispense with his new love. Much the same thing is reported from all quarters of the globe. Where custom or fashion say yes, the individual is rarely able to say no; and where he has the pluck to go on his own way, he will find himself regarded as an eccentric and treated accordingly. So that, whether the top hat is or is not the explanation of the premature baldness so common to our young men, we may safely assume that the date of emancipation is as yet lost in futurity. It took some years to kill the crinoline, which was not one whit more absurd; common sense at last prevailed in that instance, and it is to be hoped that it will ultimately declare itself against such a fragile, unsteady, and absurd invention as the 'topper.' Not only was the adoption of the straw hat during last summer an indication of a healthy revulsion of feeling, but the rejection of the still sillier opera hat, with its complicated closing apparatus, was an additional sign. The soft felt hats seem to answer every requirement for winter use. They are comfortable, warm, light, are not easily blown off, and are, moreover, cheap and lasting; in summer nothing can be cooler than the simple straw. The tyranny of the 'topper' still maintains its power in London, and will die hard, but die it will sooner or later: in the words of the song, 'Let it be soon!'

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XIV.—THE GENERAL ELECTION.

Despite the changes, suppressions, repressions, and new conditions which have been imposed upon the good old election, there is still some excitement left. We may sigh and pine for the brave days when an election lasted six weeks; when everybody marched up valiantly, though clubs were shaken in his face and might be broken over his head; and when he gave his vote openly before all the world; when the people who had no vote contributed their share in the representation of the country by free fights, hustling and belabouring the voters; when drink flowed as freely as when Wat Tyler held the city; when everybody had to take a side, and to behave accordingly; when the chairmen brought their poles, and the sailors brought their clubs, and the butchers brought their marrow bones and cleavers; and all for use and not for mere fashionable display; when none thought shame to take a bribe; when the air was thick with showers of epigrams, libels, and scurrilous accusations; when the Father of Lies held his headquarters, for the time, in the borough; when the whole of a man's record was exposed to view, with trimmings and additions, and the most ingenious and diabolic perversions of the truth; when the public-houses were open to all electors free, and beer and gin and rum were attainable by the humblest; when every elector knew his value, and proudly appraised himself to its full extent; when the candidates stood upon the hustings, courageously facing showers of dead cats, putrid rabbits, addled eggs, and cabbage-stalks—about a fortnight before an election, all the cats in the country died, and all the dead rabbits became putrid, and all the eggs grew addled, and all the cabbage-stalks became rotten. Thus doth Nature accommodate herself to the ways of man. Those of us who read of the good old days may pine for them; those who have not read of them will find little at the present day to remind them of former customs.

At Shadwell there were none of these things. A fight there was, but only one, as you shall hear. None of the ancient customs were observed; only those humours of an election which still survive were with us; and these are mild.

It was an active time for those who, like me, went electioneering. The papers spoke of nothing else; certainly at our house no one talked of anything else. I suppose that something went on as usual in the yard; but no one heeded the building of boats. Everybody told everybody else that business was completely stopped. That may have been so. In the High Street, however, the cranes on the third floor of the warehouses continued their activity, and the wagons, full and empty, rumbled along the street. They didn't mind the general election, and the ships went in and out of the docks without minding the general election in the least. Also the working-men went backwards and forwards. And they didn't seem to mind the general election in the least. Everybody said, however, that the world thought of nothing else. We made our own racket, I suppose, and thought that all the world was joining in.

And we worked—heavens! how we worked! Of course we were Robert's servants—his slaves, even. He issued commands. At his committee he did not consult his friends; he commanded them. And, of course, everybody obeyed. He ordered me to speak for him in the less eligible districts, and when he was speaking elsewhere. Well, I, who had never before spoken, obediently went to speak. I prepared speeches: I found freedom of speech. I even arrived at some popularity. 'We'd send you to Parliament,' they told me, 'if it wasn't for your cousin.' I harangued on Robert's lines, as zealously as a Party man who hopes for office: I pulled the enemy's addresses and manifestoes to pieces: I showed their abominable inconsistency: their delusive promises: their wicked self-seeking: their shameful ambitions. Oh! the wickedness and the foolishness of the other side! The world will never be righteous, mind you, or generous, or just, till the other side gives up its self-seeking and its pretences. I also manufactured some lampoons which I thought were rather effective. I sent them to Frances, who told me that I ought to be standing in my cousin's place and doing all this

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work for myself. She was good enough, however, to express a hope that so strong a speaker and so vigorous a speaker might get into the House, where, she added, he would very quickly find his own level.

Robert's committee was composed, except for myself, entirely of working-men. The employers and shopkeepers, and a good many of the working-men understood two things only, Liberal or Conservative. Politics must mean one thing or the other. That a candidate should be neither Liberal nor Conservative, but only himself, they could not understand.

Before many days were over I was as much absorbed in the election as Robert himself. I lived altogether at Wapping. We began work early in the morning, at seven, and we ended it at midnight. The committee sat all day long; that is to say, the only man among them who was not a working-man—myself—sat all day long. We issued our candidate's address, which was a bold appeal for election on the ground of knowledge and personal fitness. As for burning questions, we dismissed them. Abolition of the Lords? Not possible. What was the use of discussing for election purposes a question not yet within the reach of the Commons? The Disestablishment of the Church? Whether that would do any good to the people of the country or not was an open question. Meantime, was the measure even possible at the present moment? No. Then why consider it? Was there to be an Eight Hours' Bill? Then there would have to be an eight hours' pay, with reductions, otherwise the employer would be ruined. And so on. The independent candidate would promise nothing, except the support of such measures as he himself, exercising his own judgment, might think calculated to advance the whole community. He said that he would vote for no interest: that he would not needlessly disturb existing institutions: that old things, grown up in the course of centuries, meant things befitting the mind of the people, and so far should be respected. He offered himself as a man who knew things. He reminded the electors that they had heard his addresses, and had learned his views. If they approved of him and his opinions, they would send him to Parliament, where they would find him able, at least, to set the House right on a good many matters of fact.

When one contrasted this address—strong and manly we called it—with the conventional phrases—we called them conventional—of the other candidates, it seemed marvellous—to ourselves—that any one should vote for them at all.

Every evening for four weeks Robert spoke. On Sundays he spoke at the working-men's clubs, in their own club-houses: on Mondays he spoke in such halls and big rooms as can be got in this neighbourhood. It was one evening just before the polling that the fight happened, which has been mentioned above.

We were in the same music hall to which I had brought Frances on a certain memorable occasion. Robert would still have no chairman or committee men on the platform. He stood alone: with some of the committee I was in the stage-box. Now I observed, when we took our places, a lot of fellows whose faces were unfamiliar to me—yet by this time I knew all Shadwell—they were all standing gathered together in the orchestra. They talked to each other and nodded their heads and stuck elbows in each other, with a good deal of earnestness, as if they designed something; they all carried sticks; and they looked inclined for mischief. Well, at election time there is still something left of the old leaven. It looked to me as if they meant to rush the platform. Robert would be alone there: if these fellows should try to rush it, how would he defend it by himself? I mentioned my suspicions: we resolved to jump down to the stage if there should be any need.

Well, our candidate came on: he was received with a storm of applause—but the men in the orchestra did not applaud: they only whispered and nudged each other. Robert began his address. The company in the orchestra continued to whisper: they did not pretend to listen. After the speaker had gone on for a few minutes, the house became perfectly silent, carried away by the current of the speech flowing full and strong and clear. The voice of the man was magnetic: it would be heard: it recommended silence. Then suddenly one man blew a whistle. Instantly the men in the orchestra, at either end, climbed up on the platform, shouting and brandishing their sticks.

The whole house rose crying 'Down! Down! Off! Off!' And then followed the finest display of physical strength and bravery that I have ever seen. There were at least twenty of them, equally divided. Robert seized the chair beside him, and with this for weapon he fell upon the party on the right, and literally broke the chair to pieces over their heads. We might have leaped down and joined him, but there was no need: the battle was over as soon as it was begun: the assailants fell back one over the other: their heads were broken, their teeth were knocked out, their collar-bones were broken: Robert wielded his chair with the lightning-like dexterity of a skilful player in the olden time who wielded his quarter-staff. It seemed but a moment before the fellows of the right-hand party were down again, broken to pieces, with no more courage for the fray. Robert kicked the last of them over the footlights into the orchestra. He then turned to the second party. But they had seen enough: they were now tumbling over each other to the place whence they came in much greater haste than they had shown to mount the stage. Then Robert stood alone. A streak of blood lay on his white shirt front: it came from his lip, which was cut, but not badly: his table was upset: his water decanter broken: his chair lay about in fragments. And then—oh! I have never heard such a splendid tumult of applause. From every throat it came: from every man and woman present there arose such a storm and rolling, roaring, continuous thunder of applause, as I have never heard before or since. Who is there among us that does not rejoice to see an act of bravery and strength? One man against twenty, and where were all the rest? Again—again—again—will it never stop?

A hand was laid upon my shoulder. I turned quickly. It was Frances.

'I came to hear your orator again,' she whispered. 'But I have seen him as well. George, it was splendid! Oh! The great, strong, brave creature! He must get in. He must!'

Then Robert, advancing to the front, held up his hand for silence, for the people, having tasted blood, wanted more fighting, and were now roaring for the disturbers of the peace to be thrown to the lions; and the ill-advised rushers, caught in a trap of their own making, were looking at each other with rueful countenance, expectant of a troublous five minutes. Imagine the Christian martyrs going to be let out into an arena full of lions, all hungry. And these poor fellows had not, it was clear, the support of faith. They had been paid to make a row and break up the meeting; and now it looked as if they had achieved martyrdom.

Silence obtained, Robert pointed to the orchestra below him. 'I think,' he said, 'that before we go on, these gentlemen had better be removed. If they do not go quietly, I will go down among them myself, with all that is left of the chair. In taking them out, remember that there are perhaps a few ribs and collar-bones broken. Please not to kick the men with the broken bones down the stairs.'

The house roared with joy; the men jumped up and poured to the front. They summoned the rushers to come out of that, or—they promised truly dreadful things as an alternative. But these misguided young men surrendered; they climbed ruefully over the pew; as each descended he was escorted between two of our fellows to the stairs, and then, one had reason to believe, he was assisted down those stairs by strange boots. The unfortunates on whose skulls and ribs the chair had been broken came last, all the conceit out of them, with hanging heads, and the exhibition of pocket-handkerchiefs. They were received with cheers derisive.

'And now,' said Robert, when they were gone, 'let us go back to business.'

And I really believe, so great is the admiration of the crowd for personal bravery and a man who can fight, that this little adventure brought him as many votes as all his speeches. For once the people were presented with evidence conclusive that they really had a very strong man before them.

'I am glad I came,' said Frances, when the meeting was over. 'I never saw a brave man before. Oh! what a thing it must be to be a man! And you go and throw it all away. Take me down, quickly. My carriage is waiting by the door, I believe.'

I led her down the stairs, in the splendid dress which was always part of her, through the people, who made way for her right and left; the poor women with their pinched and shabby shawls, and the working-men in their working-dress.

'You people all!' she said, standing at the top of the staircase, 'I have heard a splendid address to-night, and I have seen a splendid thing. If you don't send that splendid speaker and that splendid man to the House of Commons, you deserve to be disfranchised.'

'Don't be frightened, lady,' said one of the men, whom I knew to be a rank Socialist. 'We'll send him there fast enough. Especially if you'll come here and speak for him.'

So she got into the carriage and drove off while the crowd shouted after her.

And this was the nearest approach to the old-fashioned humours of an election that we had to show.

When the day of polling arrived, we had no carriages. Robert would not pay for any, and no one offered to lend him any. The carriages of Liberal and Conservative ran about all day long; but our voters had to walk. In the evening they came by companies: among them all the costers of the quarter with their barrows. What made the costers vote for Robert if it was not that very noble battle on the stage?

And when the votes were counted, Robert was head of the poll by 754 votes.

So he had got the desire of his heart, and was a Member of Parliament. He had worked for it for seven years: he had even descended so far as to learn manners, which was at first a very bitter pill. He had trained his voice and taught himself the art of oratory: he had studied economics of all kinds: he was patient, courageous, tenacious, and he was ambitious. What would he do after all this preparation?

## PRISON MALINGERING.

It is a very common thing with convicts to sham illness, whether bodily or mental, so as to evade work and get admission to the prison hospital with such comforts as it imparts. This shamming is carried on with a zeal worthy of a better cause, not to speak of the immense ingenuity displayed, the long-sustained and persistent efforts, and the self-torture inflicted, which are out of all proportion to the benefits to be gained. The deception carried on by prisoners in this way for years is said to be often incredible. Such is the experience in all countries of those who have to do with criminals in a state of confinement.

Captain Powell, governor of the Florida convict camp, tells of a convict who had been wounded when attempting to escape. The guard had fired at him, and the bullet struck him in the hips, knocking him head over heels. In time the wound healed, but the man persisted that the leg was entirely paralysed, and went hobbling about on crutches, doing no work at all for the balance of his time—some two years. Captain Powell frequently accused him of shamming, but the prison physician thought otherwise. On the day of the convict's discharge, the governor's judgment was vindicated. The convict made perfectly sure that he was free, then broke both crutches across his knee, and walked away roaring with laughter.

In the English convict prison at Dartmoor, a man met with an injury of a trifling nature by falling against his bed, and was taken to the hospital, complaining of severe pains in the back, and exhibiting all the symptoms of

paralysis of the lower half of the body. He appeared perfectly helpless; pretended that he could not turn in bed without assistance, and was carried daily to the exercise yard. At length—says Captain Harris, the present governor of Portland, and recent governor of Dartmoor, who relates this prison experience—after keeping up this deception for nearly three years, and after every kind of remedy had been tried to alleviate his supposed sufferings, he one day threw down the crutches furnished to him before the astonished doctor, saying: 'There, you may take them; I have had enough of them for the present.' It is added that during the years this imposture lasted, the man was most insolent and abusive to the medical staff, who were doing their best to lighten what was thought to be his afflicted condition.

Another Dartmoor case is that of a convict, the bones of whose foot were believed to be diseased. He was treated with the greatest care for many months, when it was found that he had two large needles bound round with thread embedded in a wound above the instep. The needles were removed and the man at once recovered.

A case showing great cunning and perseverance, as well as tolerance of much self-inflicted pain continued for many months, is worth telling. The convict was most determined and resourceful in his efforts at malingering. He began by running a piece of copper wire into his knee, by which he nearly lost his leg. He then produced a number of sores round the knee-joint, and kept up a great degree of swelling and inflammation by means of rag and thread pushed into the wounds. Upon the discovery of this he took to introducing lime below the skin. On another occasion a bandage was found firmly bound round the man's thigh, the result being, in medical phraseology, 'extensive swelling and lividity of the thigh.' The doctor ordered his limb to be enveloped with a large piece of gutta-percha so as to checkmate the prisoner's malpractices. The latter, however, by means of a strip of sheeting, and the skewer to which part of his dinner was attached, formed a tourniquet, and by it compressed his leg so much during the night as to quite neutralise the medical treatment it had received during the day. The imposture was at length detected by an order of the doctor to expose the limb outside the bed-clothes to the view of the officer by day and night, and from that hour progress was made towards complete recovery.

The ailments most frequently feigned are imbecility, paralysis, fits, spitting of blood, and bleeding from the nose; but a hand or leg retained in a particular position for a length of time, resulting in the loss of the power of again using it, is not uncommon. The late Dr Guy, an eminent authority, mentioned the case of a man who sewed up his mouth and eyelids with a needle and thread with a view to prove his insanity after less violent measures had proved unsuccessful.

Dr Gover, Medical Inspector of Prisons, brings forward several cases of imposture. One remarkable case is that quoted by Dr Smalley, of Parkhurst Prison, in which infiltration of air was found beneath the skin. Dr Smalley was much perplexed as to how to account for this, when an ordinary safety-pin straightened out was found hidden in the prisoner's mattress. He had punctured his lung with the safety-pin, and so produced the morbid condition in which he was. When he died, another safety-pin was found at the post-mortem examination embedded in the lung tissue. The second was a suspicious case of Bright's disease, which was proved to be caused by artificial means.

Prisoners sometimes attempt to commit suicide; often they fail, but sometimes they succeed. These attempts are frequently timed to meet the keeper's eye, so that the prisoner who has tied himself up by the neck may be cut down on the opportune arrival of the executive officer in charge. As the said officer has not always arrived at the calculated time, 'the event,' in sporting phraseology, has unhappily 'come off,' when it has not been intended. It is not an easy matter to say whether such attempts have been seriously meant or not, but their object is believed to be that of exciting sympathy or attracting attention to the extreme wretchedness of the prisoner's condition, so that some alleviation of his lot may follow. Only a profound psychologist could divine in such circumstances the real motives of prisoners, which too frequently are of the nature of a Chinese puzzle even to experts.

The most determined instance of self-inflicted injury of a suicidal character is recorded by Dr Clarke, a prison surgeon. It appears that during a previous sentence a prisoner had incurred repeated punishment for misconduct. He had feigned insanity in a borough jail; he had affected to be palsied before the judge who tried him; and when condemned to a period of prison seclusion, although he arrived without the least symptom of mental derangement, he soon commenced in prison a course of malingering. He began by the usual methods of destroying books, clothing, bedding, and the glass of the windows. This was followed by the refusal of food, and his abstinence was so persistent that hospital treatment became a necessity. Not only did the prisoner pass through all these well-known stages in the career of malingering, but he added muteness to his other eccentricities; and in order to guard against any new phase in his conduct, he was placed under more constant observation. Whether the restraint of close surveillance became irksome, or whether he despaired of success in his imposture, is a matter rather difficult of solution; but after other symptoms of amendment, he assured the doctor on the day before his death that he had resigned the attempt to feign insanity. All the ordinary precautions to frustrate suicide continued to be taken, and yet on the following night he succeeded in strangling himself by means of a bandage round his neck tied to a looped sheet, in the bight of which he placed his feet, and by extending them tightened the ligature. The act is said to have been unexampled for cunning and determination. He was covered by his bed-clothes; he refrained from making any noise; and although the light of the lamp streamed into his cell, he seemed to the officer on night-

duty, who passed and repassed throughout the livelong night in full view of him, to be sleeping the sleep of the just, while all the time he was silently choking himself to death. The post-mortem held over the prisoner revealed a healthy condition of brain.

Major Griffiths, one of H.M. Inspectors of Prisons, in his very interesting work entitled *Secrets of the Prison House*, tells how an astute malingerer was able at length to baffle the prison medical authorities. The prisoner's name is given as Quex—very probably a pseudonym. This man had been within most of Her Majesty's jails, and his speciality consisted in the manufacture of false keys with which he opened the not too securely fastened doors of labourers and artisans who left home in the small hours of the morning for their work, leaving their wives still asleep in bed. As a consequence he was often caught, and his booty was at all times but scanty. He was full of long-winded, frivolous, groundless reports: 'The food wasn't fit for pigs, the mornin' gruel's that thin! I never saw such skilly as that 'ere. And the soup, sir, it's nothin' but water; and the bread, it's made of musty flour. Look, sir, at this loaf, it's as 'ard as a stone, and it's only baked the night afore.' These were his complaints to Major Griffiths as Inspector of Prisons, who soon saw that the man had kept his bread till it had got hard, all this being contrary to the regulations. The loaf was removed, much to his disgust. His next complaint, made a week or two later on, was that the bread was soft and pulpy. Inquiry showed that he had soaked it in his water-can so as to produce the state in which it was. Another complaint was to the effect that the governor had put him on three days' punishment diet for giving away a loaf to another man. He contended it was against Scripture, because 'it says there that it's more blessed to give than to receive. Blest if I think it's so in this blooming jail!' So much for the facetious side of Quex. His course of imposture must now be told.

The first thing he did was to cultivate what are termed delusions, which ordinarily indicate weakness of intellect. He believed himself innocent, and this idea became fixed in his mind. He then complained of noises in his ears, buzzings which kept him from sleep at night or peace during the day. Next, his food was tampered with; 'things' were put in it; and it was doing him no good; for he was wasting away. The prison doctor was still incredulous, so Quex had to rise to the occasion. He now complained that he was being subjected to electrical shocks. 'The electricity was passed into his body sometimes from a distance; the assistant-surgeon came to his cell door at night and woke him with the electric light, the object was to play upon the nerves of his face and to see inside his brain' if he was innocent, &c. 'So they tried another form of torture, which was to push an instrument up each side of his nose, so as to injure the brain. After that they cut a hole in his nose on each side,' he said to Major Griffiths with the greatest gravity and impressiveness—'and pulled the instrument out of his mouth, and then through his nose again. By this means they made him breathe bad air, and this affected his brain, and altered what was written there. The doctors were determined to do away with him, he was sure.' He next demanded protection, and asked that publication of his wrongs might be made in the *Times*.

The doctors finally yielded to Quex when he had harped month after month on the same string. He was accordingly certified to be insane, and was handed over to the county asylum authorities. Major Griffiths had the curiosity to inquire about him some time later. 'Quex? Quex? Ah! I remember,' said the asylum superintendent. 'No more mad than you or me. By the way, he escaped—that proved it.'

'His superior cleverness got the better of you.'

'Yes, and of the police. There was a hue and cry for him in the town, and he was all but caught in the street. Met my assistant-surgeon coming one way and the police the other.'

'Well?'

'Quex was equal to the occasion. He went straight up to the police and said, "You are looking for an escaped lunatic, I believe? There he is," and he pointed out the assistant-surgeon, whom the police immediately captured, and Quex got completely away.'

Quex has never been heard of since; but the strangest part of all is that the man's symptoms of feigned insanity were a perfect counterfeit of the real trouble, according to the account given of them by the eminent 'alienist,' Dr Nicholson, superintendent of Broadmoor Asylum.

## THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

### CHAPTER III.

Otto Staarbrucker was the first witness called. He gave his evidence with great clearness, and conveyed, with consummate skill, the impression of his extreme reluctance and pain at having thus brought his former friend into trouble. Only the natural instinct of self-protection, on behalf of himself and his sister, and the absolute refusal of the prisoner to 'declare' the diamond, had induced him to take the extreme step of informing the authorities. One item, and that an important one, was added to the evidence tendered by him upon the occasion of the prisoner's committal. He had omitted then to state that on two evenings, shortly before his discovery of the diamond in Farnborough's possession, he had seen the prisoner, not far from the house, in earnest conversation with a native. The time was evening, and it was dark, and he was unable to positively identify the 'boy.' This evidence, as was suggested by counsel for the prosecution, tended manifestly to couple the prisoner with a native diamond thief, and thereby to tighten the damning chain of evidence now being wound about him. Staarbrucker suffered it to be extracted from him with an art altogether admirable. He had not mentioned the fact at the former hearing, thinking it of trifling importance. The prosecuting advocate, on the contrary, exhibited it

with manifest care and parade, as a most important link in the case.

This piece of evidence, it may be at once stated, was a piece of pure and infamous invention on Otto's part, an afterthought suggested by seeing Frank once give an order to a native groom. In the hands of himself and a clever advocate it did its work.

In cross-examination, Otto Staarbrucker suffered very little at the hands of the defending advocate, skilful though the latter proved himself. The prisoner's theory (and indeed, perfectly true story) of his, Staarbrucker's, repeated offers of a prospecting partnership, and of his ultimate rage and vexation upon Frank's refusal, he treated with an amused, slightly contemptuous surprise. The man was a finished actor, and resisted all the assaults of counsel upon this and other points of the story with supreme skill and coolness. The touch of sympathy for the prisoner, too, was never lost sight of. Frank Farnborough, as he glared fiercely at this facile villain, reeling off lie after lie with damning effrontery, felt powerless. What could he do or say against such a man? To express the burning indignation he felt, would be but to injure his case the more fatally. With difficulty indeed, while he felt his fingers tingling to be at the slanderer's throat, he restrained himself, as Otto's calm eye occasionally wandered to his, expressing, as plainly as might be for the benefit of all present, its sympathy and sorrow at the unfortunate situation of his former friend.

The next witness called was 'Miss Nina Staarbrucker.' Again there was a manifest sensation. Miss Staarbrucker was well known in Kimberley, and every eye turned in the direction of the door. There was some delay; at length a passage was made through the crowded court, and Nina appeared.

Before she steps into the witness-box it may be well to explain Nina's attitude and feelings from the morning of the day upon which Frank's arrest had been made.

After cooling down somewhat from the paroxysm of rage and revenge, which had impelled him to turn traitor upon his friend, and deliver him into the none too tender hands of the detective authorities, Otto Staarbrucker had suffered a strong revulsion of feeling. He regretted, chiefly for his own ease and comfort, the rash step he had taken, and would have given a good deal to retrace it. But the die was irrevocably cast: having chosen his path, he must perforce follow it.

He was well aware of Nina's friendship—fondness he might call it—for Frank; her sympathy would most certainly be enlisted actively on the young man's behalf immediately upon hearing of his position. At all hazards she must be kept quiet. Shortly before tiffin, he returned to the house. Calling Nina into the sitting-room, he shut the door and sat down.

'Nina,' he said, 'I have some bad news for you. Don't excite yourself, or make a noise, but listen carefully and quietly to what I tell you, and then we'll put our heads together and see what is best to be done.'

Nina turned pale. She feared some news of disaster to Otto's business, which latterly, as she knew, had been none too flourishing. Otto went on.

'I heard, late last night, from an unexpected quarter, that the detective people had an inkling of an unregistered diamond in this house. You know very well what that means. I went to Frank Farnborough both late last night and early this morning. I begged and entreated him, for his own sake, for all our sakes, to go at once first thing this morning and hand over and declare the stone. This he refused to do, and in a very insulting way. I had no other course open for my own safety and yours, but to give the information myself. I am afraid matters have been complicated by the discovery that the diamond is a De Beer's stone, undoubtedly stolen. Frank is in a temporary mess, but we shall be able to get him out of the difficulty somehow.'

Nina had uttered a low cry of pain at the beginning of this speech. She knew too well the danger, and, as Otto went on, her heart seemed almost to stand still within her.

'Oh,' she gasped, 'what is to be done? What shall we do? I must see Frank at once. Surely an explanation from us both should be sufficient to clear him?' She rose as she spoke.

'My dear Nina; first of all we must do nothing rash. We shall no doubt be easily able to get Frank out of this trouble. The thing is, of course, absurd. He has been a little rash—as indeed we all have—that is all. For the present you must leave everything to me. I don't want to have your name dragged into the matter even for a day. If there is any serious trouble, you shall be consulted. Trust to me, and we shall make matters all right.'

By one pretext or another, Otto managed to keep his sister quiet, and to allay her worst fears, until two days after, by which time Frank had been sent for trial and was safely in prison. Nina had meanwhile fruitlessly endeavoured to possess her soul in patience. When Otto had come in that evening and told her of the news. 'Why was I not called in evidence,' she asked fiercely. 'Surely I could have done something for Frank. You seem to me to take this matter—a matter of life and death—with very extraordinary coolness. I cannot imagine why you have not done more. You know Frank is as innocent as we are ourselves. We ought to have moved heaven and earth to save him this dreadful degradation. What—what can he think of me? I shall go to-morrow and see his solicitors and tell them the whole of the facts!'

Next morning, Nina read an account of the proceedings in the newspaper. It was plainly apparent, from the report of Otto's evidence, that there was something very wrong going on. She taxed her brother with it.

'My dear Nina, be reasonable,' he said. 'Of course Frank has got into a desperate mess. I was not going to give myself away, because I happened to know, innocently, that he had an unregistered diamond for two or three days in his possession. I have since found out that Frank knew a good deal more of the origin of that diamond than I gave him credit for, and it was my plain duty to protect myself.'

This was an absolute fabrication, and Nina more than half suspected it.

'But you were trying to make arrangements with Frank to prospect the very place the stone came from,' said the girl.

'I admit that, fully,' replied Otto calmly. 'But I never then suspected that the diamond was stolen. I imagined it was innocently come by. It was foolish, I admit, and I am not quite such an idiot, after giving the information I did, to own now that I was prepared to go in for a speculation with Frank upon the idea of the diamond being an up-country one. Now, clearly understand me, not a word must be said upon this point, or you may involve me in just such a mess as Frank is in.'

Nina was fairly bewildered, and held her peace. Matters had taken such astounding turns. The diamond, it seemed after all, was a stolen one, and a De Beer's stone to boot; she knew not what to think, or where to turn for guidance and information. And yet, something must be done to help Frank.

For the next few days, the girl moved about the house like a ghost, seldom speaking to her brother, except to give the barest replies to his scant remarks.

Several times she was in a mind to go straight to Frank's solicitor and tell her version of the whole affair. But then, again, there were many objections to such a course. She would be received with great suspicion, as an informer from an enemy's camp. After almost insufferable doubts and heartaches, Nina judged it best to wait until the day of trial, and then and there to give her version of the affair as she knew it. Surely the judge would give ear to a truthful and unprejudiced witness, anxious only to save an honest and cruelly misused man! Surely, surely Frank could and would be saved!

About a week before the trial, she was subpœnaed as a witness on behalf of both prosecution and defence, and finally, the day before *the* terrible day, Otto had a long interview with her upon the subject of her evidence. Her proof he himself had carefully prepared and corrected with the prosecuting solicitor; excusing his sister upon the ground of ill-health and nervousness, but guaranteeing her evidence at the trial. He now impressed upon her, with great solemnity and anxiety, the absolute necessity of her story coinciding precisely with his own. Nina listened in a stony silence and said almost nothing. Otto was not satisfied, and expressed himself so.

'Nina,' he said sharply, 'let us clearly understand one another. My tale is simple enough, and after what has occurred—the finding of a stolen diamond and not an innocent stone from up-country—I cannot conceal from myself that Frank must be guilty. You must see this yourself. Don't get me into a mess, by any dangerous sympathies, or affections, or feelings of that sort. Be the sensible, good sister you always have been, and, whatever you do, be careful; guard your tongue and brain in court, with the greatest watchfulness. Remember, my reputation—your brother's reputation—is at stake, as well as Frank's!'

Nina dared not trust herself to say much. Her soul sickened within her; but, for Frank's sake, she must be careful. Her course on the morrow was fully made up. She replied to Otto: 'I shall tell my story as simply and shortly as possible. In spite of what you say, I know, and you must know, that Frank is perfectly innocent. I know little about the matter, except seeing Frank with the diamond in his hand that night. You may be quite content. I shall not injure you in any way.'

Otto Staarbrucker was by no means satisfied with his sister's answer, but it was the best he could get out of her. He could not prevent—it was too late now—her being called as a witness. Come what might, she was his sister and never would, never could, put him into danger.

At last the time had come. Nina made her way, with much difficulty, to the witness-box; steadily took her stand and was sworn. All Kimberley, as she knew, was looking intently and watching her every gesture. She had changed greatly in the last few weeks, and now looked, for her, thin and worn—almost ill. The usual warmth of her dark beauty was lacking. Only an ivory pallor was in her face; but her glorious eyes were firm, open and determined, and honesty and truth, men well might see, were in her glance. She looked once quickly at the two judges and the magistrate sitting with them, and then her eyes met Frank's, and for him a world of sympathy was in them. It did Frank good and he breathed more freely. Nina, at all events, was the Nina of old.

The prosecuting advocate opened the girl's evidence quietly, with the usual preliminaries. Then very gently he asked Nina if she was well acquainted with the prisoner. Her reply was, 'Yes, very well acquainted.'

'I suppose,' continued counsel, 'I may even call him a friend of yours?'

'Yes,' replied Nina, 'a very great friend.'

'Without penetrating unduly into your private affairs and sympathies, Miss Staarbrucker,' went on the advocate, 'I will ask you to tell the court shortly what you actually saw on the night in question—the night, I mean, when the diamond was first seen by yourself and your brother.'

Here was Nina's opportunity, and she took advantage of it. She told plainly, yet graphically, the story of that evening; she portrayed the amazed delight of Frank on the discovery of the stone, his free avowal of his find; the knife in his hand; the open crocodile on the table; the pebbles previously taken from the reptile's stomach. She went on with her story with only such pauses as the taking of the judge's notes required. Counsel, once or twice, attempted to pull her up; she was going much too fast and too far to please him; but the court allowed her to complete her narrative. She dealt with the next two days. Mr Farnborough had kept the diamond, it was true. He was puzzled to know what to do with it. He had, finally, announced his intention of giving it up and declaring it, and he would undoubtedly have done so, but for his arrest. The stone might have been stolen, or it might not, but Mr Farnborough, as all his friends

knew, was absolutely incapable of stealing diamonds, or of buying diamonds, knowing them to be stolen. The stone came into his possession in a perfectly innocent manner, as she could and did testify on oath. As for her brother's suspicions, she could not answer for or understand them. For two days, he at all events had had none; she could not account for his sudden change. Spite of the judge's cautions, she concluded a breathless little harangue—for she had let herself go completely now—by expressing her emphatic belief in Frank's absolute innocence.

She had finished, and in her now deathly pale beauty was leaving the box. There were no further questions asked by counsel upon either side. Nina had said far too much for the one, and the advocate for the defence judged it wiser to leave such a runaway severely alone. Who knew in what direction she might turn next? He whispered regretfully to his solicitor: 'If we had got hold of that girl, by George! we might have done some good with her—with a martingale and double bit on.'

The senior judge, as Nina concluded, remarked blandly—for he had an eye for beauty—'I am afraid we have allowed you a good deal too much latitude, Miss Staarbrucker, and a great deal of what you have told the court is quite inadmissible as evidence.'

As for Otto, he had stared with open mouth and fixed glare at his sister during her brief episode. He now heaved a deep breath of relief, as he watched the judges.

'Thank God!' he said to himself savagely under his breath, 'she has overdone it, and spoilt her own game—the little fool!'

Nina moved to her seat and sat now faint and dejected, watching with feverish eyes for the end.

The case for the prosecution was soon finished. Three witnesses, experts of well-known reputation and unimpeachable character, testified to the fact that the stone was a De Beer's stone, and by no possibility any other. Evidence was then put in proving conclusively that the diamond was unregistered.

Counsel for the defence had but a poor case, but he made the best of it. He dwelt upon the unimpeachable reputation of the prisoner, of the utter improbability of his having stolen the diamond, or bought it, knowing it to be stolen. There was not a particle of direct evidence upon these points. The evidence of experts was never satisfactory. Their evidence in this case was mere matter of opinion. It was well known that the history of gold and gem finding exceeded in romance the wildest inspirations of novelists. The finding of the first diamond in South Africa was a case very much in point. Why should not the diamond have come from the Mahalapsi River with the other gravel in the belly of the dead crocodile? Mr Farnborough's friend, Mr Kentburn, would prove beyond doubt that he had brought the mummified crocodile from the Mahalapsi River, where he had picked it up. The greatest offence that could by any possibility be brought home to his client was that he had this stone in his possession for two days without declaring it! That was an act of sheer inadvertence. The stone was not a Griqualand West stone, and it was a puzzling matter, with a young and inexperienced man, to know quite what to do with it. If the stone were, as he, counsel, contended, not a stone from the Cape districts at all, it was an arguable question whether the court had any rights or jurisdiction in this case whatever. Would it be contended that a person coming to South Africa, innocently, with a Brazilian or an Indian diamond in his possession, could be hauled off to prison, and thereafter sentenced for unlawful possession? Such a contention would be monstrous! The great diamond industry had in South Africa far too much power already—many men thought. Let them be careful in further stretching or adding to those powers—powers that reminded unbiassed people more of the worst days of the Star Chamber or the Inquisition, than of a modern community. Had the prisoner attempted to conceal the diamond? On the contrary, he had shown it eagerly to Mr Staarbrucker and his sister immediately he had found it. That was not the act of a guilty man!

These, and many other arguments, were employed by the defending advocate in a powerful and almost convincing speech. There were weak points, undoubtedly—fatally weak, many of the spectators thought them. These were avoided, or lightly skated over with consummate art. The advocate closed his speech by a touching appeal that a young, upright, and promising career might not be wrecked upon the vaguest of circumstantial evidence.

The speech was over; all the witnesses had been called; the speeches concluded. The afternoon was wearing on apace, and the court was accordingly adjourned; the prisoner was put back into jail again, and the crowded assemblage flocked into the outer air, to discuss hotly throughout the rest of the evening the many points of this singular and absorbing case.

## JUMPING BEANS.

By G. Clarke Nuttall, B.Sc.

A new botanical curiosity of a very interesting and unique character has lately been brought into notice in England under the name of 'A Jumping Bean.' This so-called 'bean,' when placed on a flat surface, hops continually up and down, and moves by a series of jerks for considerable distances. There is apparently no end or limit to these movements. Given a certain warmth, and a certain amount of sunlight, these curious little objects will perform with unceasing and untiring activity for months together.

Each bean is about the size of a cherry-stone, and of a somewhat peculiar shape. If we imagine an orange cut into three equal and similar pieces, we have in each piece a fair representation, though on a greatly enlarged scale, of a 'jumping bean.' Each bean has three sides; one, convexly curved, corresponding to the rind of the orange piece, and characterised by a smooth, dark-brown surface; the other two are flat surfaces of a pale straw

colour, the ridge in which they meet being broken by an elliptical yellowish mark. One may, somewhat fancifully perhaps, term the convex side, which is much the largest of the three, the 'back' of the bean. It is apparently a matter of indifference to the bean on which side it lies. It will hop and jump equally well on its back as on either of the two flat surfaces.

These beans were first introduced to the notice of the Royal Botanical Society in November 1894, and afterwards a number of them were exhibited and sold at the late Indian Exhibition, Earlscourt, where their antics provoked much interest and amusement. Indeed, a large metal tray covered with brown beans, all dancing as if endowed with life, is an unusual and surprising sight. It may be interesting to some to know that the small case of beans brought over to the exhibition was insured for sixty pounds. Although they appear to be new to England, they seem to have been sold as a novelty in the Southern States of North America for some little time past.

The jumping beans are really the seed-vessels of a Mexican tree, a tree said to be peculiar to that part of the world. It is stated that this tree has each fruit made up of three carpels, which at first are adherent, the fruit then being about the size of a nut and rounded like an orange. As it matures, however, the carpels split asunder and are dispersed singly. Although all three carpels are of similar appearance, it is asserted, correctly or not, that only one of the three is a *jumping* bean.

If one of the beans be cut in half to investigate the cause of the movement, it is found to be a hollow shell with a light-brown membranous lining, containing a yellowish-white grub, about half an inch in length. The grub is made up of some eleven or twelve segments, and is further furnished with sixteen legs. It is evidently the initiator of the movements, and proves to be the larva of a moth, known as *Carpocapsa saltitans*. How the larva became enclosed does not appear at first sight, for there is not the slightest sign of any hole or puncture in the smooth shining brown surface of the bean. The only possible explanation is, that the moth chose the flower of this particular tree in which to deposit its eggs, and carefully laid them inside the young carpels before the flower withered and the seeds matured. While the carpels were increasing in size after the fertilisation and subsequent fading of the flower, the eggs hatched, and the grub developed within the seed-vessel, and found food for life and growth in the provision the plant had there made for its own offspring. The voraciousness of the prisoner would account for the absolute emptiness of the bean shell when opened later in the season.

Something similar to this occurs in the case of a certain night-fly, *Pronuba Yuccasella*, which places its eggs in the seed-case of the young Yucca flowers, so that the larvæ, when developing, may eat and thrive upon the immature seeds.

Again, we often find that an apple, apparently sound and whole on the outside, harbours a grub at the core—the larva of the codlin moth, a moth of the same order as the one in question, and this, too, has been shown to be developed *in situ* from eggs laid months before in the apple blossom.

But, of course, in neither of these instances is there any resulting movement, and, after all, it is their jumping which invests these seed-vessels with such peculiar interest. The motion possesses certain interesting characteristics. If a bean is disturbed by being moved or shaken, it will remain quiescent for a few moments, as if recovering from a shock; but soon a slight movement may be perceived, and this is followed up immediately by a series of jerks upwards and onwards. Then a short pause ensues, as if the bean were gathering strength for a fresh effort, which results in another series of, perhaps, even still more vigorous jumps. During a jump a bean may turn completely over from a side on to its back, and during a second again from its back on to a side. It is most amusing to watch a succession of these somersaults. When very vigorous, a bean may leap a couple of inches into the air, and even a comparatively sluggish one traversed by little jerks more than half a yard in half an hour. The distances which a bean can travel during several months must therefore be very considerable. For the movements to be continued with any degree of energy, it is necessary to keep the beans in a warm, light place, and to expose them to direct sunlight for some little time every day. As winter approaches and the temperature grows colder, the beans become more sluggish. This points to a tropical or semi-tropical habitat; but energy may be restored by holding them in a warm hand, or placing them on a warm plate. When in the hand a curious pulsation may be distinctly felt, even when there is no actual movement. Extremes of heat and cold have a pernicious effect upon the worm and eventually kill it.

It is not easy to explain in what way the grub effects these movements. A circular issued at the Indian Exhibition, setting forth the marvellous nature of the beans, asserted: 'The movement of the bean is fascinating, it contradicts the law of gravitation, for while seated in its own house, it can move both itself and its house miles away.' This statement, of course, must be received with a very considerable grain of scientific salt. Probably each jerk or jump is occasioned by the worm drawing itself together, and then suddenly elongating and pressing with either its head or its tail on the walls of its cage. The internal cavity of the bean is considerably larger than the grub within, and affords ample room for any such movement. In the same way, a man standing in a light wooden cage could lift the cage off the ground by jumping up and striking the roof with his hands or head. According to the point struck on the shell, so would be the direction of the jump. If this hypothesis be true, it would explain the movement without any violation of the great principle of gravitation, or yet of Newton's law that action and reaction are equal and opposite. The grub would obtain the momentum for the spring by pressing first on the floor of its cell. It is, however, very difficult to verify any hypothesis on the matter, for should the bean

be opened for examination, the worm no longer attempts to produce movement. Indeed, if only a slight opening is made, the worm immediately betakes itself to the task of filling it up again with a fine silky web, and not until it has completed this work, does it resume its jumping.

But if the method of the movement is somewhat obscure, the reason of it—the object to be attained by it—is still more so. It has been suggested that the worm instinctively sets out on its travels in order that it may escape from any enemies that may be lurking about the place of its birth. This supposition, however, is open to one great objection. The dark-brown beans, if lying quietly on the ground, might escape the notice of birds on the lookout for food; but this can be no longer possible when they indulge in active movement, for the continuous hopping must be the very thing to attract the observation of inimical species. The shell protects its occupant to a certain extent, but it is scarcely hard enough to resist a determined attack by the larger kinds of birds. An alternative supposition suggests itself. Is it possible that the movement may be due to the same instinct that, in the vegetable kingdom, leads the parent plant to make often such elaborate arrangements for the scattering of its progeny, as, for instance, by wings attached to the seeds—that same instinct which, in the higher animals, leads their young to adventure themselves in fresh districts or countries—the instinct, in fact, that foresees and combats the terrible evil of overcrowding, and by increasing the area of distribution promotes the propagation of the species? Until, however, we know more of the environment in which the bean is produced, and more, especially, of the life and habits of the animals—birds, beasts, and reptiles—which co-exist with it, we can but speculate idly on the probable idea that Nature has worked out in producing this curious 'jumping bean.'

## MR SOWERBY'S PLOT.

### CHAPTER III.—THE WEDDING DAY.

As Aunt Bridget had already been written to, it was thought better that Clare should pay the promised visit; and indeed the poor girl was in such wretched spirits that she looked forward to the solitude of Ballykilbeg as a relief. She cared nothing about her trousseau; for the more she thought of her marriage, the more she shrank from it. And another advantage of going to Ireland was that she would be out of the way of Mr Sowerby's visits.

Aunt Bridget received her grand-niece with little show of affection, but a good deal of the reality. She was a spare old lady, with a skin like satin, and small curls of white hair at her temples. In manner she was brusque; but her bright dark eyes could be very soft and tender.

Claribel had not been long at Ballykilbeg before she made up her mind to tell her aunt the truth about the approaching marriage. She did not, however, disclose any of her father's secrets, but merely intimated that it was very much for her father's interest that she should marry Mr Sowerby.

'Sowerby!' exclaimed the old lady, looking up with a start as the name passed her niece's lips.

'Do you know him, auntie?'

'Me? No, child. How should I know any London gentleman? I heard of a person of that name not long ago—that's all.—And you don't like him very much? He is older than you, you say? That wouldn't signify if you really cared for him. Well, well! You have been a good daughter, Clare; though perhaps'——

Alas! Clare knew very well that her aunt was going to have said what she had said to herself more than once lately—that she had made a mistake—that she had been wrong to make the promise she did.

'You've given your word,' said Miss O'Feely, after some reflection; 'and you tell me this Mr Sowerby has performed his part of the bargain, so you can't in honour draw back; and there's no more to be said. Let us hope it will turn out better than we expect.' And with this very feeble attempt at consolation, Aunt Bridget rose hastily and left the room.

Next day brought Claribel letters, one from her mother, and one from her future husband. Somewhat to her surprise, Aunt Bridget asked whether she might see the one from Mr Sowerby. 'I know there are no love secrets between you, my dear; and I want to find out what your Mr Sowerby is like: one can often form a very good opinion of a man's disposition from his letters,' she added, with a sagacious nod.

As there was nothing of importance in the epistle, Clare handed it over for inspection at once, and did not think about it again till she sat down next day to answer it, when, after hunting in vain for a few minutes, she remembered what she had done, and got it back from her aunt.

Another letter followed in two or three days' time, and this also Aunt Bridget expressed a wish to see. The old lady's innocent curiosity was gratified; the letter was returned to its owner, answered, and thrust away somewhere with its predecessor. Other letters came, but these Aunt Bridget did not care to look at.

Clare had delayed as long as possible her preparations for leaving Ballykilbeg, and was greatly cheered when, on the very eve of her departure, Miss O'Feely announced that she would accompany her niece to London, and be present at the marriage ceremony.

'Will you really, Aunt Bridget?' exclaimed the girl.

'Yes; and I may bring you a wedding gift such as you don't expect,' said the old lady.

This speech had reference to some talk that had passed between the two as to what form Miss O'Feely's wedding gift to her niece was to take; but Clare, who had a child's simple faith in her aunt's resourcefulness, chose to construe it as a sort of hint that Aunt Bridget might help her in some way to escape from her impending fate. To this idea, however, Miss O'Feely would give no direct encouragement; she either ignored her niece's questions, or gave them an equivocal reply.

The two ladies left Ballykilbeg, and travelled together as far as Liverpool. There Miss O'Feely left her niece, saying that she had some business to attend to in that town, but would follow her to London, and certainly arrive in time for the wedding.

The 7th of September, the day fixed for the ceremony, happened to be a Tuesday. Claribel had reached home on the preceding Friday; and she expected that her aunt would make her appearance next day. Saturday came and went, however, Sunday also, and Monday, yet Aunt Bridget neither came in person, nor wrote, nor sent so much as a telegram to explain her absence. There was one hope left. Miss O'Feely might travel by night, and arrive in the morning in time—in time for what? To witness the ceremony? What good would that do?

Clare burst into tears—a very little made the poor girl cry now—partly because her aunt had not come, partly because she could not give the slightest reason for the hope that she was now forced to abandon.

Tuesday morning dawned, fair and clear, but it brought no Aunt Bridget. The bridal party set out for the church; and surely never did a whiter face than Clare's appear under a crown of orange blossoms. Mr Sowerby was there, of course; and Mr Buddicombe thought that he must be an older man than he had always supposed him to be: his hair looked as if it were not altogether innocent of dye. There were not many invited guests; for the bride had insisted on a semi-private ceremony; yet there was a fair sprinkling of people in front of the altar.

While the clergyman was putting on his surplice, Mr Buddicombe took his future son-in-law into the empty choir-vestry, and said in a hoarse whisper: 'That bill—have you got it about you?'

'Yes; of course.'

'Let me see it.'

'Let you tear it up, you mean? Certainly, after the wedding, my dear sir.'

'How am I to know that you will keep faith with me, then?'

'Because I shall then be your son-in-law. If I give you the bill now, there is nothing to prevent your charming daughter and you from walking out of the church and leaving me.'

The banker ground his teeth in silent rage, and pointed to the door that led to the church. Mr Sowerby bowed, and passed through it, still smiling.

The Rector, a white-haired, smooth-shaven, pink-faced gentleman, who looked like an elderly cherub, was already at the altar. The bride and bridegroom fell into their places, and the service began.

The bridegroom had 'plighted his troth,' and the bride was about to repeat, with trembling lips, the corresponding words for her part, when a commotion was heard at the other end of the church, and a small female figure was seen hurrying up the middle aisle. Two commonplace-looking men had followed her into the church, but slipped into a pew near the door, and showed no signs of coming nearer.

'Stop! stop!' cried Aunt Bridget (for it was no other) when she arrived at the altar steps.

'What is this unseemly disturbance?' demanded the Rector, his red face becoming yet redder as he spoke.

Miss O'Feely paid no attention to him, but beckoning to the two men who had followed her into the church, and now came slowly forward, pointed with her parasol to the bridegroom and said, 'That is the man.'

'I don't like arrestin' anybody in church,' said one of the men. 'It's not been in my experience, and I'm not sure if it's legal. We'll wait for the gentleman outside.'

'Do you mean to tell me that you hold a warrant for this person's arrest?' cried the Rector, pointing to the bridegroom.

'We do, sir, if his name happens to be George Sowerby,' said the man.

The clergyman glanced at the name written on a slip of paper he held in his Prayer-book, closed the book, and without a word, marched off into the vestry by a side-door.

The two men moved up behind Sowerby.

'I don't know what you mean!' cried the bridegroom, in a blaze of fury. 'I know nothing about any summons. In any case, the marriage must go on.—Call back that fool of a parson,' he said savagely. 'Tell him that it is his duty to go on with the ceremony; and if he refuses to do his duty, it will be the worse for him.'

Nobody seemed inclined to execute this command; and Sowerby, from his place at the altar rails, could see the Rector in the act of throwing off his surplice.

With a cry of rage, the disappointed man dropped Claribel's hand, and rushed into the vestry. In another moment the two detectives had followed him; and then some one shut the vestry door. Claribel never saw George Sowerby again.

Meanwhile, two other persons had entered the church. One was Mr Alfred Moulton, late editor of *Financial Echoes;* the other, a tall woman in widow's dress, wearing a crape veil.

'I don't understand how all this has come about, Bridget,' said Mr Buddicombe; 'but if you have saved my daughter from marrying that man, may God bless you!'

'Humph!' grunted Miss O'Feely, with a look of contempt, which the banker felt like a blow.

'Tell me who the prosecutor is,' said Mr Buddicombe as they passed out of the church. She pointed to Alfred Moulton; and Mr Buddicombe drew him aside. He was anxious about the bill of exchange which was still in Sowerby's possession; and Mr Moulton advised him at once to see the chief commissioner of police and explain that no value had ever been given for the bill. The banker took this advice; and though he could not recover the document, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he would never be called upon to pay for it. The bill became the permanent property of the police department, and is never likely to again change hands.

On the way home from church, Miss O'Feely explained how she had been able to intervene

so decisively at the last moment. One of her old friends, a Mrs Fisher, who had been recently left a widow, was in very straitened circumstances through the rapacity of a money-lender named Sowerby, whom Miss O'Feely had little difficulty in identifying as her niece's intended husband. As the result of her visit to England, Miss O'Feely discovered that Sowerby was a greater rascal than had been supposed. He had managed by a clever forgery to lay hold of the two thousand pounds for which his client Fisher, the widow's late husband, had been insured. It happened that Mr Moulton, late proprietor of *Financial Echoes*, had been an intimate friend of Mr Fisher. Mr Moulton had taken the two ladies to a lawyer, by whose investigations a forgery was discovered. A warrant was applied for on the day before the wedding, but Sowerby had disappeared. His intention, no doubt, had been to leave England as soon as he had secured his bride, and then force his father-in-law to give him an allowance by threatening to discount the bill of exchange. This plan would have succeeded, had it not been that Miss O'Feely was able to give Mr Moulton the all-important information that George Sowerby would be found at a certain church in Kensington next morning. She made a mistake, however, with regard to the hour—a mistake which luckily did not prove fatal.

Miss O'Feely made a prolonged stay in London. She soon learned from Claribel some interesting facts concerning a certain Bernardo Rolfini, Professor of Music, and she expressed a wish to know that young man. He was introduced to her at a concert one afternoon, and impressed the old lady so favourably, that she actually gave him an invitation to Ballykilbeg. And when one remembers that the whole family—including Mr Buddicombe—look on Miss O'Feely as Clare's preserver, and as one entitled to dispose of her with a more than paternal authority, one feels certain that Rolfini —'a very honest fellow, though an Italian,' as Aunt Bridget puts it—has some solid foundation for the glorious cloud-built castle in which he is now living.

## GERSOPPA FALLS.

These, the most famous falls in India, are situated on the Siruvatti (or *Sharavati*) River, which at that part of its course forms the boundary between the north-west corner of the native state of Mysore and the Bombay Presidency. The source of the river is in Mysore, half-way up Koda Chadri, a hill about five thousand feet high, near the famous old town of Nuggur, once the seat of the Rajahs of Mysore, where are still to be seen the ruins of an old fort and palace, and the walls of the town, eight miles in circumference.

The natives have a legend that the god Rama shot an arrow from his bow on to Koda Chadri, and that the river sprang from the spot where the arrow fell, and hence the name Siruvatti or 'arrow-born.' From its source the river flows north for nearly thirty miles through the heart of the Western Ghauts, and then turns west and flows down through the jungles of North Canara to the Indian Ocean—another thirty miles. Shortly after taking the bend westwards there comes the fall, which, on account of its height, is worthy of being reckoned amongst the great waterfalls of the world. Here, at one leap, the river falls eight hundred and thirty feet; and as, at the brink, it is about four hundred yards wide, there are few, if any, falls in the world to match it.

During the dry weather the river comes over in four separate falls, but in the height of the monsoon these become one, and as at that time the water is nearly thirty feet deep, the sight must be truly one of the world's wonders. It has been calculated that in flood-time more horse-power is developed by the Gersoppa Falls than by Niagara. This of course is from the much greater height of Gersoppa, eight hundred and thirty feet against about one hundred and sixty feet of Niagara, although the Niagara Falls are much wider and vaster in volume. The Kaieteur Falls of the Essequibo in British Guiana are seven hundred and forty-one feet sheer and eighty-eight more of sloping cataract, but the river there is only one hundred yards wide. At the Victoria Falls, the Zambesi, one thousand yards wide, falls into an abyss four hundred feet deep.

A friend and I visited the falls in the end of September, about a month after the close of the monsoon, when there were four falls with plenty of water in them. The dry weather is the best for the sight-seer, as, during the monsoon, the rain is so heavy and continuous that there would not be much pleasure in going then, although doubtless the sight would be grander and more awe-inspiring. The drainage area above the falls is seven hundred and fifty square miles, and the average yearly rainfall over this tract is two hundred and twenty inches, nearly the whole of which falls in the three monsoon months, June, July, August; so it can be imagined what an enormous body of water comes down the river in these months. There is a bungalow for the use of visitors on the Bombay side of the river, about a hundred yards away from the falls, built on the very brink of the precipice overhanging the gorge through which the river flows after taking the leap. So close to the edge is it that one could jump from the veranda sheer into the bed of the river nearly a thousand feet below.

The four falls are called 'The Rajah,' 'The Roarer,' 'The Rocket,' and 'La Dame Blanche.' The 'Rajah' and 'Roarer' fall into a horseshoe-shaped cavern, while the 'Rocket' and 'La Dame Blanche' come over where the precipice is at right angles to the flow of the river, and are very beautiful falls. The 'Rajah' comes over with a rush, shoots clear out from the rock, and falls one unbroken column of water the whole eight hundred and thirty feet. The 'Roarer' comes rushing at an angle of sixty degrees down a huge furrow in the rock for one hundred and fifty feet, making a tremendous noise, then shoots right out into the middle of the horseshoe, and mingles its waters with those of the 'Rajah' about half-way down. The

'Rocket' falls about two hundred feet in sheer descent on to a huge knob of rock, where it is dashed into spray, which falls in beautiful smoky rings, supposed to resemble the rings formed by the bursting of rockets. 'La Dame Blanche,' which my friend and I thought the most beautiful, resembles a snow-white muslin veil falling in graceful folds, and clothing the black precipice from head to foot.

From the bungalow a fine view is got of the 'Rocket' and 'La Dame Blanche,' and when the setting sun lights up these falls and forms numerous rainbows in the spray, it makes an indescribably beautiful scene. Here one is alone with Nature, not a house or patch of cultivation anywhere. In front is the river, and all around are the mountains and primeval forests, while the ceaseless roar of the waterfall adds a grandeur and solemnity not easily described.

Near where the 'Rajah' goes over is a projecting rock called the Rajah's Rock, so named because one of the Rajahs of Nuggur tried to build a small pagoda on it, but, before being finished, it was washed away. The cutting in the rock for the foundations is still visible. To any one who has a good head, a fine view of the horseshoe cavern can be had from this rock. The plan is to lie down on your stomach, crawl to the edge, and look over, when you can see straight down into the pool where the waters are boiling and seething nearly a thousand feet below. I took a few large stones to the edge and dropped them over, but they were lost to view long before they reached the bottom. It was quite an appreciable time after my losing sight of them before I observed the faint splash they made near the edge of the pool.

In order to get to the foot of the falls it is necessary to cross the river to the Mysore side, as there is no possibility of getting down on the Bombay side. About half a mile above the falls there is a canoe, dug out of the trunk of a tree, which belongs to the native who looks after the bungalow, and ferries people across. A path has been made to enable visitors to get to the foot of the falls, and many fine views of all four are got while descending. The first half of the way down is fairly easy, but after that the track is a succession of steps down great boulders and across slabs of rock, rendered as slippery as ice by the constant spray. Ere my friend and I reached the bottom we were soaking wet, and realised when too late that we should have left the greater part of our clothes behind us. By going to the bottom a much better idea of the immense height of the falls is got, and the climb up again helps still more to make one realise it. From the bungalow the largest rocks in the bed of the river looked like sheep; but we found them to be huge boulders, ten and twelve feet high and about twenty feet across.

The falls seem to have become known to Europeans about 1840, but were very seldom visited in those days. Even now the number of visitors is small, as the nearest railway is eighty miles off, and there is no way of procuring supplies with the exception of a little milk and a chicken, to be had from the above-mentioned native. Everything else must be carried with you.

For a good many years there was great uncertainty about the height of the falls, but the question was finally set at rest by two naval lieutenants who plumbed them in 1857. The *modus operandi* was as follows: Their ship being off the coast near the mouth of the river, they got a cable transported to the falls, and stretched it across the horseshoe—a distance of seventy-four yards. Having seen that the cable was properly secured at both ends, they got a cage fixed on, and one of them got into it and was hauled out until he was in the centre. From the cage he let down a sounding line with a buoy attached to the end of it, and found the depth to the surface of the water to be eight hundred and thirty feet. After satisfactorily accomplishing this feat, they proceeded to the foot of the falls, and constructed a raft so as to plumb the pools, which they did, and found the greatest depth to be one hundred and thirty-two feet. This was done near the end of the dry weather, when there was very little water in the river, and they were able to temporarily divert the 'Rajah' and 'Roarer' into the 'Rocket,' without doing which it would have been impossible to plumb the horseshoe pool—the deepest one—satisfactorily.

About a mile from the bungalow is a hill called Nishani Goodda or Cairn Hill, from the top of which a magnificent view of the surrounding country is got. To the east lie the tablelands of the Deccan and Mysore, the flat expanse broken here and there by an occasional hill. North and south stretches the chain of the Ghauts, rising peak after peak as far as the eye can see (Koda Chadri, where the Siruvatti rises, being very conspicuous); while to the west one looks down on the lowlands of jungle-covered Canara, with glimpses of the river here and there, and beyond them gleams the Indian Ocean.

The bungalow book in which visitors inscribe their names is very interesting reading. The records go back to 1840, and many travellers have written a record of what they did when there; while a few, inspired by the scene, have expressed their feelings in poetry, some of it well worth copying and preserving by any one who has seen the falls.

## A STUDY IN RAGS.

He was bawling his wares at the full stretch of a thin, reedy voice. The sounds he emitted were unintelligible to the 'uneducated;' but he must needs shout his best, if he wished to make himself heard above the roar of the clamorous multitude, which spread out in billowy undulations to right and left, and overflowed into the numberless courts and alleys, and gulfs and bays, with which the main line of thoroughfare was indented.

A battered hulk adrift on the waters, the sport of winds and waves. A wastrel on the great sea of life. A bit of human wreckage carried hither and thither upon the yeasty tide of humanity; now hurried towards the breakers

by the rising storm of prejudice, now flung into the boiling ocean-depths by a hurricane of angry passions.

> Backward and forward,
> And to and fro,
> Flotsam and jetsam,
> They come and go.

He had been borne right across Europe by the current of events, and when I saw him, was crying cream cheese in the middle of the Judenmarkt in the chief city of the world. But to get so far from his original moorings in the little town on the banks of the Vistula, had taken 'a monstrous cantle' out of his life. Persecution had driven his family thence when he was little more than a child. They fled northward to Riga. This was the beginning of sorrows. From the date of the migration to Riga count forty and six years; this brings us to 1892, the year in which David Lipsitski first landed in England.

The long outstretching hand of Time has dealt hardly, even brutally, with this poor waif of the Judenstrasse and the Ghetto. David has lost three of his front teeth and the lobe of his right ear; he is also minus a finger on the right hand. Jew-baiting was counted legitimate sport in many of the Christian towns where Lipsitski sought a refuge and desired to make a home. The last Continental city in which the poor Jew had a settlement was Elberfeld in the Rhineland. This was ten years back. He buried his wife there, and lost his business; went to Amsterdam, to Bremen, always the mock of Fortune, and ever scourged by the hand of Fate; losing heart, losing money, losing health.

In 1889 he was drifting about the Baltic provinces, eventually finding an asylum in Hamburg, where he had been located for some time during the war of 1870, when he was in funds; but time and chance proving unpropitious, he came over to England with a cattle-boat, and finally 'brought up' in 'the Lane'—Middlesex Street, Aldgate, where I found him.

His stock-in-trade consisted only of a few cream cheeses; unprotected from contact with grimy hands save and except for the wretched little scrap of paper torn from some coffee-house news-sheet, and wrapped round the dainty delicacies by the dirty fingers of the vendor himself. They were exposed for sale in a fancy soap-box which, like the man who carried it, had seen service—hard service, which had left its mark behind it.

David could not, by any stretch of charity and without abuse of custom, be called clean. Sober, he was. Honest, as the world goes. Truthful, perhaps; but clean? No, David was not clean. Neither in clothing nor in person was he clean. But whose was the blame? The man was a true child of the Ghetto. He had been badgered and baited and bullied through life. The sole of his foot had seldom been allowed to rest in any place where it had lighted. Kicks and curses had been his portion through all the years when the nerves are most sensitive and the mind receives its deepest impressions. Squalor and misery were his birthright. Filth and foulness he was condemned to by reason of his race. He grew up with them, they remained with him, and now he cannot rid himself of their company if he would, and perhaps would not if he could, since 'tis strange, 'tis passing strange to what base uses we may grow accustomed.

David's brethren have no fastidious scruples about cleanliness. They buy his cream cheese without winking, drop it into the family hold-all, where the haddocks and vegetables are already reposing, and where the fowl, the 'bolas,' and big loaf of rye-bread will presently join them.

David is a tall, shambling, sickly-looking man, with a heavy crop of rough, tangled hair, iron-gray in colour, and worn rather long; a don't-kick-me expression in his thin, feeble face; and in his eyes, which are large, and lustrous at fifty-nine, one sees a glimmer which throws a faint ray of light upon his complex character and over his checkered career. There is greed, perhaps craftiness, in the eyes, but there is entreaty also. The man's eyes are at once avid and beseeching. I notice that he never smiles. The mob thickens round him; rough market compliments are exchanged, rude practical jokes are played by irrepressible youths from Polly Nathan's, quarrels are fought out by strength of lung or strength of arm. Domestic incidents are never wanting to enliven the scene, for the poor Jew lives much in the open air; there are 'battles royal' between the sexes—the eternal feminine is very much in evidence in the market-place—but through all the tumult and turmoil David remains unmoved. Is the man really wooden? Has he no blood in his veins? No heart to feel, no nerves to tingle? Not at all. He is merely a foreign Jew, who by many a painful lesson has learnt not to meddle in other folks' business, not to give the enemy a chance by showing on which side his sympathies are enlisted or his interests menaced. He calls 'cream cheese,' regardless of disturbances at his elbow, or the pranks of noisy youth in a crowd.

A ragged coat, with a superabundance of grease adhering to it, is not an uncommon sight in 'the Lane;' but David's garment must have been a wonder to beholders. How it held on him was not far from a miracle. He had worn it constantly—at night as well as by day—for months together; and it was twelve years, gone last Purim, since he bought it of a dealer whose shop was near the synagogue in the Muiderstraat at Amsterdam. 'It was a good coat,' he said. The coat had certainly been a very good one once upon a time. Now, it was a coat no longer, but simply a dirty agglomeration of greasy rags. That David divested himself of it at sleeping time, I do not believe; since, had he succeeded in getting out of it, he could never have got into it again. But how to get out of it would have puzzled any 'Christom' man. The problem could only be solved by a descendant of Shem with a genius for patient persuasion. David expected a new coat would be coming to him at the fast of the Atonement. 'It had been promised,' he said. I hope he got it, for no man in the Judenmarkt stood in worse need of an overall than David Lipsitski. But I should

like to know this. Did he pull off that coat of many summers, or did the coat drop off him?

David's head was covered with that very unpicturesque article of male attire known as a 'Whitechapel bowler,' and round the too narrow brim was an unmistakable accumulation which told its own story of hard wear and long usage. The 'bowler' did not improve the *ensemble*. It destroyed the harmony. Between David's clothes and David's self, there existed a subtle spiritual affinity; each was affiliated to the other. Nothing was discordant but the 'bowler.' That pale Jewish face, with the long flowing beard and aquiline nose, should have been surmounted by nothing less than a cap of black sheepskin; and twenty years old at the least.

What a story the man could tell, had he a tongue to speak! but he is dumb, inarticulate. His English is a negligible quantity, while his timidity and suspicion have become ingrained. Pushing my way through the thronging multitude, in the direction of Aldgate, I could yet distinguish above the hubbub and confusion of the market, the thin, weak voice of David Lipsitski, shouting with mechanical iteration: '*Der Rahmkäse, rahmkäse;* sonice, sonice, twopenny, twopenny.'

## A FAMOUS FOUNDRY.

The end of Soho foundry, the famous works of Boulton and Watt, the cradle of the steam-engine, and the first mechanical engineering shops the world ever saw, recently broken up and brought to the auctioneer's hammer, conjures up many memories of the past, and whether viewed in the light of the historical associations recalled, or the lessons of the changes time brings, is well worthy of some passing comment at our hands.

Soho, as our readers will remember, is about two miles north of Birmingham, and was until the middle of the last century a barren heath and rabbit warren, the sole relic of the past, the well of the warrener's hut still existing. On this spot Boulton erected his famous factory about 1760, and devoted his attention to the manufacture of metal wares and similar articles. This factory, the 'Soho' properly so called, was dismantled as far back as 1850–1. Many of the tools being removed to 'Soho foundry,' about a mile distant from 'old Soho.' It is with the fortunes of the 'Soho foundry' that we are now concerned, as this famous establishment, now sold, had survived its parent by nearly half a century. Soho foundry was built in 1775, and covered an area of over nineteen acres; its foundation was due to the rapidly extending business of Boulton and Watt, who found their existing works quite unable to cope with the ever-increasing demand for the new steam-engine.

Into the early history of the steam-engine, and the struggles of James Watt, it is foreign to our purpose to enter. Smiles's *Lives of the Engineers* has already told the famous story of years of labour, perseverance, and anxiety, crowned by success and well-deserved prosperity. We deal rather at the present moment with the historic foundry, the scene of so much skill and ingenuity, exerting an influence on arts and manufactures, which will endure for all time.

The foundry stands on the banks of the Birmingham canal, and was inaugurated on January 28, 1776, by a banquet given by Boulton, quaintly described as a 'rearing feast.' Details of the feast yet survive to set forth in classic style the good cheer provided. 'The first fruits of the cultivated land at Soho were sacrificed at the altar of Vulcan and eaten by the Cyclops in the great hall of the temple, which was forty-six feet wide by one hundred feet long.' Military music was provided, and a speech by Boulton impressing industry and thrift on his workmen terminated the great day. It is interesting after the lapse of nearly one hundred and twenty years to recall Boulton's closing words at this memorable feast. 'May this establishment be ever prosperous, may no misfortune ever happen to it, may it give birth to many useful arts and inventions, may it prove beneficial to all mankind and yield comfort and happiness to all who may be employed in it.' A good augury for the aims of the new foundry, which the verdict of over a century will amply indorse as fully fulfilled, and worthy of the great names associated with the undertaking.

To attempt to describe in any detail the work turned out by Soho would be impossible; suffice it to say that every kind of engineering and industrial goods were invented and turned out, and the history of the rise and progress of Soho is that of the century itself. To adequately describe the famous coining machinery at Soho, from which were subsequently modelled the royal mints of many governments, would alone require much space; whilst the invention of gas by Murdock at Soho, would in itself alone have stamped the place with fame for all time. Of late years the grand old works have busied themselves with machinery for vessels, and pumping plant, and other important contracts; but the inevitable changes wrought by time, the fierce competition of the present day, and the rivalry of newer and more modern appliances and plant have gradually told on the establishment, and it was decided to cease operations.

## TESTED.

I used to wonder in those summer days—
Those careless summer days of long ago,
When life meant light and music and the low,
Sweet ripple of soft laughter—if our ways
Of loving differed, if those ancient lays
You sang to me, of lovers loving so
That they could die for love, were true or no,
And if *my* love were thus beyond dispraise.
Dear, when the sun sank down below the rim,
And when black waves beat on the lonely shore—
When all the land seemed girt with shadows grim,
Then, my heart turned to you in anguish sore—
I knew then mine in truth had come from Him
Who dowers men with that Love which dies no more!

Kate Mellersh.

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## UPPER-CLASS EMIGRATION.

What shall we do with our sons?

The cry is loud and increasing, the query meets our eye in the daily papers, in the advertisements inserted by colonisation companies and by pamphleteers; it obtrudes itself in a very forcible manner upon the attention of many a paterfamilias of the upper and middle classes, who cannot afford to do more than give his sons a fair start in life, to sink or swim according to their characters or abilities.

Emigration amongst the lower classes has now been brought to a highly systematic point. Every line of steamers whose vessels leave an English port for foreign lands, has special arrangements in connection with it. Emigration offices are found in every considerable town in the United Kingdom, and full information about the colonies may be had for the asking at any of them—particularly from the Emigrants' Information Office, 31 Broadway, Westminster, S.W.

But public schoolboys wishing to go abroad, having hitherto been brought up in more or less comfort, find themselves at a loss on two points—where to go, and, having decided this—what to do when they get there. And let me say here, that it is infinitely better that the sons of our landowners, officers, and merchants should go out beyond the seas than add to the vast army of professional men, so steadily increasing and crowded to such an extent, that often a man has reached the prime of life before he finds himself earning a competent income.

There are fundamentally two outlets open to our youths, and it is between these that the choice must in every case be made; they are (1) the colonies or (2) foreign countries.

Take the colonies first. In almost all our possessions, competition has reached almost as high a point as it has at home. In Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, the artisan or skilled workman is infinitely better off than an educated young fellow without any particular trade; we find scions of good English families as storekeepers or cattlemen on Australian stations and on the South African veldt, or journalists in Southern towns, eking out a bare livelihood by their pen. Many labour for a pittance under settlers of the old stamp, men socially and in point of education far their inferiors, but who came out when the colony was younger. The stronger by degrees work their way painfully upwards with almost as much difficulty as they would have had at home. The weaker take to gold-mining, drinking, smuggling, or worse, and go rapidly down to the pit of the lost.

The United States, especially Florida, California, and Dakota, all favoured portions of the great American Republic, are similarly inundated by our upper classes. Wheat-farming in Dakota, fruit-growing in California and Florida, are now very considerably developed—a few more years and these countries too will be included amongst the 'full up.' Where then can the young Englishman turn to?

There is, I would remind him, a certain part of the American continent which has hitherto never been seriously taken into consideration as affording an opening for small capitalists. It might be blotted out from the map, so little does it enter into calculation. From the Texas frontier southwards to the river Plate there lies a country some four thousand miles in length, a region which is one of the richest on earth. From Mexico to Uruguay lies a practically virgin world, containing boundless natural resources, and capable of turning out an El Dorado to the industrious pioneer.

Why these countries have been hitherto so much neglected it is easy to account for. Political turmoil, depreciated currencies, language, climate, &c., above all, ignorance as to the true conditions of life there—these are the chief drawbacks. But those who make inquiries will acquire astonishing information. There *are* Englishmen in South America, hard-working and enterprising Englishmen, who are exacting

from the soil its toll on both sides of the Andes, and making money, not through speculations in worthless Government bonds, but from wheat, sugar-cane, coffee, and other tropical produce. If these men do well in those far-off lands, the fringe of whose fertile wildernesses is barely touched, why should not others? Here at last there is scope.

The disadvantages which I mentioned above as being generally considered unfavourable to immigration, I will discuss briefly.

(*a*) Political revolutions, convulsing as they do each and all of the Spanish-American States, are nevertheless purely amongst the natives themselves. A European who does not interfere in politics—and if he is wise he will shun them as he would the Gorgon's head—is seldom molested if circumspect in his conduct. Of course in the interior, property is always more or less unsafe in time of civil riot; the authorities on the coast cannot in such a case control the far inland districts. Compensation, however, is obtainable through the British Consul if damage is proved to have resulted from political disturbances, in which the sufferer has taken no part; though I may say here, that in the Argentine Republic, where revolutions are chronic, it is a rare thing indeed for a European to suffer loss from this cause. When fools fight, wise men profit, and in countries where the energies of the citizens are devoted to local and general disturbance, the European on his lands out in the open country is monopolising agriculture and trade.

(*b*) Depreciated currencies. The River Plate paper-money is at a discount of from two hundred to two hundred and fifty per cent. Paraguayan paper is at a discount compared with Argentine paper at as much again, the gold premium there being from five hundred to seven hundred per cent. A young man going out to these States can afford to wait a few years till the premium on gold falls. And fall it most assuredly will as the territory becomes opened up; there is, indeed, a wide belief that it has already touched its highest point. Meanwhile, as he buys all he requires in the country itself, he finds the paper-money as good for his purpose in payment of wages and purchase of utensils as any bullion. And as he will, if a competent man of business, generally be a creditor of the country for so much paper, in the future, when paper rises, his assets will improve in value to a corresponding extent.

The most extraordinary ideas prevail even in these countries themselves as to the climate in different districts. In the towns on the seacoast (all the towns of any importance *are* on the coast), the natives themselves have fearful tales to tell of the deadly climates up-country. 'You are going up to Jujuy!' your friends in Buenos Ayres exclaim in horror. 'You will die of malaria before three months. Jujuy is all swamp or desert.' On arriving at that remote Argentine province you find a bracing mountainous climate, unparalleled for enjoyable living for six months in the year. When at last the heat comes, with care in clothing and cooking you will ward off ague with no more difficulty than you would a cold at home. True, in freshly cleared land it is often impossible to go free, but if taken in time these low fevers are easily got rid of. There are, undeniably, hot marshy valleys in all these tropical States most pestilential and deadly under present conditions; but all the republics enjoy great variety of climate, and on the mountain-slopes and tablelands of Brazil and Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, Ecuador, take which you will, the conditions of life are first class, and the temperature and soil adapted to every form of animal and vegetable growth.

'I cannot go to South America because I don't know Spanish,' say many. The Spanish and Portuguese languages are amongst the easiest to acquire. In three months a man of ordinary intelligence can make himself understood without difficulty—in a year he will be perfectly at home. Englishmen pride themselves on being execrable linguists, but why it should be so, does not appear. Schiller says that with every new learned tongue a man gets a new soul. Certainly the knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese is daily becoming of more practical use.

The course that I advise to the intending emigrant to South America is, for six months previously to take lessons in the language of the country to which he is going—Portuguese if to Brazil, Spanish if to any other part of the continent. A knowledge of chemistry, sufficient to enable him to analyse soils, will also be of great use. On reaching, say Pernambuco, or Guayaquil, or whatever port he may have selected, let him make inquiries as to the capabilities of the various provinces, and then arrange with some estate owner to teach him his business for a year or two—sugar-planting, coffee, cocoa, indigo, tobacco, chinchona, or anything else. Once having got an insight into the run of plantation work, he can either continue working for a wage, or if sufficiently affluent, set up at once for himself. Land is cheap, labour is cheap—in many parts it is Indian, and costs next to nothing. Land may be cleared at a third of what it would cost in the colonies; the ground once cleared yields large and valuable crops. Transport is not difficult, well-meaning railway companies having run lines through vast fertile plains and forests to end in some stagnant little town at the end of everywhere.

There is no doubt at all that for an ordinarily intelligent and robust youth there can be no comparison between his prospects as a tropical planter, and clerkdom or professional life in a crowded English city. One is a free life, large and full of opportunities—the other narrow, unhealthy because confined, a terrible struggle owing to competition.

I have purposely left unnoticed certain colonies belonging to this country which partake of a tropical character. The West Indian islands at the commencement of the century were so many gems in the British crown. Since the negro emancipation, they have steadily gone backwards, though why, it is not easy to see. Fertile, surrounded by the ocean, within a fortnight of London and a week of New York, surely there are great possibilities there. We are a race of colonisers—turn then to these

still new regions in the south-west, oh paterfamilias, and despatch your young hopeful to anywhere in America between Cancer and Capricorn.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XV.—IN THE HOUSE.

THEN followed the opening of the newly elected Commons. Our own member went off with a quiet air of self-reliance, not arrogance. 'I am not in the least afraid of my own powers,' he repeated. 'I have tried and proved them. I shall speak to the House first, and to the country next.'

So he went off, the strong man armed, to begin the fight; and we looked after him, as he strode down the street, for my own part always with the feeling that we had somehow changed places.

'Robert will get, I suppose, some day, the desire of his heart,' said Isabel. 'I wonder why men desire these things.'

'They are very grand things,' I told her. 'Robert wants to be a leader of men—is not that a great thing to desire? What greater thing can there be?'

'Yes, if he is fit for it, and if he be a wise leader. But Robert puts the leadership first and the wisdom next. He only desires the wisdom in order to get the leadership.'

'Nay, Isabel, we must think exactly the contrary. Otherwise, how is the world ever to respect the leader?'

'I cannot think anything except what I know.'

'Well, then. Power is a very great thing to have. Every man in the world, except myself, ought to desire power. I don't want it, I confess, because I am not ambitious. Perhaps that is philosophy. Give me a tranquil, an obscure life if you like, with private interests; boat-building, for instance—and—what it seems I shall have to forego.'

Isabel paid no heed to the latter sentence, but went on talking about Robert. 'Always to lead, always to command. That is Robert's single thought. If he was King, he would not be contented unless he ruled the whole world.'

'A noble ambition, truly.'

'Sometimes I wonder whether all the great men of history have been self-seekers as well as masterful.'

'I should say—all. The personal motives, desire of place and authority, must underlie everything else.'

'Then how can any woman love a man who thinks of nothing but himself? I could not, George; but you know it—you—I cannot.'

'Well, Isabel, a woman may love the greatness and strength of the man first of all. Besides, she may call that a noble ambition which you call self-seeking. She may call that tenacity which you call selfishness. She may lend her whole strength.' I thought of Frances and what she would do. 'To advance the career in which her husband is absorbed, without asking for thanks or recognition from him at all.'

'I could not do it, George. The thought of devotion without thanks or recognition makes me wretched. I could never love a man who would accept such work. Besides, I could never love a man unless I filled his heart, and made him think of me.'

So she spoke, telling me all her thoughts in sweet confidence, knowing that it would not be abused. Well, some women differ. Frances would be contented if only her husband became a great man, with neither thanks nor recognition. Isabel cared nothing about the greatness. And I suppose that some women are contented with the ideal they have set up; they love not the strong man for his strength, nor the weak man for his weakness; they love an imaginary man. In this way the noblest woman may love the lowest man, seeing her ideal even through the matted overgrowth of animalism. Isabel had no power, unfortunately, of setting up an ideal; in this case, she knew the real man in his workshop, without his coat, so to speak, in his shirt sleeves. I said so. 'You worked with him, and for him, Isabel. That destroyed the ideal. No man is a hero to his typewriter.'

For three weeks nothing happened. At the house we went on as usual, but without Robert, who remained at Westminster, living in my chambers, while I took over the work of his boat-yard all day and the care of his mistress every evening. We were loyal to him; there was passed between us no word or look of which one need be ashamed: Isabel had repeated her promise; she had renewed the oath; one could only wait.

One morning, however, I found a letter lying on my plate. It was from Frances. I opened it: a long letter. I laid it aside: with my second cup of tea I began to read it leisurely. But over the second page I jumped with interjections.

'MY DEAR GEORGE,' she began, 'I was in the House last night looking down upon the new lot. They seem to be rather a mixed lot. We have had losses. However, a good many of our old friends are back again, and the majority is assured and is large enough if the Whips do their duty. Alas! If my mother were still living, with her salon and her dinners, that majority would become a solid block, growing every day. I might, myself, have such a salon, if there was a man anywhere for whose sake I could take the trouble and make myself a leader. But, George, as you know very well, there is not.'

I laid down the note. I could see in imagination Frances writing these words. She would throw down the pen and spring to her feet in impatience—in queenly impatience because among all her subjects she could not find one man strong enough. Yet to one strong and ambitious she would give, not only herself, but also such help in his career as few, very few, men could hope for; the help of a very long purse, very great family influence, political experience, and social power. She wanted to find such a man; she desired above all things to be a political lady, the wife of a great political leader; she would exact from him in

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return for all she gave, nothing but devotion to his career; she would acquiesce in his working and thinking for no other object.

On the other side of the table sat the other type of woman; one who wanted nothing of life but love, with sufficiency and tranquillity; one who would be perfectly contented with a life in the shade, and with a perfectly obscure husband.

As for myself, it seemed then, and it seems now, as if no distinctions—which do not distinguish—were worth the struggle and conflict, the misrepresentation, the lies and slanders of the party contest. Whereas, to live in obscurity beside a babbling brook—on Wapping Old Stairs, for instance: or among thick woods—the burial-ground of St John's, Wapping, for instance; or in country lanes with high hedges on either side—say the High Street, Wapping; with love and Isabel. . . . I resumed the letter.

'The questions do really grow more tedious every day. At last the adjourned debate began again—at half-past nine. You never take interest in anything really interesting, my dear George, so that it is useless to tell you that the Bill was a Labour Bill, and that everybody thought it a very useful Bill—even the working-men Members until to-night. However, the Bill, everybody says, will now have to be abandoned. In other words, your cousin, in a single maiden speech, has done the Government the injury of making them withdraw a Bill. It is equivalent to a defeat. But I am anticipating. My dear George, your cousin's speech is talked of by everybody.'

'Where's the paper?' I cried. 'Give it to me, Captain.' I tore it open and looked at the debates. Yes, there it was! Robert had made his first speech. 'Look, Isabel!' I cried. 'Look! he has succeeded with a single speech.' I threw the paper across the table and went on reading.

'I daresay you will have seen all about it in the papers. Now it is very curious; I had almost forgotten that your cousin was a candidate. They told me that he had no chance whatever, and I left off thinking about him as a candidate. Of course I could not forget the fiery orator of Shadwell, or the hero of the splendid fight that I witnessed. So that when he got up to speak I was quite unprepared for him. Of course I remembered him instantly; he is not the kind of man one forgets readily. I think he is quite the handsomest man in the House; not the tallest, but what they used to call the properest man and the comeliest; he has not the least air of fashion, but he has the look of distinction.'

'Good,' said the Captain. 'I always said that he looked like a duke.'

'Read the speech, George,' said Isabel, 'and then go on with the letter.'

I read the speech aloud. The oblique narrative makes everything cold. Even in direct narrative one loses the voice—in this case so rich and musical a voice—and the aspect of the man, the personality of the speaker—in this case so marked and so distinguished. Now the House of Commons may be cold—how can that unhappy body, doomed to listen day after day to floods and cataracts of words, be anything but cold?—but I was sure even from this dry 'précis' that the members must have listened with surprise and delight. The close of the speech I turned back from the oblique to direct narrative, and read it in the first person.

'Oh!' said Isabel. 'I think I hear him speaking. Those facts I copied for him myself from a blue-book.'

'Robert will be a great man,' said the Captain. 'My dear, they will make him something. He will be a nobleman and you will be my lady.'

'You read it just as Robert would speak it,' said Isabel. 'Your voice is like his, only not so strong. But you are like him in so many ways.'

'It is a noble speech, Isabel.'

'It is his first bid for power,' she distinguished. 'I daresay it is an able speech. But I feel as if I had been behind the scenes while he was preparing the show. To me, George, it will always be a show.'

'You are like the child who wants to go beyond the story, Isabel. Why not be contented with the things presented?'

I went on with the letter.

'I told you, George, in that East-End den, that the man was a born orator. He spoke better to-night, in the House, than before those working-men; perhaps because he was more careful. He is one of those speakers, I mean, with whom repression increases strength. He spoke consciously, I am sure, to the country as well as to the House. His voice is magnetic in its richness and fulness; his periods are balanced; he spoke without the least hesitation, yet without the fatal fluency; he was not embarrassed; he spoke with authority. The effect of his speech upon the House was wonderful; the members were dominated. They listened—compelled to listen. When he sat down there was a universal gasp, not of relief, but of astonishment.

'Of course I do not know what your cousin means or wishes by going into the House. Probably nothing but a vague ambition. What should such a man understand of the political career? Yet, when I say "such a man," I think of his trade, not of his appearance or his manner. He looks like a king and has the manners—in the House at least, whatever he might have in society—of one accustomed to the best people. Come and talk to me about him.

'Of course, also, one must never judge by a first speech. It is always interesting to hear the maiden effort. Very likely your cousin prepared every phrase and every word of it, and he would break down in debate. I wait for his second speech, and for a speech in reply.

'The member for Shadwell, as I told you before, is absurdly like you in face and in general appearance, but he is a bigger man. Perhaps he resembles the Judge, who was a very big man, more than you. Well, George, for your sake I shall watch his movements and read his speeches. He may do something considerable; he may not. Many a man makes a good beginning in the House who cannot

keep it up. The floor is knee-deep with the dust and bones of dead and gone ambitions. They take the place of the rushes which they formerly strewed on the floor. I was looking at the faces of the members last night. There were the old stagers who have long since parted with their ambitions, and now sit quiet and resigned, and vote like sheep. Why do they do it? What is the joy of remaining all their lives among the rank and file? Then I saw the faces of the new young men. I made them all out, one after the other, those who are ambitious and those who are not. Oh! George, what an interesting place the House of Commons is, and why—why—why have you left to a tradesman cousin all the ambition in the family?'

I read all this aloud.

'Who is your correspondent, George?' Isabel asked. 'I suppose it is your friend, Lady Frances. Why is she so contemptuous about tradesmen?'

'She only thinks that I ought to have gone into the House, Isabel. It is her way of expressing herself.'

However, the rest I did not read aloud.

'You may bring your cousin to see me, George. I am at home this day week. You so seldom come over to see me that I am almost tempted to come over to Wapping. But it would be too dreadful to see you among the chips, with your coat off and your sleeves turned up, and an apron, and, I daresay, disfiguring callosities already on your hands. When you are sick and tired of it, come back to the world. Lord Caerleon will soon want a private secretary. The post would suit you entirely. He is a man of the world—not a politician only. And there are still things to be had worth the having, and in the gift of ministers, which are not awarded by competitive examination to candidates who certainly have no more merit than you yourself. Come back. Great donkey—it is dull without you.—Your affectionate sister—by adoption, FRANCES.'

(*To be continued.*)

## A CHAPTER ON HOUSE-FLIES.

AT certain seasons of the year very few of our dwelling-houses are free from the presence of flies; they force themselves upon our notice in various ways, either by reason of their perpetual buzzing upon our window-panes, by their monotonous hum as they fly ceaselessly to and fro in our rooms, by their continual presence, both living and dead, wherever there is food of any kind, or lastly, by their persistent and irritating attention to our own persons. It is not generally known, however, that there are several different species of flies which thus torment us, and therefore it may profit us to consider for a little time, in a very elementary way, a few of the more conspicuous kinds, pointing out how one kind differs from another, not only in appearance and structure, but also in habits of life.

It is desirable, perhaps, to take as our first example the species which is properly entitled to the popular name of 'Common House-fly'—that known to scientific men as *Musca domestica*. Before describing this little creature, however, we should like to draw our readers' attention to what seems to be a rather prevalent popular error—namely, the idea that flies *grow*, in the ordinary sense of the term, and that the size of any fly we see upon the window-pane merely depends upon its *age*. Nothing could be further from the mark, for when a fly once becomes a fly—in other words, when it escapes from the pupa-case and acquires the use of wings, its development is completed and all power of growth at an end. It follows, then, that where there is a marked difference of size between two flies, we may be tolerably certain that they belong to quite distinct species.

It is not our purpose to go minutely into the structure, either external or internal, of flies, but it may be useful to mention that the great characteristic of all insects belonging to the Diptera, as the order of flies is called, marking them off from all other insects, is the possession of only one pair of wings. The second pair of wings, found in butterflies, moths, beetles, &c., is here represented by a pair of small balancers, called halteres, which are attached to the body, one on each side, just behind the true wings, and which in shape resemble a pair of miniature drum-sticks.

In its general appearance the common house-fly is very sombrely dressed, and seems to be without adornment of any kind, but on a closer examination it will be seen that it is really quite an elegantly marked insect. When seen from above, against the light, the front of the head is seen to glisten with two resplendent silvery-yellow patches, the thorax or middle part of the body between the wings is elegantly striped, while the abdomen or hinder part is beautifully checkered with yellow and black. The wings are transparent and tinged with gray, with a most brilliant and beautiful iridescence in certain lights. All these points give to the little creature a beauty of its own, entirely lost to the majority of people, merely because the insect is a common and insignificant one, and seemingly not worth the trouble of examining.

On holding up the fly to the light so as to look through the wing, it will be seen by the aid of a magnifying glass that there are a number of almost parallel veins running through the wing from base to apex, and that these are connected by short cross-veins. The fourth of these parallel veins, counting from the fore margin of the wing, is seen to be bent upwards at an obtuse angle towards the third, and this is really an important character and an easy one by which to distinguish this particular kind of house-fly from some others which are equally common and similar in size and appearance, but which have this vein quite straight. The head of our fly is a very pretty object. The greater part is occupied by two large reddish-brown hemispheres, one on each side. These are the compound eyes, and each of them consists of several thousand separate hexagonal lenses, arranged so as to cause an appearance under the microscope like the engine-turning on the back of a watch. Between

these compound eyes, and quite on the top of the head, are a trio of small clear dots, arranged in a triangle, like set jewels. These are the simple eyes, and their exact purpose does not seem to be thoroughly understood. In front of the head are the antennæ or feelers, and each consists of three joints, with a feathered bristle arising from the back of the last joint. This bristle is an important aid in the identification of the different species of flies, in some kinds being quite simple, in others beautifully plumose or feathered, as in the common species now occupying our attention. Below the head of the fly may be seen projecting the long thick tongue or proboscis, which is a very wonderful structure. We have only space to say a very little about this organ; to describe it fully would occupy more than the whole space devoted to our present article. It is a true sucker, but a very complicated one, made up of several pieces united so as to form a tube, which not only serves for the conveyance of the fluid food to the mouth, but also for the passage of saliva from the mouth in order to moisten and dissolve particles of the substance upon which the fly is feeding. At the tip of the proboscis are to be found hardened rings which aid in triturating the food. We have already described the general appearance of the body of the fly, so that it only remains for us to say a word or two about the legs. As in other insects there are six legs, each consisting of several joints. The foot is composed of five separate joints, the last of which is terminated by a pair of curved claws. Between the claws is a pair of minute pads, generally supposed to act as suckers. It is by the aid of these pads that flies are enabled to climb the smooth window-pane, or walk along the ceiling. Whether these pads act merely as suckers, or whether in addition they secrete a sticky substance to aid the fly in its vertical peregrinations, has not been satisfactorily proved. We cannot, however, place much faith in the latter theory.

The eggs of the common house-fly are generally laid in dung, but almost any kind of dirt or filth may be appropriated by the female for this purpose. An important factor, therefore, in the extermination or at least the diminution in numbers of these pests would seem to be absolute cleanliness in our rooms and kitchens, and the prevention of any accumulation of dust. From the eggs are hatched small, whitish, footless grubs, which feed on the filth amongst which they live, soon becoming pupæ enclosed in a hard skin. When the fly is ready to emerge, its head is furnished with a large protuberance, filled with fluid, with which it forces off the lid of the case. When the fly first escapes, its wings are in quite a crumpled condition, and this circumstance, combined with its enormously swollen head, gives the insect a very grotesque appearance. In a very few minutes, however, the wings become fully expanded, and at the same time the head shrinks and the fluid is withdrawn, the whole body hardens and changes colour, and the fly is perfect.

Of the other kinds of house-flies very little need be said. There is a smaller kind, liable to be mistaken for the *Musca domestica*, but which has the fourth vein of the wing straight. The abdomen has the base at each side yellow and transparent, while the front of the head is brilliant silvery white, with the eyes almost meeting, at least in the male, at the top of the head. This fly rejoices in the name of *Homalomyia canicularis*, though it used to be called *Musca domestica minor*. So we, too, might quite legitimately call it the 'smaller house-fly.' It has a similar life-history to that of its larger relative, with the exception that the eggs are laid in decaying vegetable matter.

A third kind of house-fly, and the only one that really 'bites' or 'stings,' is distinguished by having its weapon of offence, the proboscis, sticking straight out horizontally in front of its head. Moreover, the fourth vein of the wings is *gently curved* towards the third, and neither straight, as in the 'smaller,' nor bent at an angle, as in the 'common' house-fly. On the whole, it is a more prettily marked insect than either of the others, though its beauty hardly compensates us for its vicious habits. It is a veritable blood-sucker, attacking our hands and faces, and well merits both its popular and scientific name—the 'sharp-mouthed stinger,' or *Stomoxys calcitrans*. Its thorax is similarly striped to that of the common house-fly, but the abdomen is very differently adorned, being yellowish-gray, with six black dots, three on the second ring and three on the third. Its life-history is similar to that of the common house-fly.

Quite different both in habits and appearance from all these flies is the common Bluebottle, called scientifically *Calliphora erythrocephala*. This is almost too well known to need description. It is a much larger insect, of a beautiful metallic blue colour, with a sheen which changes its position as we turn the fly about in various lights. The front of the head on its lower part is of a reddish colour, and the fourth vein of the wings, so often alluded to, is bent at a very sharp angle towards the third. The eggs of the bluebottle are laid in flesh of different kinds, and every housewife knows the difficulty in summer and autumn of keeping these unwelcome visitors away from her choicest viands. Even living wounds have been selected by these flies for the purpose of depositing their eggs, and great must be the agony caused by the maggots which hatch from them. The maggots are ready to escape from the egg in a very few hours after these have been laid, and themselves soon enter the next or pupal stage. As to the duration of life of the perfect fly, it is probably much longer than that of either the larva or pupa, and some bluebottles may even hybernate through the winter, and so live on from one year to the next.

The last fly we shall notice, though not so often found in houses as the others, yet possesses an interest from its habits. This is the common Flesh-fly, *Sarcophaga carnaria*. It is about the size of the bluebottle, but of a more slender build, of a gray colour, and perhaps the most handsome fly we have considered. The face is silvery, the veins in the wings are similar in arrangement to those of the bluebottle, the thorax is beautifully striped, alter-

nately black and gray, while the abdomen is brilliantly checkered with black and silvery gray. The females of this fly are viviparous, that is to say, they do not lay eggs, but living larvæ. These are deposited upon all sorts of animal matter, and in countless numbers. Meigen, a great authority on the Diptera in the earlier half of the present century, has calculated that, supposing a female to lay only fifty eggs, which is a very small estimate, say on the 1st of April, and that half of these become females and lay fifty eggs each, by the end of October, at the same reckoning, would be produced from this single fly a progeny of no less than five hundred and eight millions of separate individuals. By allowing eighty eggs to each female this number would amount to as many as eight thousand millions. So that, to use Meigen's own words, had not Nature provided ample means for their extermination, more especially in the shape of insectivorous birds, this host would indeed leave little meat for man, and *fast-days would prevail!*

## THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

### CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

AGAIN, as usual in Kimberley at this season, the next morning broke clear and invigorating. All the world of the corrugated-iron city seemed, after breakfast, brisk, keen, and full of life as they went about their business. The Cape swallows flitted, and hawked, and played hither and thither in the bright atmosphere, or sat, looking sharply about them, upon the telegraph wires or housetops, preening their feathers and displaying their handsome, chestnut body colouring. The great market square was still full of wagons, and long spans of oxen, and of native people, drawn from well-nigh every quarter of Southern Africa.

Out there in the sunlit market-place stood a man, whose strong brain was just now busily engaged in piecing together and puzzling out the patchwork of this extraordinary case. David Ayling, with his mighty voice, Scotch accent, oak-like frame, keen gray eyes, and vast iron-gray beard, was a periodical and excellently well-known Kimberley visitant. For years he had traded and hunted in the far interior. His reputation for courage, resource, and fair dealing was familiar to all men, and David's name had for years been a household word from the Cape to the Zambesi. Periodically, the trader came down to Kimberley with his wagons and outfit, after a year or two spent in the distant interior. Yesterday morning he had come in, and in the afternoon and evening he seemed to hear upon men's tongues nothing else than Frank Farnborough's case, and the story of the Mahalapsi diamond. Now David had known Frank for some few years, and had taken a liking to him. Several times he had brought down-country small collections of skins, and trophies of the chase, got together at the young man's suggestion. He had in his wagon, even now, some new and rare birds from the far-off Zambesi lands, and the two had had many a deal together. Frank's unhappy plight at once took hold of the trader's sympathies, and the Mahalapsi and crocodile episodes tended yet further to excite his interest. Certain suspicions had been growing in his mind. This morning, before breakfast, he had carefully read and re-read the newspaper report of the trial, and now, just before the court opened, he was waiting impatiently with further developments busily evolving in his brain. There was a bigger crowd even than yesterday; the prisoner and counsel had come in; all waited anxiously for the end of the drama. In a few minutes the court entered, grave and self-possessed, and the leading judge began to arrange his notes.

At that moment, David Ayling, who had shouldered his way to the fore, stood up and addressed the court in his tremendous deep-chested tones, which penetrated easily to every corner of the chamber.

'My lords,' he said, 'before you proceed further, I should like to lay one or two facts before you—not yet known in this case. They are very important, and I think you should hear them in order that justice may be done, and perhaps an innocent man saved. I have only just come from the Zambesi and never heard of this trial till late yesterday afternoon.'

Two persons, as they listened to these words and looked at the strong, determined man uttering them, felt, they knew not why, instantly braced and strengthened, as if by a mighty tonic. They were Frank, the prisoner, hitherto despairing and out of heart, and Nina Staarbrucker, sitting at the back of the court, pale and trembling with miserable anticipations.

'You know me, my lord, I think,' went on David, in his deep Scotch voice.

'Yes, Mr Ayling, we know you, of course,' answered the senior judge (every one in Kimberley knew David Ayling), 'and I am, with my colleagues, anxious to get at all the evidence available before completing the case. This is somewhat irregular, but, upon the whole, I think you had better be sworn and state what you have to say.'

David went to the witness-box and was sworn. 'This crocodile skin here,' he went on, pointing to the skin, which was handed up to him, 'I happen to know very well. I have examined it carefully before your lordship came in; it is small, and of rather peculiar shape, especially about the head. I remember that skin well, and can swear to it; there are not many like it knocking about. That skin was put on to my wagon in Kimberley seventeen months ago, and was carried by me to the Mahalapsi River.'

The court had become intensely interested as the trader spoke, the judges and magistrate pricked up their ears and looked intently, first at the skin, then at David.

'Go on,' said the judge.

'Well, my lord,' resumed David, 'the skin was put on to my wagon in February of last year, by Sam Vesthreim, a Jew storekeeper, in a small way in Beaconsfield. There were some other odds and ends put on the wagon, little lots of goods, which I delivered in Barkly West. But the crocodile skin, Sam Vesthreim said, was a bit of a curio, and he particularly

wanted it left at some friend's place farther up-country. I was in a hurry at the time, and forgot to take the name, but Sam said there was a label on the skin. The thing was pitched in with a lot of other stuff, and lay there for a long time. I lost sight of it till we had got to the Mahalapsi River, where the wagon was overturned in crossing. I off-loaded, and the crocodile skin then turned up with the label off. We were heavily laden; the skin was, I thought, useless; we were going on to the Zambesi, and I had clean forgotten where the skin ought to have been left. It seemed a useless bit of gear, so I just pitched it away in the bushes, in the very spot as near as I can make it, where Mr Farnborough's friend, Mr Kentburn, found it, nearly a year later, as he came down-country. That is one remarkable thing. I would like to add, my lord, that the Mahalapsi is a dry river, never running except in rains; and in all my experience, and I have passed it some scores of times, I never knew a crocodile up in that neighbourhood. The chances of there being any other crocodile skin in that sandy place and among those bushes, where Mr Kentburn found this one, would, I reckon, be something like a million (David pronounced it *mullion*) to one.

'There is one other point, my lords. Long after Sam Vesthreim delivered that skin on my wagon, I read in the newspapers that he had been arrested for I.D.B.—only a few weeks after I saw him—and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. I have been puzzling mightily over this case, and I must say, the more I think of it, the more unaccountable seems to me the fact of Sam Vesthreim sending that dried crocodile skin *up*-country. If it had been *down*-country, or to England, I could understand it; but in this case it seems very much like sending coals to Newcastle. I never knew that Sam was in the I.D.B. trade till I saw his imprisonment in the paper. I think he had some peculiar object in getting that skin out of his house. And I cannot help thinking, my lord, that Sam Vesthreim, if he could be found, could throw a good deal of light on this crocodile and diamond business. In fact, I'm sure of it. It's quite on the cards, to my thinking, that he put the diamond in that crocodile himself.'

Some questions were put to the witness by counsel for both sides, without adding to or detracting from the narrative in any way. The court seemed a good deal impressed by David's story, as indeed did the whole of the crowded audience, who had breathlessly listened to its recital. Mr Flecknoe, the detective, was called forward. He informed the court that Sam Vesthreim was now at Capetown undergoing a long term of imprisonment. He was no doubt at work on the Breakwater.

The senior judge was a man of decision, and he had quickly made up his mind. After a short whispered consultation with his colleagues, he spoke. 'The turn this case has taken is so singular, and the evidence given by Mr Ayling has imported so new an aspect, that in the prisoner's interest we are determined to have the matter sifted to the bottom. I will adjourn the court for a week, in order to secure the convict Vesthreim's attendance here upon oath. Will this day week suit the convenience of all counsel in this case?'

Counsel intimated that the day of adjournment met their views, and once more the crowded court emptied. As David Ayling turned to leave, he caught Frank Farnborough's eye. He gave him a bright reassuring nod, and a wink which did him a world of good. Altogether Frank went back to another weary week's confinement in far better spirits than he had been for many days. There was, at all events, some slight element of hope and explanation now. And it was refreshing to him as a draught of wine, to find such a friend as David Ayling fighting his battle so stoutly, so unexpectedly.

Nina Staarbrucker stole silently out of the court, only anxious to get home, and escape observation. There were many eyes upon her, but she heeded them not at all. Thank God! there seemed some ray of light for Frank; for herself, whether Frank came out triumphantly or no, there was no outlook, all seemed blackness and gloom. Otto's part in this wretched business had made ruin of all her hopes. Her brother's treachery had determined her upon seeking a career of her own—work of some sort—anywhere away from Kimberley she must get, and get at once, so soon as the trial was over, and whatever its result.

Once more, in a week's time, the court wore its former aspect, the characters were all marshalled for the final act. The new addition to the caste, Mr Samuel Vesthreim, a lively, little, dark-visaged Jew of low type, seemed on the best of terms with himself. For more than fifteen months he had been hard at it on Capetown Breakwater, or road-scarping upon the breezy heights round the Cape peninsula—always, of course, under the escort of guards and the unpleasing supervision of loaded rifles—and really he needed a little rest and change. This trip to Kimberley was the very thing for him. What slight sense of shame he had ever had, had long since vanished under his recent hardening experiences; and as the little man looked round the crowded court, he saw the well-remembered faces of many a Kimberley acquaintance, and it did his heart good. He positively beamed again—in a properly subdued manner, of course.

The leading judge remarked to the advocates, 'Perhaps it will save the time of all if I put some questions to this witness myself.' The suggestion was gracefully received, and the judge turned to the little Jew, now attentive in the witness-box.

'Samuel, or Sam Vesthreim, you are a convict now undergoing a term of penal servitude at Capetown, I think?'

'Yeth, my lord.'

'It may perhaps tend slightly to lessen or mitigate the extreme term of your imprisonment if I receive perfectly truthful and straightforward answers to the questions I am going to ask. Be very careful, therefore. Any future recommendation on my part to the authorities will depend upon yourself.'

'Yeth, my lord,' answered Sam, in his most serious manner—and he meant it.

'About seventeen months ago you were in business in Beaconsfield, were you not?'

'Yeth, my lord.'

'Do you know Mr Ayling here?' pointing to the trader.

'I do, my lord.'

'Do you remember entrusting Mr Ayling with some goods about that time to take up-country?'

'I do, my lord.'

'What were they?'

'There were three cases of groceries to be delivered in Barkly West, and a crocodile skin to be left at the place of a friend of mine near Zeerust, in Marico, Transvaal.'

'Take that skin in your hands.' The crocodile was handed up like a baby. 'Do you recognise it?'

'Yeth, my lord, that is the identical skin, I believe, that I handed to Mr Ayling.'

'Now, be careful. Was there anything inside that crocodile skin?'

The little Jew saw now exactly which way the cat jumped, and he saw, too, that only the truth could be of use to him in the weary days and years yet to come on Capetown Breakwater. The court was hushed by this time to an absolute silence. You could have heard almost a feather fall.

'Well, my lord,' the little Jew replied, 'there *wath* something inside that crocodile. I had had a little bit of a speculation, and there was a big diamond inside the crocodile skin. I put it there myself. You see, my lord,' he went on rapidly, 'I had been doing one or two little transactions in stones, and I fancied there was something in the air, and so I put away that diamond and packed it off in the crocodile skin, safe, as I thought, to a friend in the Transvaal. It was a risk, but just at that time it was the only way out of the difficulty. I meant to have had an eye on the skin again, myself, a few days after, but I had a little difficulty with the police and I was prevented.'

As Sam Vesthreim finished, Frank could have almost hugged him for the news he brought. An irrepressible murmur of relief ran round the crowded court, a murmur that the usher was for a minute or two powerless to prevent. The judge whispered to an attendant. The diamond was produced and handed to the Jew. 'Do you recognise that stone?' said the judge.

'I do, my lord,' answered Vesthreim emphatically. 'That is the stone I put inside the crocodile. I could swear to it among a thousand.' The little man's eyes gleamed pleasurably yet regretfully upon the gem as he spoke.

Here, then, was the mystery of the fatal, puzzling diamond cleared up. There were few more questions to ask. The little Jew frankly admitted that the stone was a De Beer's stone, stolen by a native worker; there was little else to learn. Frank was a free man, practically, as he stood there, jaded and worn, yet at least triumphant. It was a dear triumph though, only snatched from disaster by the merest chance in the world—the coming of David Ayling. And the tortures, the agonies he had suffered in these last few weeks of suspense! He knew that nothing—the kindly congratulations of friends, the tenderer affection of relations, the hearty welcome of a well-nigh lost world—none of these good things could ever quite repay him, ever restore to him what he had lost.

In a very few minutes Frank had been discharged from custody. The judges in brief, sympathetic speeches, congratulated him on his triumphant issue from a very terrible ordeal, and trusted that the applause and increased respect of his fellow-citizens would in some slight degree make up to him for his undoubted sufferings.

Frank left the court, arm in arm with David Ayling, whom he could not sufficiently thank for his timely and strenuous assistance. A troop of friends escorted him to the Transvaal Hotel, where his health was drunk in the hearty Kimberley way with innumerable congratulations. All this was very gratifying, as was the magnificent dinner which a number of friends gave to him a day or two later, at which half Kimberley assisted. But, for the present, Frank desired only to be left severely alone, with the quieter greetings of his few most intimate friends. He was still half stunned and very unwell; some weeks or months must elapse before he should be himself again.

One of his first inquiries was after Nina Staarbrucker, whom he wished sincerely to thank for her brave and honest defence of him at the trial. He learned, with a good deal of surprise, that she had left Kimberley on the morning after the trial, alone. He learned too, with less surprise, that Otto had quitted the town on urgent business in the Transvaal, and was not likely to return for some time. Beyond these bare facts, he could gather little or nothing of Nina and her whereabouts. He rather suspected she had gone to some relations near Capetown, but for the present her address was undiscoverable.

Very shortly after the result of the trial, Frank Farnborough was granted by his company six months' leave of absence, with full pay in the meantime. It was felt that the young man had been injured cruelly by his imprisonment, and that some atonement was due to him; and the Great Diamond Company he served, not to be behind in the generous shake of the hand, which all Kimberley was now anxious to extend to a hardly used man, was not slow in giving practical manifestation of a public sympathy. The stolen stone had been proved a De Beer's diamond, and Frank, its unfortunate temporary owner, had not only been deprived of a valuable find, but for his innocent ownership had suffered terribly in a way which no honest man could ever possibly forget. In addition, therefore, to his grant of leave of absence and full salary, Frank was handed a cheque for five hundred pounds, being, roughly, a half share of the value of the recovered gem.

Frank at once set out upon an expedition on which he had long fixed his mind—a hunting trip to the far interior. His preparations were soon made, and, a few weeks later,

he was enjoying his fill of sport and adventure in the wild country north-east of the Transvaal, at that time a veldt swarming with great game.

After three months came the rains, and with the rains, fever—fever, too, of a very dangerous type. Frank turned his wagon for the Limpopo River, and, still battling with the pestilence, kept up his shooting so long as he had strength. At last came a time when his drugs were conquered, the fever held him in a death-like grip, and he lay in his kartel gaunt, emaciated, weak, almost in the last stage of the disease. The fever had beaten him, and he turned his face southward and trekked for civilisation.

The wagons—he had a friendly trader with him by this time—had crossed the Limpopo and outspanned one hot evening in a tiny Boer village, the most remote of the rude frontier settlements of the Transvaal Republic. Frank, now in a state of collapse, was lifted from his wagon and carried into the back room of the only store in the place—a rude wattle and daub shanty thatched with grass. He was delirious, and lay in high fever all that night. In the morning he seemed a trifle better, but not sensible of those about him. At twelve o'clock he was once more fast in the clutches of raging fever; his temperature ran up alarmingly; he rambled wildly in his talk; at this rate it seemed that life could not long support itself in so enfeebled a frame.

Towards sundown, the fever had left him again; he lay in a state of absolute exhaustion, and presently fell into a gentle sleep. The trader, who had tended him day and night for a week, now absolutely wearied out, sought his own wagon and went to sleep. The store-keeper had retired, only a young woman, passing through the place, a governess on her way to some Dutchman's farm, watched by the sick man's bed.

It was about an hour after midnight, the African dawn had not yet come, but the solitary candle shed a fainter light; a cock crew, the air seemed to become suddenly more chill. The woman rose from her chair, fetched a light kaross* from the store, and spread it gently over the sick man's bed. Then she lifted his head—it was a heavy task—and administered some brandy and beef-tea. Again the young man slept, or lay in torpor. Presently the girl took his hand in her right, then sitting close to his bedside she, with her left, gently stroked his brow and hair. A sob escaped her. She kissed the listless, wasted hand; then with a little cry she half rose, bent herself softly and kissed tenderly, several times, the brow and the hollow, wasted cheek of the fever-stricken man. As she did so, tears escaped from her eyes and fell gently, all unheeded, upon Frank's face and pillow.

'Oh, my love, my love!' cried the girl, in a sobbing whisper, 'to think that never again can I speak to you, take your hand in mine! To think that I, who would have died for you, am now ashamed as I touch you—ashamed for the vile wrong that was done to you in those miserable days. My love, my darling, I must now kiss you like a thief. Our ways are apart, and the journey—my God—is so long.'

Once more, leaning over the still figure, she kissed Frank's brow, and then, relapsing into her chair, cried silently for a while—a spasmodic sob now and again evincing the bitter struggle within her. The cold gray of morning came, and still she sat by the bedside, watching intently, unwearyingly, each change of the sick man's position, every flicker of the tired eyes.

During the long hours of the two next days, Frank lay for the most part in a torpor of weakness. The fever had left him; it was now a struggle between death and the balance of strength left to a vigorous constitution after such a bout. Save for an hour or so at a time, Nina had never left his side. Hers was the gentle hand that cooled the pillows, shifted the cotton Kaffir blankets that formed the bedding, gave the required nourishment, and administered the medicine. On the evening of the fourth day, there were faint symptoms of recovery; the weakened man seemed visibly stronger. Once or twice he had feebly opened his eyes and looked about him—apparently without recognition of those at hand.

It was in the middle of this night that Frank really became conscious. He had taken some nourishment, and after long lying in a state betwixt sleep and stupor, he awoke to feel a tender stroking of his hand. Presently his brow was touched lightly by soft lips. It reminded him of his mother in years gone by. Frank was much too weak to be surprised at anything, but he opened his eyes and looked about him. It was not his mother's face that he saw, as he had dreamily half expected, but the face of one he had come to know almost as well.

Close by him stood Nina Staarbrucker, much more worn, much graver, much changed from the sweet, merry, piquant girl he had known so well at Kimberley. But the dark friendly eyes—very loving, yet sad and beseeching, it seemed to him dimly—of the lost days, were still there for him.

Frank opened his parched lips and in a husky voice whispered, 'Nina!'

'Yes,' said the sweet, clear voice he remembered so well, 'I am here, nursing you. You must not talk. No, not a word,' as he essayed to speak again, 'or you will undo all the good that has been done. Rest, my darling (I can't help saying it,' she said to herself; 'it will do no harm, and he will never hear it again from my lips); sleep again, and you will soon be stronger.'

Frank was still supremely weak, and the very presence of the girl seemed to bring peace and repose to his senses. He smiled—closed his eyes again, and slept soundly far into the next day.

That was the last he ever saw of Nina Staarbrucker. She had vanished, and although Frank, as he grew from convalescence to strength, made many inquiries as the months went by, he could never succeed in gaining satisfactory tidings of her. He once heard that she had been seen in Delagoa Bay, that was all. Whether in the years to come they will

* A fur cloak or rug.

ever meet again, time and the fates alone can say. It seems scarcely probable. Africa is vast, and nurses safely within her bosom the secret of many a lost career.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHAT has been rather inaptly called the New Photography has had some curious developments during the past few weeks. It has been found by Mr Herbert Jackson, of King's College, London, that by using a Crooke's tube of particular form with a reflector of platinum supported in its centre, the X-rays can be brought, as it were, to a focus, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the shadow picture afforded by such a tube is much better defined than with the apparatus formerly employed. It is also an important feature that the time necessary for taking one of these shadow pictures is, with this new tube, reduced from about twenty minutes to two. It is evident that this reduction in the time of exposure will make this system available for many surgical purposes.

Another curious development of the X-ray marvel has been found in the fact that, by using a screen coated with a certain fluorescent compound, the shadow pictures need not be submitted to the action of a photographic plate, but can be seen by the eye direct. Professor Salvioni, of Perugia, was the first to point this out, and experiments in London have corroborated his observations. By using a screen covered with potassic-platino-cyanide, Mr Herbert Jackson has shown that the bones of the hand, foot, elbow, &c. can not only be seen, but can actually be seen in movement. The method he adopts is to place the object to be viewed between the radiant matter tube and the fluorescent screen in a dark room; the shadow then becomes evident on the screen as a shadow might be projected upon a surface covered with luminous paint. In this way Mr Jackson has already viewed the spinal bones in a living human body, and he looks forward, at an early date, to viewing in the same manner the entire skeleton.

From observations made at some ironworks in Germany, it seems evident that the chimney of a blast-furnace, while such a furnace is in action, needs no protection by a lightning-conductor. Even if it be furnished with that metallic tie between the clouds and the earth, the electricity will prefer to avoid it, and to take advantage of the easier path afforded by the heated air. Again and again has it been noted at these works that the lightning will take a path right through the chimney shaft and through the molten metal to the earth beneath without doing any damage whatever. The explanation may be found in the circumstance that the column of smoke proceeding from such a chimney contains much water and carbon dust in suspension, and that this smoke, extending as it does to a great height above the chimney shaft, forms a far better conductor than the small copper tape outside the brickwork.

Dr John Murray, of the *Challenger* Expedition, recently gave a very interesting lecture at the Royal Institution on Marine Organisms. He showed that temperature was a far more important factor in the distribution of these lower organisms than in the case of warm-blooded and air-breathing animals on *terra firma*. The surface waters of the ocean had five well-marked temperature areas. First, there were the Arctic and Antarctic regions with very low temperatures; next, a tropical belt of small range but with high temperature; and there remained two intermediate areas where the annual ranges of temperature were great. The ocean might be divided into two great divisions, the upper one reaching to a depth of one hundred fathoms, and the lower one, a still region where plants were absent, but where animal life was abundant. The lecturer supposed that the various facts in the distribution of marine organisms might be explained by supposing that in early geological times there was not only a uniform climate over the entire globe, but an almost universal fauna and flora.

A French process for giving to iron a rustless coating is carried out in the following manner. The article to be treated is placed in a gas retort, and raised to a temperature of about six hundred degrees centigrade, when a current of hydrogen is turned into the retort for forty-five minutes, after which a small quantity of naphtha is introduced for ten minutes. The hydrogen charge is now repeated for another fifteen minutes, and the process is complete. The effect of this treatment is to give the iron a bluish coating of carbide, which, it is said, is so strongly adherent to the metal, that it can be freely bent about without any disturbance of the rustless coat.

Several serious accidents have been recorded from flywheels, while revolving at a high speed, breaking into fragments and spreading death and destruction on every side; a result brought about by the centrifugal force exerted by the revolving mass overcoming its tensile strength. A new kind of flywheel has lately been erected at the Mannesman Tube Company's Works in Germany, which is specially designed to run at very high speeds without risk of such a disaster as that just referred to. The new wheel has a massive cast-iron hub or boss, to either side of which is strongly bolted a disc about twenty feet in diameter. The arrangement thus represents a huge but very narrow reel in proportion to its diameter. The space between the discs is wound with no less than seventy tons of steel wire, which has a tensile strength far beyond that possessed by any casting. This immense mass of metal is driven at a speed of two hundred and forty revolutions per minute, which gives a velocity to any point on its rim of about two and a half miles a minute, that is to say, about three times the speed of an express train. The wire employed in this novel form of flywheel is No. 5, and its estimated length is two hundred and fifty miles.

Edison's beautiful optical instrument, the Kinetoscope, has now become familiar to most people through its exhibition in various large towns. By means of it, a photograph, or rather a series of photographs, constitutes a marvellous

living picture, and the only drawback to the effect produced is the very small scale of the pictures. It has therefore been the endeavour of many inventors to adapt the mechanism of the Kinetoscope to the optical or magic lantern, so that the original pictures, which are not more than one inch in length, can be magnified to several feet. This has been done with more or less success by M.M. Lumiére of Paris, and the apparatus is now being exhibited in London. What we may call the action of the pictures thus exhibited is most realistic. In one instance, a busy railway station is shown, a train is seen approaching, it draws up at the platform, the carriage-doors open, the passengers alight and talk with one another, and the guard steps forward and signals the engine-driver to proceed on his journey. It is evident that this apparatus when perfected will be as much valued by artists as a means of studying motion, as it is by mere amusement-seekers; but the assertion that one day we shall be able, by means of these projected pictures in association with the phonograph, to reproduce operas and other dramatic representations, is at present, to say the least, premature.

An English steamer, the *Scandia*, was recently overtaken by a terrific storm in mid-Atlantic, and the captain, having no store of oil on board which he could throw on the troubled waters, tried the effect of soapsuds, and, it is said, with the greatest success. The effect was instantaneous, the height of the waves being immediately diminished and their crests being less threatening. The captain of a French vessel is also reported to have employed soap solution with similar success. He used three kilogrammes of soap dissolved in seventy litres of water, and dropping the mixture over the bows of his ship, insured a quiet pathway for it ten yards wide.

It is reported that there is some chance of a union between the Panama and Nicaragua Canal Companies; and the proposed arrangement, including as it does a fusion of French and American interests, is regarded with favour by those most interested in the matter. Under such an arrangement the Nicaragua Company would purchase the machinery and assets generally of the Panama Company, and the construction of a canal over the Nicaragua route would be rapidly pushed forward. It is considered that only one canal is needed to accommodate the ships which are now compelled to go round Cape Horn. The notion of piercing this isthmus is a very old one, and many lives have been lost and much treasure has been expended in the endeavour to carry out the enterprise. It is certain that the work will be accomplished some day with success, and this union of the two companies which have formerly been rivals, seems a step in a forward direction.

Hitherto marine glue has been the only satisfactory cement for joining glass; it would withstand the action of water and acids, but heat would cause it to give way. It is now reported that Mr Charles Margot has produced a metallic solder for glass, consisting of ninety-five parts of tin and five of zinc, which melts at two hundred degrees, and becomes firmly adherent to that material. An alloy of ninety parts tin and ten of aluminium melts at three hundred and ninety degrees and becomes a still stronger solder for glass. It is asserted that with these alloys it is as easy to solder two pieces of glass together as pieces of metal. Of course, certain precautions are necessary, for we all know that glass suddenly heated will inevitably crack. The pieces to be joined should be carefully heated in a furnace, and the parts to be connected rubbed with a rod of solder, and this can be then evenly distributed as it melts, with a rod of wood or paper.

Mr Arthur Stenhouse, in a letter to the *Scotsman*, describes the process of ore treatment and gold recovery in the Transvaal, by means of which at least ninety-five per cent. of the gold in the ore can be recovered, this method more than anything else having made recent gold-mining so successful. The three stages of progress are milling, concentrating, and cyaniding. As to the first process, when the rocks are hoisted out, they are sorted, the waste rock is thrown aside, while the gold-bearing ore is broken into lumps, and passes by gravitation and feeders through a battery, or stamp-mill, each stamp of which weighs about eleven hundred and fifty pounds. A stream of water is introduced, and the ore is crushed into fine sand, carried over a series of inclined copper plates, which are coated with quicksilver. The free gold in the sand amalgamates with the quicksilver, and the sand-laden stream continues its course, and passes on to the concentrators, which retain the heavy sand, while the lighter passes to the cyanide vats. A solution of cyanide of potassium is pumped into these sand vats, which dissolves the gold, leaving pure sand alone in the vat. This gold solution, after it leaves the vat, being led into a series of boxes filled with zinc shavings, the gold separates from the liquid, and settles on the zinc shavings in the shape of a small black powder.

In the battery, the copper plates are scraped daily, and the quicksilver and gold is weighed and placed in the safe. The quicksilver is afterwards evaporated, and the gold residue smelted into bars. The 'concentrates' are usually roasted, so that iron may be separated from the gold. The gold from the zinc shavings is also recovered by retorting, the produce when melted being known as 'cyanide gold.'

A curious calculation with reference to the power exerted by, and the life of, big guns, is given in a recent number of the *Scientific American*. The Italian 100-ton gun (model of 1879), with a charge of five hundred and fifty pounds of powder, ejects an enormous projectile at an initial velocity of 1715 feet per second, which is equal to seventeen million horse-power exerted for about the hundredth part of a second. Modern guns give to their projectiles an initial velocity of just upon two thousand feet per second, equal, when the weight of the ball is taken into consideration, to twenty-four million horse-power exerted for the same time. But, unfortunately, after a few of these gigantic efforts the constitution of the 'infants' is undermined; the ephemera are longer lived in comparison, for whereas those

active organisms have at least a summer day's life, the big gun has lived out its allotted span after the time required for the discharge of about one hundred shots.

Asbestos wool, compressed by the hydraulic pump to a thin sheet and waterproofed on one side, is recommended by an American inventor for the middle soles of boots and shoes. It is said that such a compound sole will protect the wearer from all the ills which are supposed to be associated with the access of heat, cold, and moisture to the feet.

Lord Armstrong has recently made some very curious photo-electrical experiments by means of a Wimshurst machine. This machine is caused to charge two large condensing jars, and the brush discharge from these latter, just before the tension rises sufficiently to produce an actual spark, is made to impinge upon a very sensitive gelatine plate. The operation is conducted in a dark room, and in the absence of either camera or lens, but the result on each plate employed is a most beautiful arborescent pattern, which is varied in each picture by modifying the conditions of the discharge. Very beautiful effects are also produced by using a simple plate of glass which, after being waxed, is covered with a very delicate layer of fine dust; by the action of the discharge, this dust is made to assume various curious figures. It is well known that Nature endows the lowliest organisms with most perfect form and intricate adornment, but it is curious to note that beauty of design should accompany even the phenomena connected with a discharge of electricity.

The United States Navy Department has recently adopted a form of machine gun which is known as the Colt Automatic, and it is made by the Colt Company of Hartford, Conn. It stands on a tripod, and has a weight of only forty pounds, so that a horseman can carry it in a boot behind his saddle, and even a bicyclist can mount one without much difficulty. This gun will give a continuous fire of four hundred shots per minute for an indefinite time, and in a recent test for accuracy, at two hundred yards, made one hundred hits on a target the size of a man, in sixteen seconds. The cartridges are fed to the gun by a belt, and any kind of ammunition may be used. The expansion of gas during one discharge works the necessary mechanism for the next.

The *British Medical Journal* lately reminded its readers that while micro-organisms are the great producers of disease, dust is the great medium by which those organisms are carried from place to place. The housemaid in sweeping a carpet, especially when she kneels down to do so with a short brush, is stirring up this dust to the detriment of every one in the house, and breathing germ-laden particles to her own destruction. If carpets must be used—and they are unhealthy things at the best—a patent sweeper should be used with plenty of damp tea leaves. What is much better than carpet is a floor-covering like linoleum which can be wiped with a damp cloth; this is far healthier than any fabric which can hold in its meshes microbe-bearing dust.

The demand for wood-pulp by the paper factories is now so great that, to meet it, the destruction of timber is positively alarming. It is said that the *Petit Journal* of Paris—we do not know why this particular newspaper should be picked out for illustration—consumes paper which is equivalent to the annual sacrifice of one hundred and twenty thousand trees, or a clearance of twenty-five thousand acres of timber land. If this be true of a single journal, it is difficult to imagine how the demands of all the others can possibly be satisfied except on the supposition that many other kinds of fibre beyond that afforded by wood are being requisitioned by the paper-maker. It is believed that within a few years the growth of timber to supply the needs of literature will be quite as important as its production for constructive purposes. It is perhaps a fortunate thing that iron and concrete are so rapidly usurping the place of wood as building materials.

## 'PADDY'S' WIFE.

By John Mackie.

Author of *The Devil's Playground* and *Sinners Twain*.

### CHAPTER I.

Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnished sun.
*Merchant of Venice.*

Four riders, each one leading a packhorse, had come to a swollen, swift-flowing river in the Never-Never country of the Carpentarian Gulf, and prepared to cross.

A blackfellow called 'Paddy' was the first to plunge his horses into the flood and successfully accomplish the passage. A white stockman called Clements was the next to land safely on the other side. Then a black gin named Katie, wife of the aforesaid 'Paddy,' urged her horses into the tawny-crested waters as fearlessly as either the latter or the stockman had done. But the packhorse was heavily burdened, so in mid-stream it suddenly took fright, reared, pawed the water wildly, and went round in a circle. Katie, who was like a fish in the water, released her grip on the mane of her riding horse, leaving it to reach the opposite bank by itself. With one powerful side-stroke she swam in upon the struggling, overburdened animal; caught and clung to its long mane on the off side, and tried to guide it to the opposite shore. The sound of her voice and her prompt action quietened the brute, when suddenly catching sight of a drifting log, which it probably mistook for an alligator, it reared and lashed out again with its fore-feet. Then an unshod hoof struck the black woman on the head, and her body drifted down with the current.

In another minute, however, Alec Paterson the squatter, who was the last of the party to essay the swim, had ridden his horses into the river; left them in mid-stream to finish the journey by themselves, and swam down hand over hand to where the gin had disappeared. He dived once, twice, three times; at last he caught sight of the woman as she came to the surface, and caught her before she sank again. He was a strong swimmer, so in a few minutes had towed his burden to the opposite shore, and laid it on the bank. The

first thing he did was to restore respiration by artificial means. The next, when he saw that the woman was regaining consciousness, was to call on the stockman pretty sharply to continue the process, while he—Alec Paterson—went up to the black husband 'Paddy,' who had been watching the entire proceedings with an air of apathetic unconcern, and surprised that worthy by pulling him off his horse, and kicking him soundly. Alec Paterson never did anything by halves.

'You cold-blooded villain,' he said, with a notion of frightening Paddy, 'I've a good mind to take Katie from you.'

'Humph!' snorted the blackfellow contemptuously, 'me no care s'posen' you do that; plenty more sit down alonga bush.'

Just then, however, Katie regained consciousness; heard her lord's chivalrous speech; saw him trying to dodge Mr Paterson's boot a second time, and smiled despite her sick and dazed condition.

### CHAPTER II.

Alec Paterson was the pioneer of that wild Never-Never country which lay between the salt-pans and the ranges to the west of the one hundred and thirty-eighth degree of eastern longitude. As yet his nearest white neighbour was in Queensland, some fifty miles distant; moreover, the mountain blacks, and those that infested the mangrove-fringed rivers on the low-lying northern seaboard, marked their disapproval of his presence by occasionally spearing his cattle and horses, cutting the fencing wire to make spear-heads with, and otherwise annoying him. But, still, as Alec Paterson said, they were a cowardly lot at the best, for they always carefully avoided coming in contact with the whites. It was therefore not an unnatural thing that in time Alec Paterson and his stockmen began to hold their enemies somewhat cheap, and to neglect those precautions the disregard of which has cost so many settlers in wild new countries their lives.

Alec Paterson had married the cultured daughter of a well-to-do Sydney merchant in '81, some two years previous to his coming up to the Gulf country. He had left her behind in Brisbane, until such time as he could get ready a fitting home for her in the land of promise he was going to; but when he first saw it his heart sank within him. However, during his spare time he and his men built a rough but comfortable dwelling-house; and then he wrote her to say that as there was not a white woman within a hundred and fifty miles of them, he could not think of bringing her to such a place. But Mrs Paterson was not to be put off like this, so within two months she and her child had arrived at Burketown in Queensland, where the maid-servant she had brought with her promptly accepted the best of four offers of marriage she received within as many days of her arrival, and became the wife of the principal storekeeper. But Mrs Paterson was not easily discouraged, and so a few weeks found her with her husband upon the cattle station.

When Alec Paterson looked at the dainty, delicate figure of his wife, and then around at the crude attempts at carpentering which characterised their sitting-room, he bit his lip with a sense of mortification. How could he have been such a fool as to suppose that a girl who had been accustomed to every luxury could exist in such a Crusoe's cave? This was surely what they called a man's selfishness.

'However you're to exist, my dear, in a place like this, without another white woman, I don't know. I'm sorry I didn't send you back with the next boat when at Burketown. It was just like me not to think of it sooner.'

But she only laughed at him.

'Nonsense,' she said; 'it's a capital little house; what with the roll of calico we brought with us, you won't know it for the same place in another fortnight. This is just the sort of thing I always had a fancy for. If you could only manage to let one of those black women come over and help me a little every day, until I get things straight, I should be perfectly happy. Your Chinaman, Sue Lee, is an excellent cook, and upon the whole I think we'll get along very well.'

Paddy's wife, Katie, was no Venus when judged by the white man's standard of beauty—she was black but not comely. Still that did not prevent her evincing something more than mere respect for the only man who was not afraid to kick the arch-tyrant Paddy. Her ethics were based upon the simple doctrine that it was as well to do unto others as they did by you. When Mrs Paterson arrived at the station, beyond a furtive series of peeps, born of an irresistible curiosity in regard to the outward appearance of the 'white Mary,' Katie had shown a decided disposition to sulk. Afterwards when Mr Paterson with awakened interest pondered over whatever associations he had with her, he remembered that, previous to his going to Burketown to fetch up his wife and child, he had told Katie of his purpose, expressing the hope that she would welcome the white sister and endeavour to be of some use to her. Whereupon the black woman, who had been seated on the ground sharpening a 'yam-stick' by the aid of a piece of broken glass, rose to her feet, looked at him in an incomprehensible way, and marched off in evident dudgeon, somewhat mystifying the simple-minded young squatter.

It was only when Mrs Paterson with the child in her arms went over to Katie's hut in Paddy's absence, that she succeeded in overcoming the black woman's evident antipathy to her.

When the white woman had entered the tiny bark hut, which was innocent of doors or window-frames, she found the black gin squatted on a rug spread on the clay floor; she was evidently brooding over something, and did not seem to notice her visitor. The expression on her face was not inviting; indeed, some would have hesitated before addressing her. But Mrs Paterson was equal to the occasion.

'Katie,' she said pleasantly, in that peculiar pigeon-English used between blacks and whites, 'you come look out this-one white piccaninny.'

And going over to where the gin sat with sullen averted face, she knelt down beside her, holding out the white-faced child, whose big blue eyes, so like its father's, seemed to stare so wonderingly upon the world. Katie stopped

short in the 'baal budgerie' of pettishness that rose to her lips, and the look of anger on her face gave way to one of curiosity. The child crowed and shot out his fat little arms towards her. With an inarticulate cry of pleasure and tenderness Katie clasped her hands together, while her plain face became beautiful with the light that shone upon it.

Alec Paterson had often been filled with wonder to witness the solicitude which those wife-beating blacks displayed towards their dogs; but he was hardly prepared for the devotion which the savage woman exhibited for the white child. Katie, indeed, had become a changed creature. She would bustle around the house all day, making herself useful, in order that she might be allowed to nurse the child for a few minutes. When Alec Paterson saw that Paddy's domestic comfort was suffering in consequence, he spoke to his wife.

'My dear,' he said, 'you must really try and do with less of Katie, or some fine day you'll find that she has disappeared into the bush and taken something with her.'

This frightened the mother; but when one day Paddy, without any warning whatever, flung off the livery of a hateful civilisation, and cast in his lot with the neighbouring blacks, leaving his wife behind him, Mrs Paterson's sympathy for Katie was aroused and her faith in her restored.

But Alec Paterson only remarked, 'I wouldn't wonder if that beggar Paddy's up to some mischief. I'd advise you to keep an eye on the gin, and see that she has no communication with the outside blacks—that's the secret of half the massacres.'

### CHAPTER III.

The blacks had been killing cattle at the south end of the run, and the squatter was obliged to go off in a hurry, leaving Clements the stockman and the Chinaman cook to keep an eye on the station, and those in it who were dear to him, in his absence.

Mrs Paterson sat under the bark roof of the veranda, while the child, resting in a hammock, with Katie bending and crooning over it, were alongside her. The glaring intensity of the fierce sunlight had begun to soften as the shadows crept towards the east. Suddenly a strange bird called from a thicket of golden wattle. Katie started when she heard it, and then crooned on as before. In a few minutes the strange bird called again. Then the black woman yawned with a delightful absence of restraint, and remarked: 'Me plenty tired now, missis. Thinkit me go alonga hut.'

But when Katie left she did not enter the hut; she only sauntered round by the back of the house, and stole off into the bush like a shadow. And there was no one to connect her disappearance with the cry of that wild bird.

. . . . .

Night, and the white mother with the child by her side lying in the partially darkened room, while outside the thousand and one voices of the tropical night created a strange medley of sound.

With a cat-like stealth a shadowy figure crept into the room, approached the bedside of the sleepers, and paused a minute as if irresolute. It was Katie the black gin. Through the shutterless casement a broad shaft of subdued light streamed into the room, throwing the woman and child into relief. For a minute the face of the black woman darkened as she looked upon the face of the sleeping mother. But in another moment she had looked upon the sleeping child, who only a few hours before had cried with delight as he threw out his chubby little arms, and looked up trustingly into her dark face.

'Missis, Missis,' cried the gin impulsively, shaking the sleeper with something almost like fierceness. 'S—sh! Get up—get up—you put 'm on dress and come 'longa me.'

'Katie!' cried Mrs Paterson, in no little alarm as she awakened out of her sleep, and with a dawning sense of the horrible truth, 'what is the matter? Is it the'——

'Myall (wild) blackfellow come up alonga station in the morning. You come where blackfellow no find 'm you. Quick—put 'm on cloes.'

The black gin led the white woman, who carried the child in her arms, out by a back way, and then in cover of a clump of bushes into the forest. Mrs Paterson had wanted to warn the others in the station, but Katie insisted on having her own way. 'Blackfellow no come up till morning,' she explained; 'after a little bit me leave 'm you, and then me go back tell 'm alonga station.'

Up the sandy tortuous bed of a dry creek the black woman led the white. Soon they had reached the mountain-side, and entered a little gully shrouded by a wealth of feather-palms and tree-ferns.

'You stop here till me come again,' said the dusky daughter of the woods, as, stooping down, she lifted one of the rounded little hands of the child and pressed it against her cheek. Then like some spirit of the night she disappeared noiselessly.

### CHAPTER IV.

It is the darkest hour in all the twenty-four, which precedes the one when the pale lemon glow struggles into the eastern sky, and the voices of the night cease. Already the scattered buildings of the cattle station loom up mysteriously to an abnormal size; but there is nothing to hint at the tragedy which overshadows it.

In the paddock, slowly advancing on the station buildings, a large number of wicked-looking blacks flit from tree to tree as noiselessly and, seemingly, as unsubstantial as shadows. In their hands are cruel barbed spears and other weapons. And now as they approach nearer the squatter's house, some of them get down on their hands and knees, while others lie flat on their faces, and wriggle along like snakes. At last some of the bolder spirits actually stand under the veranda of the dwelling-house.

For a second or two they pause to listen, but nothing save the foolish croak of a belated frog down by the creek disturbs the stillness. Suddenly three little jets of light, like blood-red flashes of fire, spurt from loopholes in the side of the slab-built house, and a hideous roar

echoes through the woods—a strange heralding for the tropical dawn. At the same moment, three savages drop to earth like pole-axed bullocks. Katie had kept her word; she had gone back to the station and given the alarm.

Then a grim little siege began; the besieged being a white man, a Chinaman, and a black woman. Time and again did the savages try to rush the house; but the stockman's Winchester did deadly work, and Sue Lee's double-barrelled fowling-piece, loaded with slugs, was something to be reckoned with. But the blacks were evidently bent on extermination, and kept pressing on from behind. It was only a question of time with the little garrison. And then as the bright-eyed goddess of the morn fared forth, and the sun as if on tip-toe peeped over the tree-tops, a hissing, crackling, ruddy shaft of flame shot up from the bark roof of the doomed house. The grimed and hard-pressed three could not stand the terrible heat much longer. *Crash!* down came a ponderous tie-beam and a sheet of bark from the roof, sending a shower of sparks in all directions. How peacefully the blue sky looked down upon them through that fire-fringed rent!

Then the Christian white man, the disciple of Confucius, and the heathen woman, knew that the time was come when they must needs leave the burning house, and go outside to face what Fate might have in store for them. And it would have been hard to decide, judging by appearances, which of them went out to face the problem of eternity most readily.

. . . . .

When Alec Paterson and his men rode down upon the station a few hours later, they found only the little storehouse intact amid the smoking ruins of the other buildings. When the three hard-pressed ones had been driven from the burning dwelling-house, they had fought their way to it, and there made a final and effectual stand. The blacks, at last despairing of dislodging them, had taken themselves off, carrying with them most of their dead and wounded. Clements, the white stockman, now sat outside, propped up with his back to the wall, and his rifle resting across his knees. There was a spear wound in his right leg, and another in his left shoulder. With care he might pull through. As for poor Sue Lee, he now knew more than any white philosopher, for he had solved the great mystery. And as for Katie, the black gin, she knelt outside on the ground, pillowing the head of a dead savage upon her knees, and wailing over him. This savage was her old lord and tyrant, the arch-traitor Paddy. The spear wound in her side, that even now made her feel faint, had been dealt by him.

The squatter, who was afraid to ask Clements as to his wife and child when he saw the smouldering ruins of his home, rushed into the storehouse with a horrible fear in his heart. But there was no wife and child there—only, across the doorway, the body of Sue Lee with that look of contentment on his face.

In another moment the squatter feared the very worst. Like one who is beside himself with grief, he rushed outside, seized the gin by the arm, and pressed the muzzle of his revolver against her cheek: 'Where are my wife and child!' he cried; 'where are they, you she-devil?'

The gin lifted her head and looked him boldly, scornfully in the eyes. 'Shoot, you fool!' she said by way of reply. 'You thinkit me like that? You thinkit black gin baal (is not) all a-same white Mary?'

He took the weapon from her cheek. 'When I think of it now, you didn't seem to take to her,' he said, 'and why, your own black heart only knows. But we'll drag the truth from you.'

He had not realised as yet—though he was soon to do so—that human nature as exemplified by the feminine mind is the same all the world over, and that nobility of soul may exist inside a black skin as well as under a white one.

When they tied her hands together, and made her walk in front of them for fear of treachery, she neither resisted nor murmured. Probably they had not guessed the reason of her faltering steps, as with a set and apathetic expression on her face she led them to the little gully in the mountain-side. Had they dreamt of the fact that a barbed spear-head was buried in her side, they would surely have acted differently. And there in that secluded spot, where the feathery fronds of palms meeting over their heads shut out the blue of heaven, the squatter found his wife and child waiting for him unharmed.

When Alec Paterson turned from them to their dark-skinned guide, it was too late; for Paddy's spear and the forced march had done their work, and she had gone to where her proud spirit would be better understood.

## HOPE.

If thou art absent there is nought that cheers,
For life without thee hath no promise fair,
And love without thee is a lifelong care,
The certain pledge of agony and tears:
But thou hast magic to assuage my fears,
For thou art strong to battle with Despair,
And thou alone canst help a man to bear
The mournful silence of his lonely years.

Stay with me, angel of a better life
That I shall live when dream is shaped in deed;
Stay till I reap the harvest of the seed
Sown now love's passions and love's fears are rife;
And when I doubt the truth of love's blind creed,
Tell me the end is worthy all the strife.

PERCY GALLARD.

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# THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

BY MRS OLIPHANT.

## CHAPTER I.

John Percival was the nephew of a banker in Edinburgh, destined from his childhood to the service of the bank—which was considered by all the family the greatest good luck that could have happened to a boy. His uncle, who like the boy was John Percival, and who was his godfather—or namefather, as we say in Scotland—as well as his uncle and his patron, and was connected with him by every possible tie, was a childless man—childless, too, in the most secure way, not an old bachelor who might marry at any moment, but a staid married man with a wife younger than himself, yet not so young as to be dangerous. He was, though the old man did not say so, nor do anything to raise expectations, universally considered as his uncle's heir; and did so consider himself calmly, without impatience or preoccupation with the subject, and very far from wishing to shorten his uncle's life by a single day. He was thought the most fortunate boy in the family; but I don't think he considered himself as such, and especially when he set out on a wintry day at noon in the stage-coach for Duntrum, a large provincial town in the south of Scotland. It may be divined that it was not to-day or yesterday, according to the popular phrase, when this journey took place: for nowadays one whisks off from Edinburgh to Duntrum in the morning, and whisks back again at night, having several hours in which to do one's business between, and no fatigue to speak of. It was very different in those days, when from noon to nearly midnight the coach joggled over the frost-bound country; and even in his corner in the interior, where John was forced to place himself by the anxieties of his elders, who kept up a pleasing fiction that he was delicate—it was very difficult even under a pile of plaids and topcoats to keep warm. He was going to serve for a year in the bank at Duntrum to give him a knowledge of country business and the ways of rustic depositors and clients, a knowledge which John felt to be very unnecessary, seeing that his life was to be spent, not in Duntrum, but in Edinburgh, and at the least in the manager's office, not at the counter selling money as if it were tea or sugar. He did not like this change of scene at all, perhaps because the season was at its height in Edinburgh, and all the entertainments of the year hurrying upon each other; but chiefly because it was the sordid side of business, the lower part of the profession, as this foolish young man thought, which he was being sent to study. He did not appreciate the advantage of knowing everything connected with his trade, which the elders know so much better than the young people. Indeed, to tell the truth, he was not sure at all that he was fond of banking, or thought it every way so superior an employment as many people thought. His own opinion was that if he were left at peace to live upon his own little bit of money, and pursue his own tastes, he would be a much happier man. He had a notion, indeed, that he might possibly turn out a great painter or a great writer if he were thus left to himself to cultivate the best that was in him. It was a pity that he felt the possibilities were equal in respect to these two pursuits. It might be either which would bring him fame and fortune, but certainly one of them. If he had been sure that it was either this or that, there would have been more hope for John: but he was not sure—he thought at one time he could

have been a painter, had he time and encouragement to try, and then again another time that he could be a novelist or a poet. Perhaps on the whole it was just as well for him, that with such excellent prospects, and the certainty of coming to a good end, if he behaved himself, he should have been what he was—a banker's clerk.

But whatever it might end in eventually, it was very hard lines, he thought, that he should have to leave Edinburgh in the middle of the season when everything was in full swing. There was not much in those days, at least not the tenth part so much as now, of football and golf. These games were played, but they were not the essence of life. Strange to say, young men found other things to talk about, other things to occupy them which were not all deleterious. For one thing they took a great deal more interest in dances and all sorts of assemblies, in which the boys met with the girls of their own class, than the ordinary run of 'manly young fellows' do now. I suspect they fell in love much more freely than they do now. They wanted to meet, to talk to, to laugh with these girls, as they like now to make themselves comfortable in a smoking-room, or rave about breaking a record on the links. I do not say which is best, not knowing; but at least one must confess that it is quite different. It is possible that John had even more than one incipient flirtation on his hands. He did not at all like to leave, for a hum-drum provincial town near the Border, with all its local questions and prejudices which he would not understand, the cheerful bustle of Edinburgh, the gay assemblies and all the private entertainments that abounded at this cheerful time of the year.

'Good-bye, my boy: we'll see you back whenever there's anything great going on,' said one of the friends who were seeing him off. There was a little group of them round the coach door, bright-faced young men who had made a dart from the offices of several Writers to the Signet, or even from the Parliament House—to see the last of Percival, as they said.

'Perhaps,' said John with satirical bitterness, 'if well-founded information reaches the bank that the world is coming to an end.'

'In that case you may stay where you are,' said the other; 'we'll have enough to do thinking of ourselves. Hallo!' said this young man, feeling himself vigorously pushed aside from the coach door. This was the arrival of another passenger, by whom the group of young men were pushed aside to right and left by that free use of elbows and personal momentum, which an energetic woman of the lower orders uses with so little scruple. This was a strong and vigorous maid-servant of middle age and weighty person, leading a veiled and muffled personage who followed her closely, and who bore the aspect of an old lady afflicted with toothache or 'tic,' or one of those affections of the face which were then treated freely with enveloping wraps to keep out the cold, and external applications, and a total indifference to personal appearance. Indeed, in this case, as the face was entirely invisible, a thick veil of Spanish lace, in a large pattern of heavy and close design, covering the small amount which was not entirely obliterated by plaster and poultice applied to the right cheek, there was not perhaps any inducement even to undying vanity to attempt modification or concealment. The identity of the veiled person it was quite impossible to divine—her wrapped-up head was like a melon, a 'sport' with one great bulge on the right side—a faint glimmer of an eye between the crevices of the lace pattern, a little colour, was all that was apparent; feature and form and expression were all lost in the portentous envelopments. She clung close to her protector with old and tremulous steps, and occasionally a faint waggle of the mis-shapen and enormous head.

'Can ye no see it's an auld leddy with the rheumatics in her head—and jist you get out of the way, my fine callants, that kenna what trouble is. Gang round to the other side of the coach if you have any more blethers to say. Steady, mem, steady! take your time, this is the town corner, the furdest frae the winds: and I'll pull up the window-glass, and ye'll not feel a breath. You'll jist be as safe as gin ye were in your auld chair with the wings at hame.'

During this speech, to which the young men listened awe-struck, the old lady was carefully and with much precaution hoisted into the coach, a process which seemed more difficult than her short stature and apparently insignificant figure seemed to justify, the stout woman-servant growing redder and redder under the strain, although assisted by a porter who pushed from behind. When the process was accomplished the boys burst into a genial but suppressed laugh, with significant looks at John, who for his part could not but regard with a certain fascination the mass of nodding headgear which was to be his companion in the long drive. He could not take his gaze from her. The cold journey to Duntrum leaving dinners and assemblies behind, was reason enough for despondency: but to travel with Medusa herself in a mail-coach! if by any chance the wrappings might come off, and her unfortunate fellow-passenger be turned to stone.

'I give you joy, Jack,' whispered one of the attendant youths; 'here's a bonny bride to bear you company.'

'I'll tell May Laurie you were in capital fettle; a fair lady by your side and plenty of time to make your court.'

'Nothing of the sort, Jack, my lad; I'll let her know you were preserved from every temptation,' cried another—all this in not quite inaudible whispers, at the other door.

John was glad when the coach finally started, leaving all these laughing faces behind; for he had a tender heart and was remorseful at the thought of perhaps wounding an old and suffering person for whom he had on the contrary the greatest compassion. True, it was dreadful to see that mis-shapen head nodding from the opposite corner, and to know that whatever happened he must be its companion for so many hours. A horrible doubt seized him whether it would be possible for her to go so far without occasion to change her poultice

or undo her cerements. He thought of the *Veiled Prophet*, then just published, and wondered whether he might not have some ghastly revelation to undergo like that of the horrified hero. He thought in spite of himself of ill-smelling ointments and other sickening appliances. Poor creature! it might be a question with her of ease from distracting pain, or she might go on suffering, unwilling to expose her inflamed cheek, or run the risk of disgusting her companion. Poor old body! John tried to turn his back on her, to keep his eyes diverted on the view from the opposite window: but there was a fascination in the unknown which drew him back. He stole glances at her against his will as if she had been a young beauty. He would have given much to see what was underneath the thick silken flowers of the veil, even though he was sure it would be chiefly poultices bound up with white-and-black handkerchiefs. These modes of wrappings were visible sometimes on Edinburgh streets as they are on those of Paris to-day. It would not be a pleasant sight: still it would be better than the mystery in the corner which sat there, like an image of stone, never showing any sign of life but by the occasional nodding of the distorted head. Was it palsy too, poor soul? had she all the ills that flesh is heir to? John was very sympathetic. The sight of that wrapped-up mass of suffering in the corner affected him very much. He would fain have done something to show his pity. He began to calculate how he should manage to help her out when the coach came to its first stopping-place to change horses and to afford the passengers an opportunity for 'a snack.' Probably she would not be able to take a snack or exert her suffering jaws. He thought perhaps he might get her some broth, which would give her no trouble except the trouble of undoing her veil. Broth was always to be had in a Scotch village about dinner-time. It would warm and comfort her, and perhaps even she could take it without undoing anything. He had a horrible desire to see the coverings undone, and yet he had so kind a heart that he would have been glad to think she could take a little broth without any trouble in that way, poor old soul!

However, he did his best to read his book for an hour or two, turning his mind from the lady in the corner. He would be out of temptation those fellows said. Well, yes, he was out of temptation in one way: but if his fellow-traveller had only been a moderately well-looking woman, even though young and responsive, he did not know that he would have been so much in temptation as with this mystery in the opposite corner, though he felt sure it was a repulsive mystery, and probably would have a sickening, and not an enticing effect upon him. But he said to himself he would just like to know what it was. Poor thing! perhaps it was a dreadful embarrassment to her to find a man opposite to her, to be hampered in any effort to relieve herself which she might have made if alone. He could see that she pressed herself more and more into the corner and leaned the weight of her poor head on the cushions. By degrees it occurred to him that he might make her more comfortable if she would allow him to make a roll of one of his plaids and put it at the place where no doubt her neck came, so that she could support her head more comfortably. He pondered over this a long time, and experimented on himself how he could do it, before, with much timidity and as fine a blush as if he had been aiding a beautiful princess, he at last ventured to speak.

'The cushions,' he said, 'are not very soft in these coaches.'

The melon with the bulging side turned round to him with a swiftness he could not have thought possible, but nothing was said.

'I've been thinking,' said John, 'I've seen it done in—in my own family. You see, you roll up a thing like a small bolster, and then you place it just where your neck comes'——

He exemplified what he meant by rolling up a large comforter knitted in dazzling white wool, quite new and of his Aunt John's choicest manufacture, made expressly for this journey. It was large and soft, and John rolled it close till it became as round and smooth as a bolster according to his homely simile.

'If you will let me,' he said, rising, 'I think I could place this'——

There was an agitated movement inside the draperies, and a voice that made John jump, between a squeak and a scream, came as it seemed out of the top of the mis-shapen head, 'No! no! I cannot be touched. No! no!'

It made John jump; but after all, what was a voice any more than the other appearances, to daunt him when he had so honest an intention of doing well? He came a step nearer. 'I am sure you will find it more'——

'No! keep away. No, keep away!' the voice repeated with shrill decision, not at all softened but made still more bewildering by a sudden tremor at the end. He paused for a moment with his white roll in his hand, and he distinctly saw the veiled figure shake with a strange sort of broken vibration, as if in one access after another of palsy, was it? or, if not, what else? He did not know what else it could be. He stood for a moment wavering, and then he retired and threw down the comforter impatiently upon the seat. 'Well,' he said, with a sigh also of impatience, 'if you won't have it I cannot help it: still I am sure I could have made you more comfortable,' he added, recovering his good-humour. And he resumed his book: but his attention was sadly distracted; for that spasmodic movement went on at intervals; and there even broke forth certain stifled sounds—was it moaning, was it the signal of some approaching calamity? He gazed earnestly over the top of his book, with a most compassionate face, and held himself on the alert to give any aid he could. But after a while his apprehensions were quieted: there seemed no reason to suppose that anything was going to happen, and these mysterious movements died away.

The lady, however, refused the broth which he procured for her when they stopped, at the risk of having no time for his own 'snack.' She rejected it with the same sharp squeaking voice as before, and with something of the

same strangely convulsive movements, darting away from her corner, when he suddenly opened the door at her side, with a swiftness which it was impossible to suppose such a wrapped-up mummy could be capable of, and an evident fright which piqued him a little. 'No; keep away!' she squeaked again. What a cankered, sour, shrill, old woman! What did she suppose he wanted with her? It was not for her *beaux yeux* certainly. But he had heard that some women always, however old and ugly they may be, imagine a man wants to make love to them. He laughed at this to himself as he went off to get his 'snack,' and as ten minutes with a powerful young appetite can do a great deal, succeeded fully in indemnifying himself. For the moment he was vexed with this second repulse; but no such feeling had long the mastery in John's honest bosom. There were some fine golden oranges on the table, and he put two or three into his pocket, before he went back to the coach. Perhaps she might like one in the dark hours that were coming before they reached Duntrum, when there would be no light to see by, whatever faces she might make, if she put aside the veil. He put two of them gently on the seat beside her when he returned to the coach: but the mummy only gave a grotesque fling farther back into her corner, and took no notice. Yet once again John made an attempt to be of service to her. It was when the guard, as they passed through the small town of Dunscore, as the evening fell, opened the door hurriedly, and flung in a bundle of postbags, two or three attached to each other with a strap, their metal padlocks shining in the glow of his lantern. 'Last stage afore Duntrum,' said the guard. It was his habit to place the mails there at this point of his journey, in order to give them up to the Duntrum authorities without delay.

'That is scarcely very safe' said John ingratiatingly to his silent companion, 'suppose you or I were less honest than we seem.' He laughed, but his laugh died out of itself in that shamefaced way in which a laugh quenches itself when made at our own joke, and falling flat without response. But presently, after a while, he suggested, which was very true, that it was getting cold, and asked if she had enough wraps, or would accept one of his. This seemed to overcome altogether the patience of the veiled lady in the corner. She told him sharply to mind his own business. 'There's nothing wanted from you,' she said. The voice was odd, the shrill one alternating with a softer note as if two people were speaking. It had almost become a point of honour with John to overcome this persistent defiance. He approached with one of his plaids outspread, and laid it gently about her knees. The answer was a vivacious movement kicking it away.

'Will you not take a telling?' cried the shrill voice. 'Away! and snoozle yourself in your corner, and let me be quit of you!' The voice was so fierce that John fell back in spite of himself, and, somewhat mortified, took the unfriendly advice. He did withdraw into his corner, wrapping himself round and round in his many wraps, until he was almost as much muffled up as his companion. And the night was cold, and there was only a very feeble lamp in the coach. He ended by 'snoozling' as the old lady advised, with his head buried in the high collar of his coat, and as the windows were closed against the penetrating chill of the night, and the atmosphere heavy, fell fast asleep.

He woke with a start some time after, with the sensation of a gust of wind blowing upon him from the coach door. Half bewildered as he came to himself, he saw that the door was open, and caught, with astonished eyes, a momentary glimpse of the face of a young woman, a sudden apparition against the blackness of the night; and then the door was closed sharply and with a clang. The coach was at the foot of a steep ascent beginning to ascend slowly. John sat up suddenly, awake but still bewildered, and rubbing his eyes. The opposite corner was vacant. His plaid lay on the floor where the old lady had tossed it, but she herself had disappeared. He jumped up still confused, and unable to believe his eyes, and groped in the corner. But there was no one there: then he put his head out of the window, and shouted loudly into the night.

## LODGINGS AND HOLIDAYS.

In the face of short dividends and diminished incomes, the fact of a steady rise in the rent of apartments at frequented country and seaside resorts, during their respective seasons, is becoming a serious inconvenience, and a source of alarm to those who hitherto have been able to give their families the usual annual outing. The causes leading to this grievance are many, nor does the blame lie entirely at the door of the people who, to make a living, allow strangers to temporarily occupy their rooms at exorbitant prices. We are a gregarious race, and like a flock of sheep, follow blindly where others lead. Every one is anxious to go where others are supposed to be taking their pleasure; nor is this sufficient, for we must all go at the same time, and that time must cover a short six weeks out of a possible fifty-two in the year. Would it be human nature then, if the fortunate possessors of spare rooms did not, when the rush comes, try and make money when favourable opportunity offers? But further, the evil does not end with the departure of the holiday crowd. Prices go up easier than they fall, and elated with success at having secured an exceptional rent for some mere strip of a room, inadequately fitted with the commonest necessaries, the deluded owner continues to try to levy blackmail for the rest of the year.

The law of action and reaction is a steady factor both in public and in private life. Changes come, sometimes imperceptibly, sometimes with startling suddenness, but when the time is ripe, come they will. Only one ending is possible to such short-sighted policy, and judging from the general depression at once well-frequented localities, the point of toleration for high

charges is nearly reached. Empty houses, and bankrupt lodging-keepers, have for the last few years been but too common at many favourite watering-places, and those who have had to face these unpleasant experiences will be wise if they profit from them. Another factor is at work, perhaps not so easy for the suffering public to deal with, because the stakes are higher, and the risk proportionally great. Some one—often as not interested owners of a property—'boom' a place, it may be with capabilities of development, but often as not wholly lacking in attractiveness. Money once invested, the speculation has got to run, and holiday folk always athirst for novelties flock in their hundreds to a new place, and so force it into notoriety. Then the accommodation becomes limited, the jerry-builder sets to work to erect shaky terraces and second-rate villas, with views of neither country nor sea; only neighbours' windows, and back-yards are the pleasing boundary of the visitors' vision. Rents go up, and provisions are far beyond London prices; for tradesmen must recoup themselves for the heavy rents they too have to pay, and their higher standard of living has to be taken into consideration.

So the great wheel of life goes round, and as the spending powers of the classes become more limited, those of the masses seem to expand like an elastic band. What may be the eventual result of the endeavour to raise the tone of social life, is a question yet to be solved. Certainly the transition process is a disagreeable jumble. There are ominous signs on the horizon that the probable command of surplus money for mere pleasuring lies in the hands of ubiquitous 'trippers,' who in their thousands are brought by the railway and steamboat companies in all reasonable comfort, and at nominal prices, to be scattered during the summer months broadcast through the length and breadth of the land, sparing neither our choicest scenery, our most fashionable resorts, nor our pet primitive little nooks. It is not that we would selfishly keep to ourselves the enjoyment of Nature's lovely scenery—free gifts for poor and rich alike—or drink in to the exclusion of others the life-giving breezes which blow uncontaminated through the sweet shady woodlands, from over the pulse-beating ocean, or down from the everlasting hills. No! let all share equally God's gifts, and no one thinks of grudging a holiday from daily monotonous toil in crowded towns and close-packed alleys; but one would like to see behaviour, at these times, a little more fitted to a nation which boasts of its civilisation as our own does, and find sea-side and country resorts kept in some sort of order, and less like the bear-garden they become when 'trippers' are let loose amongst us. If the old chronicler Froissart were to come to life again, he would have to alter his record that the proverbial Englishman 'takes his pleasures sadly.' That is a thing of the past, for nowhere on the Continent do we meet with a holiday crowd so rude, so boisterous, and so little dignified, as in England. The throwing about of greasy papers, broken victuals, and empty bottles, strewn 'thick as autumn leaves in Vallombrosa,' the riotous undisciplined children, and the hustling elders, would not for an instant be tolerated abroad by the authorities, much less by the people themselves.

Every summer that comes round, it becomes more difficult to find a quiet economical place where we may recuperate exhausted nervous energy, and store up renewed thought for the battle of life during the succeeding ten or eleven months. In the cramped space lodgings afford, where home comforts are absent, and our usual occupations in abeyance, the over-strained mother and hard-worked father of a family look for a little peace and repose, at least out of doors, whether it be idling by the shore with the soothing lullaby of the beating waves, or away over the breezy downs, or ensconced in some leafy forest nook, with the swaying branches of oak and beech for music, and the squirrels and birds for company, anywhere indeed where they may enjoy undisturbed the *dolce far niente* of a long summer's day. But this is only vain anticipation, a castle in the air, which reality soon dissipates. The Nemesis of strident bands, always craving for coppers, noisy niggers, cheap trippers, touting owners of char-a-bancs, are constantly in evidence everywhere; and at the outset of a holiday we must, like Dante, read, and bow down to the stern decree, 'Abandon hope all ye who enter here.' How long is patient tolerance of remediable drawbacks to our peaceful holidays to go on without a stand on the part of those who ought to be the stronger party? And why, too, do we fall into such utter thraldom directly our own comfortable homes are exchanged for lodgings, where we submit to dictated hours, bad cooking, dishonest extras, and all the rest of it? When on the subject of reforms another question arises—why we are made to suffer the inconvenience of having small rooms filled up with big double bedsteads, and have to sleep through the hot summer nights on debilitating feather-beds, or on mattresses full of lumps and holes which have not been teased out for years, and the coverings of which, together with bolster and pillows, from want of an annual cleaning, are neither sweet nor wholesome? And this unpardonable laxity of attention to small details that make up the sum of comfort in our daily lives, is not confined to apartments of lower rents, but is too commonly found in those commanding the best prices.

Some change seems desirable in this unsatisfactory holiday scramble, and in the heavy expenditure entailed, which so many now find a burden beyond their legitimate means. One out of many queries for this end suggests itself: Do we not err in elaborating our holidays too much, hesitating to live during the time on a more modest scale, to drop the attitude of superior beings, and to dress more simply?—all changes demanding a certain amount of self-denial, but which will brace us up like a tonic, and induce a double appreciation of home comforts when we return to them. It is only English people who want to carry these about with them, whether they make a move for a long or a short period. The Italian 'Villeggiatura' is an elementary enough affair. An

empty or partially furnished villa, or flat, is secured, a few necessary household gods are transported, sent on before with the baggage by a reduced staff of servants, who put things in order before the family arrives, and the thing is done. No one expects much attendance, and no one grumbles when they have to help themselves and others. What they want is a holiday, and they take it. Elaborate eating and soft places they will have later on, but their temporary enjoyment is secured, and weighs down by a long way the balance of reduced domestic cares and worries, sent for the time into the background. The Austrians and Germans, again, have a sensible plan one longs to see adopted in this country. Beyond the early breakfast no other meals are served in the house, but cheap and excellent restaurants are always at hand, where can be obtained a greater variety of wholesome, well-cooked food, at a less cost of time, money, and temper, than would be possible were the meals all thought out, marketed for, and prepared in a lodging. The constant spreading and removing of meals, the odours ascending from the kitchen, the irritating unpunctuality, and slovenly cooking we all know from our national method, is thus entirely avoided. Daily expenses can be calculated to a fraction, and when the time of flitting arrives, there are no bills pouring in from butcher, baker, and candlestickmaker, with unexpectedly large totals, the crumpled rose-leaves that send us back from our holidays with ruffled tempers and unpleasant suspicions of the general courtesy. Yes! decidedly we carry the burdens of civilisation too much about with us.

Yet another suggestion must often have occurred to the suffering martyrs of a holiday rush, when casting about for some possible alteration of their grievances. Is it necessary for all the family to go away in a body, as the custom now is? In the majority of cases, the older boys and girls are away for the greater part of the year at schools located either in the country, or by the sea. Clearly then the necessity of this universal custom, flying away in a body like a flock of emigrating birds, cannot be on their account. From school to home is their change, and ought to be sufficient; and with home resources for employment, and enjoyment, with insured sanitary surroundings and suitable, well-cooked food—all doubtful items in lodgings—parents would have less anxiety, and be better able to appreciate the companionship of their children, than in the harum-scarum, feverish existence that holds good with the immediate flight now fashionable directly holidays set in. The juniors could go away some other time, say—'atween June and May, half-prank with spring, with summer half-embrowned'—when Nature is so freshly beautiful, the days long and balmy, and the nights but a short twilight that links the setting sun with the rosy dawn. Rents would not then be at a premium, as in autumn, and the money thus saved would leave a margin, a nucleus for little outings later on when the bigger and more companionable children were at home. Nor would the benefit of some such arrangement be all on one side. Having a season spreading over months instead of weeks, for earning their yearly income, letters of lodgings could afford to be less exorbitant in their demands, and the same argument would hold good for tradespeople. At most holiday-resorts shops have to stock goods which are in active demand only a few weeks in the year, and then the risk is great; for the public are proverbially capricious, and may, or may not, arrive as usual, or through bad weather, or a sudden outbreak of sickness, they may hurry away prematurely.

We are aware many difficulties stand in the way of setting right the grievances of our holiday jaunts. That they exist, none deny, and all long for some alleviation. The needed changes must be gradual, but ought not to be difficult to accomplish, if all those dissatisfied with the small amount of pleasure gained in return for their annual outlay of money, determined, individually and collectively, to put in their little wedge of reform to remove the monster of imposition, noisy vulgarity, and low rowdyism, which becomes more rampant every year at all our popular sea-side and country places of resort.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By Sir Walter Besant.

### CHAPTER XVI.

Lady Frances's rooms were already well filled when we arrived—later, they were crowded. She welcomed me with her customary kindness. 'I shall never cease to reproach you,' she said; 'but I have forgiven you.'

She was dressed in all her splendour—a blaze of diamonds, a vision of silk, if it was silk, of velvet, if it was velvet. Her queenly stature, her noble figure, her large head and ample cheek, set off her splendid dress; she looked as if this was the only dress she ought to wear; she looked, indeed, a *grande dame de par le monde*.

I presented my cousin. For the moment Robert was staggered. I saw upon his face an expression of weakness quite new to him. It was the weakness of the strong man in the presence, for the first time, of the queenly woman.

She received him with gracious courtesy.

After a few words, I left Robert to talk a little with his hostess. While they stood together, there entered a little old man with shaggy white eyebrows, keen eyes, and a white mane, and a big head, a leonine person. Frances shook hands with him, and then turned to Robert.

'Mr Burnikel,' she said, 'let me introduce you to Lord Caerleon. Mr Burnikel is Member for Shadwell, and a cousin of your friend, Sir George.'

Lord Caerleon shook hands with him. 'On our side, Mr Burnikel, I hope.'

'I have entered the House as an Independent member,' said Robert sturdily.

'Oh!' Lord Caerleon replied drily. 'Yes. I have known several young men announce that intention. But they change it—they change

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it. There is a good deal to be got out of the House by an ambitious man, who goes the right way to work—a great deal—distinction and recognition—that is something—place and power—that is something. You are a lawyer, perhaps.'

'No. I am not a member of any learned profession. I am a Master Craftsman—by trade a boat-builder.'

'Oh!' Lord Caerleon refrained from the least expression of surprise. 'But one may imagine that every young man who goes into the House is actuated by some ambition.'

'My ambition is to make a mark in the House—and out of it,' said Robert.

'Then, sir, I wish you every success. And you will speedily discover that in order to make that mark, you must join a Party: that is, our Party—my Party.'

Lord Caerleon left him and walked over to me. He was a former friend of my grandfather, the judge. 'Is that your cousin, George?' he asked. 'That tall, good-looking fellow over there—Member for Shadwell.'

'He is my cousin, certainly, though rather distant.'

'Oh! he said he was a—a—a boat-builder. Did he speak some kind of allegory?'

'A hundred years ago my great-grandfather and his great-grandfather were partners in a boat-building yard. At the same time, your great-grandfather, Lord Caerleon'——

'Was unknown. Certainly. Yet one does not expect to see an actual boat-builder in a place like this, and looking and talking like a gentleman. You and I, Sir George, belong to the third generation at least of those who were born in the purple of gentlehood. This man says he is a Master Craftsman. Do we receive the man with a plane and a chisel in our drawing-rooms?'

'He is a master of labour: he employs many men. I believe he will prove himself to be a Master Craftsman in the craft of oratory and debate. He is the strongest man, Lord Caerleon, the most courageous man and the most finished man that I know. You can't dazzle him. You can't frighten him. And I am quite certain from his first speech that he will carry away the House, as he carries away his constituents. Look after him, Lord Caerleon. Don't forget to reckon with him as soon as you can.'

Thinking of what the man was when first I knew him: how contemptuous of social conventions, how determined to go into the House as a rough craftsman; to set everybody right on all questions of labour and employers; knowing nothing whatever of the ways and manners by which alone anything real can be accomplished; and seeing the man in this salon, quiet and assured, yet strangely unlike the ordinary young man of the West End, I was elated to think of my success.

'He has the air,' said Frances, reading my thoughts, because I was looking across the room, 'of a man who has lived in the best society, but not our own. Has he lived in New York?'

'No. He has only lived in Wapping, a distinguished suburb near the place where you heard him speak.'

'Wapping has then, I suppose, a curiously distinguished society of its own. Has Wapping a nobility, an opera-house, ladies of the world? Seriously, George, how did this man arrive at a distinguished manner as well as a distinguished look? You know—I told you—when I heard him speak, I made up my mind that he was a born orator.'

'Well, Frances, he has practised a very honest trade; that prevents meanness; and he has read enormously, so that his level of thought is elevated; and he takes himself very seriously, so that he is self-confident; and he is quick to observe: so that, altogether, I think you may understand how he has arrived at his present manner.'

'He is not a young man for a young lady. I introduced him to one just now, and they separated five minutes afterwards with a lively look of mutual repulsion. Perhaps he began by telling her, as he told Lord Caerleon, that he was a boat-builder.'

'Very likely.'

Then I retired into a corner and looked on. I saw that Frances looked after this guest with a care which she seemed to bestow upon no others. She talked to him; she introduced him to people, especially to members of the House, and I saw that he was not dazzled—not in the least dazzled—by title or by fine dress, or fine manners. It was impossible to condescend with such a man; most likely he condescended to the condescender.

'I like it, George,' he said, when we found ourselves together. 'I like the crowd and the fine dresses and all. It is amusing. I don't belong to it in the least. That makes it all the more amusing.'

'And the women? How do you like them?'

'Lady Frances is splendid. I do not see any other woman in the place.'

It was filled with women—some young and beautiful; some old and no longer beautiful; all well dressed, and most of them animated. But he had no eyes except for Lady Frances.

Presently all were gone. I alone remained behind.

'Let us sit down, George, for a few minutes' quiet talk. Come into the little room. You may have a cigarette if you like. Now, about that tall cousin of yours. Do you really think that he has the qualities necessary for success? It is not enough to fire off a speech now and then, you know.'

'Well, he says he has these qualities. Whatever he says is always true. Quite a man of his word, you know.'

Frances became thoughtful. 'You know, George,' after a pause, 'I was bitterly disappointed that you did not go into politics. You would have had every kind of help. I cannot tell you half the dreams I had nourished about your success. Everything is possible for such a man as you. And you basely deserted us, and went off boat-building. Oh, heavens! boat-building!'

'I did, Frances. I am a wretch.'

'Well, the Party wants a few young men—good young men. If I can get that big strong man, your cousin, to throw himself heartily into the Party, he may prove himself worthy

of being looked after. Help me with him, George.'

'What am I to do?'

'Bring him to dinner with me. I will have a little dinner of you two first: then a little dinner alone with him: then a little dinner with one or two of the chiefs thrown in. Then—but you understand how a woman works in such a case. I want him for the Party.'

'What can you offer him?'

'Nothing yet. We must see first what he is worth. An ordinary young man would be contented with dining with me: he would then go home and dream of making love to me: then he would come here, and try to make that dream a reality. But a young man with a great future before him would want more than that.'

'What will tempt him then?'

'Power. He wants Power. He would be another Gladstone—another Bismarck. He desires Power above everything. It is the greatest presumption: the greatest audacity.'

Frances sighed. 'Oh!' she said. 'If they had only made me a man! George, there is but one thing in the world that I desire—and that is—Power. I could get it easily, even though I am a woman, if I had a husband strong and able and ambitious, and worth working for. Where is that man? You ought to have been such a man, George, but you're not. You are only a common carpenter. Oh! The grovelling of it!'

### CHAPTER XVII.—PARTNERSHIP.

A few days afterwards, Robert came over to the yard. He came during the men's dinner hour, when a delightful calm settles down upon Wapping, and even the cranes and the donkey-engines are silent; when the wagons rumble no longer, and there is no ringing of bells and no hammering of hammers, and no grinding of machines. And we sat upon two workmen's benches, opposite each other, and talked.

'I saw Lady Frances yesterday,' he began; 'she was good enough to invite me to call, and so I did call—and had a long talk with her.'

'Good.'

'She's a splendid woman! That's the kind of woman to back up a man. I used to think that a man wants no help from any woman. I now see that a clever, sympathetic woman who understands things may be of the greatest use.'

'Undoubtedly.'

'Of course she's all for Party. She says I must join her Party, or else there is no chance.'

'You've heard that before, haven't you? Well, there is no chance outside the grooves. I am certain of it.'

'Anyhow, I won't join a Party. I went in an Independent member, and I'll continue an Independent member. Nothing whatever shall induce me to join the rank and file of Party—to run about and say what I am told to say. Nothing, mind you. Not even to get the assistance of that woman.'

He spoke with the determination of approaching submission. His words had a forced ring in them—their exaggeration showed weakness. He was under temptation.

'Then, Robert, farewell, a long farewell, to dreams of greatness!'

'We talked about my speech—and she spoke highly of it. Well, why not? A very good speech it was. When we came to read it next day—how it stood out from the windbags and froth of the rest—you noticed that, George?'

'I did. A very fine speech. Full of solid stuff.'

Robert never pretended to any modesty as regards his own work. He honestly thought it a great deal better than the work of anybody else, and he said so, without any affectation of inferiority. This candour impressed people. Other men it might injure, but not Robert. Very few men, indeed, do really possess a sincere, unaffected admiration for their own powers. Most of us are spoiled by diffidence.

'Of course,' he added, 'she admired the speech.'

'Very good. Next!'

'Oh! Then we began talking about other things. It seems odd that I should be taking advice about my own affairs from a woman, doesn't it?'

'It would have seemed odd three months ago.'

'But, of course, Lady Frances isn't an ordinary woman. She's got the brains of fifty women, and the experience of a hundred put together. What a woman she is!'

'How did she advise you about your own affairs?'

'She asked me about myself. Of course I told her everything there is to tell. Why should I conceal things? I even told her how you have given your evenings for three months or more, to show me what the West-End world was like. She strongly advises me to go into society. "Become one of the world," she says.'

'Did she tell you how to get in? The gates of what she calls the world do not exactly stand open to everybody.'

'I suppose not. What they call Society is divided into circles, and there are circles within circles. And there are political circles. And in them she could launch me—of course, on the usual conditions.'

'Party, of course.'

'Party. No room anywhere, it seems, for the Independent member.'

'And you are an Independent member. It is unfortunate, isn't it?'

'Says I must join a political club. But there are none for Independent members.'

'No. It is unfortunate.'

'Then we talked about the way in which men get on nowadays. No one, not even you, ever before understood my position so perfectly. Whatever I tell her, she catches it in a minute. One would think she had lived next door. And about the ways of men—they don't climb, George, they wriggle—they wriggle, most of them.'

'So I have heard.'

'Wriggling and advertising. One must be like the man who advertises his soap, always before the world.'

'That is, in fact, the first thing, and the second thing, and everything.'

'She told me about one man who has cer-

tainly got on remarkably well—yet not so well as I mean to do, because he hasn't the same ability. This man, who, like me, had no family influence, got into a political club, wrote a paper now and again for one of the magazines, spoke frequently at public meetings, was seen everywhere at private views, and first nights, and at private houses, went into the House, spoke there on occasion and with weight, published a volume of essays, was accepted as a man who went everywhere, long before Society received him at all, and is now married to a woman whose wealth and connections will advance him rapidly.'

'That may be your fate.'

'But the trickery of it!'

'If you want to achieve a definite object, you cannot always choose the way. Nobody but yourself, remember, knows your own motives. What you call trickery may appear to the world as the natural reward of ability.'

'Well—but—I don't know.' He walked to the edge of the quay, looking up and down the river. 'It is a world so different from anything I ever imagined,' he said. 'You have opened out the world to me. I confess that I hesitate to venture upon this kind of path.'

'You don't think you are the only ambitious man in the world, do you? My dear boy, everybody there is ambitious, except the men who have got up as high as they can. And even then, they all want something; a little more social consideration, a decoration. Everybody for himself, anywhere. Nowhere so much as in the city of the setting sun—in the West. In other words, you have discovered that many of your old dreams must be abandoned.'

'I shall wriggle as little as may be. Now, listen carefully, and don't interrupt. I am going to make a proposal to you of the greatest importance.'

'Go on. I will not interrupt.'

'Well, I see very plainly, to begin with, that the way open to me means a good deal of expenditure. I must have good chambers, some place where I can receive people. I must keep myself well groomed.'

'Both points are important.'

'I must have a club. I must cultivate people; there are already plenty of men in the House who want to know me. I must be able to give a dinner occasionally, as Lady Frances advised; and there are the daily expenses which in the West End run away with so much money; one must go about in cabs—it isn't possible to go without cabs; why, here I used to spend nothing at all, from day to day, except our modest housekeeping money. It means money. I must have money, George.'

'Yes, if you are going to live over there. But you've got your business here.'

'I can't live in two places. There you have it. If I am going to get on, I must live in the West End—and I can't carry on this business from Piccadilly chambers, that's quite certain.'

'I'm afraid it's impossible. Shall you sell this business?'

'No, I can't afford to do that. Mustn't burn the boats, you know. But I've thought of a plan, and I'll lay it before you to turn over in your mind. First of all, are you perfectly serious and in earnest about the boat-building trade? Mind, I never believed it. Do you, really and truly, intend to go into the trade as a living?'

Put in that way, I was staggered. Because, you see, I perceived at once what he was driving at.

'What I thought,' I replied slowly, 'when I came here was, that I might learn the business from you, and that I might then take my small capital, which is no more than three thousand pounds, and start as a boat-builder in one of the Colonies—British Columbia, for example, wherever I could find an opening. That was my plan, subject to my mastering the mysteries of the craft.'

'You have mastered most of them, and you are a first-class hand already. But you can hardly be trusted yet in the buying and the selling.'

'Since I've kept the books for you I've learned something of that as well.'

'Yes, but you can't run alone yet. However, that part of it might be managed. Now for my plan. You've got a good pile, though you call it so little. It's a good deal more than I shall want. Give up the idea of a Colony. Settle here in the old place—you can go on living in the old house if you like; and become my partner—the managing partner. You shall buy your share. Don't think that I want only to get your money, though that will be of the greatest use to me. You will make your solicitor examine the books—for that matter you have the books already in your hands, and he will tell you what you ought to offer if you entertain the proposal. Come, Burnikel & Burnikel it has always been called. There were once two cousins in it, before they quarrelled over the old man's diamonds. Let there be two cousins in it again. Robert and George—they were once. Robert and George they will be again.'

He got up from the bench. 'You want time to decide,' he said. 'Don't press yourself. Take as much time as you like. I will advise you in any difficulty, but I can no longer think for the business. You will have to do that. Turn it over in your mind, and tell me when you have decided.'

So he got up and left me. Then the men came back from their dinner, and the work went on again.

The most remarkable part of the proposal was that we were actually going to reverse the situation, to change places. I was to give up clubs, chambers, friends, society, and everything that belongs to the class in which I had been brought up. As I had no fortune, that was inevitable. But I was to put my cousin in my place: he would give up his business, hitherto his livelihood, and take my place and belong to the world. And I was to take his place down in this deserted city of warehouses, where, except the clergy of the parish and myself, there would be no single resident, who, by any stretch of imagination, could call himself of the gentle class.

Ninety years ago, two cousins, Robert and George Burnikel, were partners; after all these

years, two other cousins, Robert and George Burnikel, were to become partners again.

Ninety years ago Robert and George parted. Robert stayed at the yard, George went west. Now, this situation was reversed. George was to stay at the yard. Robert was going west.

## IN A NORWEGIAN FARMHOUSE.

By John Bickerdyke.

Our farmhouse is placed on a slope, facing the south, and trending down to the small, shallow, weedy sheets of water where trout are rising. These lochans, as they are sometimes termed in Scotland, are fed by the overflow stream from the great lake, which is held up by a natural dam of rock, a hundred feet or more high, and crossing the valley for, perhaps, a quarter of a mile. All around are mountains, some clothed almost to their summits with pine-trees, others more rugged and wild. There are half-a-dozen small wooden houses within sight; each owned by a more or less prosperous farmer. Our host is a well-to-do man, and with a family of two big, broad-shouldered sons—each two inches taller than their father—and three strapping wenches of daughters. They lead a patriarchal life in this wilderness, and have no difficulty in keeping the wolf from the door.

It is a peaceful summer's evening as our stolkjaerres are dragged up the rough road which winds round the hillocky slope. The painted, wooden farmhouse is built on massive stone foundations; the portion below the woodwork being devoted to a kitchen and brew-house in summer, a store in winter. Opposite the three rough stone steps, which lead up to the entrance, is a smaller, one-storeyed building, thatched with birch bark held down by sods of turf. One room of this is used as an extra sleeping-apartment, while in the other are the spinning-wheels and the loom. A hundred yards down the slope is a new barn, of which Herr Ole is very proud; for it is neatly made of massive planks and timbers, and roofed in with carefully cut slabs of stone, about two feet square, placed diamond fashion: a barn that will last out three generations of men. Some children are playing with a cream-coloured foal, and another foal is just coming out of the room where the spinning-wheels are kept, and down the steps.

The work is over for the day, and the family come out to greet us, though we are unexpected. We find out afterwards that we are the first English who have ever entered the house or, indeed, been seen by any of its inmates. Our guide and driver, Sivert, tells Herr Ole that we have come to fish the big lake behind that great natural dam, and would be glad of a bed and supper. This hospitality is accorded us without a moment's hesitation, and I am shown into a large room, perhaps twenty feet square. The furniture consists of a bare table; a sort of wooden sleeping-box, five feet four inches long, filled with straw; an unvarnished wooden chair, and a low bench fixed to the wall round two sides of the room. On it are the gaily painted boxes of the family; each member apparently having his or her private chest bearing the name, place of abode, and date of birth of its owner, along with some more or less barbaric design. On a row of pegs placed not far from the ceiling, and extending nearly round the apartment, hang the Sunday clothes of the family, a suit to each peg; the trousers' legs dangling down, and, late on in the dusk, looking as if some unfortunate people had hung themselves in a row.

There is no carpet, no wall-paper, no lath nor plaster. All is good honest wood; above, below, and all around; no varnish, no polish, no stain, no paint—not even on the furniture. No twopenny-halfpenny one-inch weather boarding, or half-inch match-boards as we use in England, but great solid planks and boards which will stand the wear and tear of centuries. On the windows and doors alone is a little paint—a kind of white enamel. In a corner of the room stands a very old kettledrum, and how and why such an instrument of warfare has a place in this peaceful dwelling is for the time beyond my comprehension. There are two big windows, in one of which a pane of glass is wanting, and Sivert tells me that the family are greatly concerned thereat; on my account be it understood, for much ventilation is deemed an evil thing out here. An oval rusty tea-tray is leaning against the wall. It fits the window so far as tops and sides are concerned, leaving ample room for fresh air at the corners, so the matter is soon settled.

There is a pretty rustic scene taking place outside the window, which would require the pen of a Richard Jefferies to properly describe. One of those miniature cows which are found among the mountains—a light fawn colour and well bred—is standing by the side of the palings which fence in a small potato plot; it wears a sort of bridle, with reins, made of fishing-line, by which a maiden is holding it. Seated on an upturned pail is one of the farmer's broad-shouldered sons, who is endeavouring to milk the cow, which kicks at intervals, for the poor creature is ill, her udder tender, and the operation painful. Another girl is standing by the side of the animal, leaning across its neck to keep it quiet, chatting the while. Presently, the aged grandfather, with long flowing hair, and teeth brown and worn down by constant chewing of tobacco, comes wandering up with the feeble and uncertain steps of age. The cow will not yield milk; no, not even to the old man, who takes his place on the upturned pail, moistening his hands; but his oft practised, though dirty fingers are of no avail, and it seems to me that the refractory invalid is led off in more or less disgrace. Secretly, I am glad that the milk we look for presently at tea-time has not come from this particular source.

There is no hand-basin in my room, and no water, so I call Sivert, tell him of my wants, and presently Sameline, the farmer's wife, appears with a basin of water, which she puts down on a chair, and retires. Soap and towels are apparently unneeded in this primitive land, but they are also forthcoming through the medium of Sivert. I note that the slice off a bar of mottled soap, produced for my especial benefit from the depths of one of those big

boxes, is, during our stay in the house, borrowed whenever any member of the family wants to wash his hands. In the midst of my ablutions, one of the sons strolls in unannounced, sits on a box and watches me. I know exactly six words of Norwegian, so I try their effect on him, which is not exactly electrical. As Sivert afterwards explains to me, 'When you talk Norwegian dey do tink you talk English, and so dey no try to understand,' which is very stupid of them.

We have brought with us eggs, bread and fresh butter, and a lump of gruyère cheese, which has been diffusing its somewhat powerful scent among the clothes and other things in my box, during our travels from Bergen. It is an hour and a half before the trout, which I caught on my way up, are cooked. Norwegians have a weakness for cutting all things into slices, if possible, and food not sliceable, into small pieces. All my trout run about three to the pound, and are divided into four or five portions, just as though they were eels. But they are admirably boiled, and in due course placed on a side-table in an adjoining room, where the doctor is to sleep, he also having a five feet four inch box filled with straw. Two knives, some salt in a piece of paper, and two tea-cups are on the table. We ask Sivert to see if the good people cannot provide us with forks, teaspoons, saucers, and a milk jug. For the latter, Sameline brings in an antique china bowl, full of milk, and two curious ancient Norwegian silver spoons, with flat handles and quite round shallow bowls, used to dip the milk out of the basin.

Sivert sits down with us, as a matter of course, and very skilfully skins and takes the bones from the small chunks of trout by means of a knife, a piece of dissection which the doctor notes with professional interest. It would seem that forks are usually dispensed with in this part of the world, but two very doubtful ones (I say doubtful because it is not clear of what metal they are made—perhaps they were once upon a time silver-plated), after a long search, are discovered in a box hidden away under the bed. All these things come in driblets, and by the time the meal is set out, the trout are cold and our hunger not decreased, for it is now, if you please, eleven P.M., though still very light, and we have had no food since two o'clock.

As soon as the not-altogether-gargantuan feast commences, the farmer and the whole family, except the grandfather, troop solemnly into the room, stand in a semicircle and watch us feeding, just as if we were some strange creatures at the Zoo. In fact, I believe that we are really greater curiosities to them than the lions and tigers are to Master Tommy in Regent's Park.

After supper I have a happy thought. I have read somewhere that the Norwegian children are exceedingly fond of sweets, and, owing to the heavy tax on sugar, have few opportunities of eating them; so I bought a pound in Bergen, and this I hand round. The whole family solemnly help themselves, and, with deep gratitude depicted in their faces, come up to us, shake hands with both the doctor and myself, and say, 'Tak.'* I give some cigars to the farmer and the two sons, the latter never having before smoked such a thing. The thrift of the Norwegian is shown in the treatment of these cigars by the youths. They smoke for five minutes, then carefully extinguish the burning end and place the cigar away in some corner of the house. The next morning I see them having another five minutes' smoke, and these cigars actually last for over two days, being taken in homeopathic doses at intervals of about two hours. Finally the ends are cut up and used in grandfather's pipe.

When I come to turn in, I find that a gorgeous woollen blanket of many colours—one of the products of the loom in the little house opposite—has been spread over the straw in my box, and there are two others to cover me. But before I am allowed to go to bed, the whole family, without exception, come into my room, examine all my things, first inquiring the English name of them, and then giving me the Norwegian.

'Engelsk?' says Herr Ole interrogatively, pointing to my razor.

'Razor,' say I.

'Ah so, razor. In Norsk, barberkniv,' he informs me. And so on through brush, comb, nail scissors, and all the things which Englishmen deem necessary for making the toilet; finishing up with sundry items of fishing-tackle which I have laid out on the table. My magnificent disregard of money in using silk for a fishing-line astonishes them. With the aid of a dictionary I tell them of what it is composed. 'No! it must be cotton, or hemp.' But I stick to my silk, and finally convince them, and they evidently regard me as a very thriftless sort of person.

It is now as dark as it will be during this short summer night, and Mrs Sameline has brought into my room a curious old repoussé work Swedish candlestick, with twisted stem, in which is a home-made, tapering, tallow candle nearly two feet in length. I am very tired, and though immensely interested in all these things, should be better pleased if the family would take into consideration my doubtless foolish English prejudices and forbear from spitting on the floor; in other respects my visitors are most clean. Each and all of them have removed their wooden shoes before entering the room, and are walking on the bare floor with their stockinged feet. The grandfather, in particular, takes a kindly interest in me, and sits on the edge of my bed chewing tobacco and acting after the manner of chewers. The candle growing dim, he snuffs it with his fingers, and drops the lighted fragment of wick on the floor, extinguishing it with his stockinged foot. Finally, some of them wander out. The last to go is the eldest son, and he, I believe, has a sort of morbid desire to see what an Englishman looks like when undressed. But I do not intend to satisfy his wishes in this respect, and by dint of 'god nat' many times repeated, induce him to go. But he has learned of me the English of this expression, and ten

* *Anglice*, 'Thank.'

minutes later puts his shaggy head in at the door, grins, jerks out 'Good-night,' retreats, and I see him no more.

A good deep bed of straw with a warm woollen rug over it is not an uncomfortable thing, provided there is leg room, which in this case is wanting. But after these long journeyings, fishing by the way, one is thankful for anything in the shape of a bed, and heaven forbid that I should criticise the kindly hospitality of these good people. For a few minutes there is a great thumping about overhead, for the common sleeping-room of both girls and boys appears to be above, and neither men nor Norwegian farm lasses tread very lightly. There is a great joke going on—it is to say 'Good-night' to each other in English. How they laugh over it! I can hear every word they say in this wooden house. Let me here say that although sleeping arrangements of this kind appear to be quite common in the wilder parts of Norway, there are no more moral people in the world than the Norwegians of the west coast.

The doctor, who was saved from the visitation of the previous night, is up betimes the next morning and wakes me at an early hour. These farm-people seem to care nothing about sleep during the summer months, having, I suppose, an overdose of it in the winter; for they have been up hours ago, shaving away at little patches of grass among the rocks with their small hand-scythes, not much larger than three 'barberknivs,' and nearly as sharp.

While Madame Sameline is preparing some more trout for breakfast, and apparently much puzzled about frying them in butter, a method which we had suggested to her through Sivert, I wander among the farm-buildings, and with, I hope, a pardonable curiosity, poke my nose into a number of places where I have no business. In one little wooden storehouse are sacks of meal, and barrels containing salted herrings of evil odour. A little way down the hillside is a tiny hut, some eight feet square, through the turf roof of which blue smoke is oozing. I look in here and see the farmer's eldest son working at a small forge, fashioning a new set of shoes for the mares which are to take us on our journey in a day or two. The animals, with musical bells fastened to their necks by a leather collar, and with foals running by their side and taking an early but spasmodic breakfast, are feeding on the short sweet grass near this little smithy. Two old, and evidently not often used, stolkjaerres have been dragged out from some shed and placed in front of the house containing the loom, to be prepared for the continuation of our journey. The shaft of one has been broken and has evidently been spliced that morning with a piece of fishing-line. Bearing in mind that the roads are bad and the hills steep, that there are no traces, and a great deal of weight is placed on the ponies' shoulders, a nervous person might not feel altogether happy in contemplating the prospect of a journey in these particular conveyances.

I try to take stock of the farmer's possessions. Imprimis, there is a good stout timber-built red-tiled house, and the more old-fashioned loom-house, which, I daresay, was the dwelling-place of an earlier generation. There are one or two small sheds used as stores, the big barn I have mentioned, and the little smithy. Close to the house is an all-too-small potato patch, and round it grows fine grass full of sweet herbage. Quaintly cut out of the grass in sundry places are a few square yards of land devoted to grain crops. By the edge of the potatoes are about twenty hop plants. Most of the cows and cattle are away on the common grazing grounds up the mountains. It is by no means a small farm, and I am told the tax paid to the State for it is about fifteen pounds a year. There is no hired labour; everything is done by the man and his family, and never have I met with more contented, happy, prosperous people. In the stone basement beneath the room in which we have our meals, the farmer is busy brewing two or three barrels of beer; while over a wood fire on an open hearth, Mrs Sameline is frying our trout.

Earlier in the morning the doctor has told me, with much amusement, that on his giving out some tea for breakfast, Sivert has said that more tea was unnecessary as the leaves which were used overnight would do again. 'Of course I told them to throw away the tea-leaves,' says the doctor, 'and the man seemed quite surprised.'

While in the kitchen, Sivert comes up to me with serious face. 'Do *you* think I should throw away the tea-leaves which were used yesterday? They are very good.' From this I gather that they look upon the doctor as a wasteful, thriftless sort of person, whose judgment in these matters is of no account; but pay me the compliment of regarding me as prudence personified, and as one not likely to fall in with such wicked waste.

'Don't you think, Sivert, that Mrs Johannesen would like those tea-leaves?' I query.

'Oh! yes, she would,' says Sivert without hesitation, and so we settle the matter and please everybody, particularly Sameline; but it is quite clear the doctor has fallen in their estimation.

Sivert announcing that breakfast will be ready shortly, I return to the house, and see through an open door the eldest daughter busy at her sewing-machine. She is sitting in a tiny cupboard of a room, in the angle of which is a corner cupboard, having wrought-metal hinges and finely carved oak doors. It must be centuries old, and contrasts strangely with the modern machine the girl is using.

The farmer and his family are now so busy that they withstand the strong temptation to see the Englishmen eat with forks. One of the girls offers us *fladbröd* this morning, a contrivance evolved out of meal and water. I believe it can be easily imitated by means of a disc of stout whitey-brown paper about two feet in diameter. The delicate, crisp, short eating *fladbröd* of the hotels is very different from this stuff, which is tough, and requires excellent teeth for its proper mastication. On this, potatoes, porridge, and herrings, these people seem principally to live; with the addition of some trout in the summer. Green vegetables they do not trouble to grow, and for

lack of these purifiers, eating too many fish, and perhaps owing to the lack of ventilation in their houses during the long winter nights, scrofula and leprosy are all too common. Apple cultivation is steadily on the increase; but the people might none the less turn their attention with great advantage to the kitchen garden.

During breakfast rain commences. As soon as our frugal meal is over we sally forth, clad in macintoshes, ascend the slope of that great rocky dam, and spend the day on the beautiful lake, catching most excellent, pink-fleshed trout. In the evening, when we sup, the family again surrounds us.

And this is very much our life in this primitive spot. The curiosity of the people concerning us, and our feeling of strangeness, gradually wear off. As our hosts begin to know us better, and we them, our regard and esteem for each other increases.

Stay, I have almost forgotten to explain the mystery of the kettledrum. I sound Sivert on the subject, and he tells me that the farmer's eldest son, like all young men in Norway, has been drilled for a soldier and has developed strong musical tastes which have led to his being appointed drummer. Word is passed round the family that I have asked about the drum, and on our second evening a deputation waits upon me, headed by Sivert, to inquire if I would like to hear the drum played. I weakly say 'Yes,' and about the time that I am longing to turn in, the whole family again troops into my room, the eldest son arming himself with long sticks, shoulders the drum-sling, and fires off volleys of rolls, beats, tattoos, and other things at my unfortunate head. I say 'Mange tak' many times, but the more I thank him the more he plays, until his arms weary and then, thank Heaven! I am left in peace. The moral is that English travellers in Norway should not be inquisitive in the matter of drums.

## LONDON'S GREAT LANDOWNERS.

Little could the owners of the rural manors which encircled the London of medieval times have foreseen the almost fabulous value which would one day attach to their lands. The vast increase in the numbers of those who are drawn, whether by business or pleasure, to the capital of the Empire, has caused every available spot in close proximity to town to be covered with houses, whereby an artificial value has been given to land the agricultural worth of which is little more than a quarter of a million. To-day, through pressure of population, it is said to be worth three hundred millions, without the buildings upon it. The oldest landowners in Middlesex are the Russells, and it may be convenient to begin with them in giving some account of London's greater landlords. At the dissolution of the religious houses, the garden of the Abbey at Westminster, and the lands belonging to it, was granted by Edward VI. to his uncle the Duke of Somerset, and, upon his attainder, came back to the Crown. Then in May 1552, we find a patent granted to John, Earl of Bedford, of the convent garden lying in the parish of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, with seven acres, called Long Acre, of the yearly value of six pounds six shillings and eightpence. The right to the market which had come to be held here, was granted by Charles II. to William, Earl of Bedford, by letters-patent in 1671. At the present day the gross revenue derived from it is said to be somewhat over twenty-five thousand pounds a year, a considerable portion of which sum is laid out in market expenses. Besides Covent Garden, the Russell family possesses considerable property in the districts of Bloomsbury and St Giles. At one time this estate belonged to the Earls of Southampton—the manor of St Giles having been sold for six hundred pounds to the trustees of Henry, Earl of Southampton, in the reign of James I. This, together with the manor of Blemund, formerly belonging to a Leper Hospital, descended to the fourth Earl of Southampton, at whose death in 1668 it became the property of his daughter and co-heiress, Lady Rachel Wriothesley, who by her marriage with the celebrated William Lord Russell, brought this estate of about two hundred and forty-five acres into the Bedford family. The old manor-house of the Blemunds stood on the site of the present Bedford Place. Another large property in this neighbourhood, owned by Lord Northampton, is situated in the parishes of St James, Clerkenwell, and St Mary, Islington, much of it consisting of very poor houses in a working-class district. Canonbury Manor came into the Compton family by the marriage of the heiress of Sir John Spencer, a citizen of London, who died in 1609, with William Lord Compton.

The owner of the most fashionable district of London is the Duke of Westminster. This extensive property at the West End was acquired by the marriage in 1676 of Sir Thomas Grosvenor with Miss Mary Davies, the only child of Alexander Davies of Ebury Manor—which, roughly speaking, is represented by the Grosvenor estate of to-day. The boundary of the estate, which is situated in the parishes of St George, Hanover Square, and St John, Westminster, begins at the Marble Arch on the south side of Oxford Street, runs down the centre of Oxford Street, almost to South Molton Street, and passing down Davies Street, takes in a small portion of Berkeley Square (with Thomas's Hotel), and including both sides of Mount Street, runs up the middle of Park Lane to the Marble Arch again. The Belgravia part of the estate begins at St George's Hospital, runs down the centre of Grosvenor Place to the Buckingham Palace Road, and passes down the western side of Vauxhall Bridge Road almost in a straight line to the river Thames, thence running along the river bank eastward as far as the Grosvenor Canal. The property does not comprise Sloane Square, Cadogan Place, or Lowndes Square, but includes all Belgrave Square and Wilton Crescent, the boundary running up again almost to the Knightsbridge Road.

The Millbank estate near the Houses of Parliament also belongs to the Grosvenor family. The collection of pictures now at Grosvenor House began to be formed here at Peterborough House, which was pulled down in 1809, to

make way for Millbank Prison, now demolished in its turn. Many of the leases on the Grosvenor part of the estate have recently fallen in, and a great deal of rebuilding has taken place, the aspect of this neighbourhood being completely changed. Probably no other London estate has been so much improved of recent years. Grosvenor Gardens were rebuilt when the erection of the Grosvenor Hotel and the Victoria Railway Station necessitated broad approaches and handsome houses in this vicinity. Later on, Hereford Gardens, half of Grosvenor Place, part of Grosvenor Crescent, and so forth, have been rebuilt, as well as nearly the whole Oxford Street frontage of the estate. The names of the streets and squares in both districts are connected in some way with the history of the family. Thus Eccleston, Chester, and Belgrave Squares are named after different portions of their Chester estates. Davies Street recalls the heiress of Ebury Manor, which in its turn gives its name to a street in Belgravia. The Dorsetshire mansion of a dowager-duchess gives us Motcombe Street, while Halkin Street is named after a property in Flintshire. The value of the Grosvenor portion of the estate must have recently been greatly augmented by the falling in of so many leases, and by the erection of better built and more spacious residences in Mount Street, Duke Street, Aldford Street, and so on.

An estate adjoining the Belgravia part of the Duke of Westminster's property belongs to Earl Cadogan, and has recently been much developed. The fine red brick houses in Hans Place, Cadogan Square, Pont Street, Lower Sloane Street, and so forth, have attracted many of the rich and fashionable to this district; and an old inhabitant would hardly recognise the semi-rural aspect of Chelsea under its changed conditions. This estate, which bids fair to rival that of the Duke of Westminster in value and importance, was brought into the family by the marriage of General Cadogan, a celebrated officer of Horse Guards in the wars of Marlborough, with the daughter and heiress of Sir Hans Sloane, who had acquired the manor of Chelsea in 1712 from the family of Cheyne.

More details are available as to Lord Portman's London estate, which consists of about two hundred and sixty acres. The estate commences at the junction of Richmond Street and the Edgeware Road, and includes Montagu and Manchester Squares, Great Cumberland Place, Baker Street, part of Marylebone Road, and other well-known localities, as well as the poor neighbourhood of Lisson Grove. It is let, generally speaking, upon ninety-nine years building leases, dating from the years 1816 to 1822. In the year 1512, the Lord Prior of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem at Clerkenwell granted a lease for fifty years to John and Johan Blennerhasset of a farm exactly conterminous with the present Portman property. In 1532 Chief-justice Portman bought the reversion of their house from the executors of the Blennerhassets, the land being subsequently acquired in fee-simple in the reign of Mary. The Seymour family at one time possessed the property on the termination of the male line of the Portmans. Eventually, however, it reverted to William Berkeley, whose mother had been a niece of the last Portman. These changes give us a clue to the names of various streets in the locality, such as Seymour Street, Berkeley Street, and Portman Square. Bryanston Square recalls the name of a village near Blandford in Dorsetshire, as Orchard Street does that of Orchard Portman in Somersetshire. The two Quebec Streets furnish us with the approximate date of their building, that is to say, during the war in Canada in the middle of the last century. Much of the estate is occupied by the shops of West-End tradesmen, and various improvements have been carried out, though not to so large an extent as on other large London estates. Leases are generally renewed for a period of twenty-five years.

A large contiguous estate belongs to the Portland family. To trace the manner in which it descended to its present owners, we must go back a couple of hundred years to the time when John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, purchased the lands of Tyburn or Marylebone for the sum of seventeen thousand five hundred pounds. The Park at Marylebone, known to-day as the Regent's Park, was specially reserved to the Crown. The daughter of this nobleman, the Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, married to Robert Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, inherited the lands of Tyburn in 1711. Her only daughter Margaret married William Bentinck, second Duke of Portland, thus bringing the estate into that family. At the present time its northern boundary takes in a large portion of the Marylebone Road, including Madame Tussaud's, where the last part of the property is situated. The boundary then runs down the eastern side of Marylebone Lane as far as Oxford Street. That street, between Wells Street and Marylebone Lane, forms its southern boundary. The lower part of Portland Place and the upper part of Regent Street belong to the Crown. The Portland Marylebone estate does not belong to the present Duke, but to the daughters of the fourth Duke. The history of the devolution of the estate upon its present owners explains the origin of most of the street names in the locality. Thus we have Portland Place, Holles Street, Harley Street, and Oxford Street —the last named in honour of the accession of Robert Harley to that title. The wife of John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, was an heiress of the Cavendishes of Welbeck, which explains the names of another street and square. The Harleys were originally of Wigmore Castle, which name survives in a principal street in this neighbourhood. Another portion of the Portland estates embraces nearly all Portland Town, that is, the district bounded on the south by Regent's Park, from Primrose Hill to St John's Wood Chapel, embracing Avenue Road.

One other family in the central district of London may be mentioned as owners of an estate bordering on the Euston Road and recording their name in Fitzroy Square. The manor of Tottenhall or Tottenham was held on lease in the reign of Charles II., by Isabella, Countess of Arlington, who married the Duke of Grafton, son of Barbara Villiers, Duchess of

Cleveland. Later on, one of the Fitzroys was created Earl of Southampton, and acquired this manor in fee-simple. The eldest son of the Duke of Grafton, the Earl of Euston, has his name recorded in Euston Road and Euston Square, though the Southampton branch of the Fitzroy family are the present owners of the estate. A small but important estate in the Strand, including Norfolk Street, Surrey Street, Howard Street, and other thoroughfares between the Strand and the Embankment, belongs to the Duke of Norfolk. The Howard family is one of the oldest landowners in Middlesex, being preceded by the Russells and Cecils only. The value of this estate since the formation of the Thames Embankment must have been greatly increased. The site adjoining the Outer Temple—the former residence of the Earl of Essex—was occupied by the Bishops of Bath, whose rights were usurped by that Seymour who was brother to the Protector Somerset. At his death, Henry Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, bought it for forty-one pounds six shillings and eightpence, and in 1579 it devolved upon the Howard family. The Savoy estate belongs to Her Majesty, having been settled with other property of the Duchy of Lancaster on the sovereign for the time being by the son of John of Gaunt, the first Duke of Lancaster. Cecil Street, Salisbury Street, and neighbouring property still belong to Lord Salisbury.

A few words in conclusion as to the large landowners in outlying districts of London, such as Lord Amherst. The Tyssens were formerly merchants in Holland, who settled at Hackney near London in the reign of James II., and purchased the manor in the year 1600. The property passed in the latter part of the last century by marriage to the Amhursts of Rochester, and subsequently to the Kentish family of Daniel, who thereupon assumed the surname and arms of Tyssen. The additional name of Amhurst was then taken. The present head of the Tyssen Amhurst family was recently created a peer under the style of Baron Amherst of Hackney. De-Beauvoir Town to the north of Hoxton is part of this estate, and records the marriage of a certain Francis Tyssen of Shacklewell to a daughter of Richard de Beauvoir of Guernsey. Another landowner, possessing states in Bermondsey, Southwark, Camberwell, and Newington, has been recently ennobled as Lord Llangattock, better known as Mr Rolls of the Hendré. The Rolls property includes the thoroughfare (recently celebrated in noble verse !) known as the Old Kent Road.

The property of the Pratt family is situated in the St Pancras district. Charles Pratt, Earl Camden, became possessed of the estate which now is called Camden Town by his marriage with the daughter of Nicholas Jeffreys about the middle of the last century. St Pancras seems to have been one of the many prebendal manors around London, and was held by a Canon of St Paul's. A separate manor appears to have passed into the hands of the Cantlo or Cantilupe family, and under its present corrupted name of Kentish Town is practically owned by the Pratts, though it is said to be subject to a nominal rent to the prebendary. Another hamlet of St Pancras, known as Somers Town, is named after the family of its present proprietor, Earl Somers.

It will be seen that the corporation of the City of London, the Livery Companies, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have been omitted from the foregoing account of London's great landowners.

## CHANGES IN PRONUNCIATION.

It requires no very profound knowledge of English literature to ascertain that the pronunciation of the language has undergone a vast change during the last three centuries. The shrewd conjecture has, indeed, more than once been hazarded that the works of the Elizabethan dramatists would be unintelligible to a modern audience if the native and original pronunciation were adhered to; and certain, at all events, it is that in many well-known passages of Shakespeare the very rhythm of the line imperatively demands a strange and unaccustomed accentuation of certain words. With the peculiarities of a later period most people are sufficiently acquainted. That *gold* was *goold* and that *china* was *chaney* during the Augustan era is matter of common knowledge; and who can forget Pope's description of Atticus:

> Dreading even fools, by flatterers besieged,
> And so *obleeging* that he ne'er *obleeged?*

The last-mentioned mode, as well as the two others, lingered on well into the present century, and was habitual with Lord John Russell; though they are all, probably, by this time as rare as *Rooshia* for *Russia*, and rarer than *Spaw* for *Spa*.

What we are not quite so apt to realise is that in our own day similar changes are taking place. No doubt it requires a considerable length of time before a marked alteration of the sort becomes generally or universally adopted in conversation, and even a longer period before it percolates from speech into poetry. Why there should be these perpetual transitions is a question to which it would be as presumptuous to give a hasty answer as to decide off-hand by what strange concatenation of cause and effect the once abhorred 'split infinitive' has thrust itself into every newspaper and magazine. We can only note two strong tendencies which have manifested themselves during the last quarter of a century.

The first of these is the tendency to throw the accent back as far as possible in words of more than one syllable. People used to look at the con*téntś* of a book if they wished to grasp its de*tails;* now they dip into the *cón*tents in order to pick up the *dé*tails (rhyming almost with 'beetles'). The Inland Re*vénue* has been almost wholly displaced by the Inland *Ré*venue, and few indeed are left to con*témplate* the pictures in the il*lús*trated papers; for all who have any pretensions to modernity either *cón*template or *íl*lustrate. A few changes of the kind have hitherto failed to commend themselves to a fastidious taste. Thus, though it may be a mark of doubtful gentility and breeding to discourse freely of man*úre*, you are not likely to mend the matter by calling it *mán*ure. The pursuer's statement of claim and the

defender's answer to it in a Scotch lawsuit, still, happily, compose the re*cord*, and the strangeness of *re*cord would attract attention; yet when the final de*cree* has in some mysterious manner become *de*cree, and the pronunciation of clerks has become that of advocates, there is no knowing what may happen. So de*ceased* becomes in the mouth of many *de*ceased; and we question if nowadays any schoolboy would come by the hearty flogging he deserves if he alluded to Swift's *ink*wery (with an emphasis on the *ink*) into 'The Conduct of the *Al*-lies.' This unjustifiable distortion of 'inquiry' is perhaps the least lovely fruit of the tendency in question, and is believed to be peculiar to North Britain, though in point of ungainliness it is run hard by *ex*piry for exp*iry*. The subject has ceased to be inter*esting* (except on the stage), and is merely *in*teresting, but it might be worth following out for all that.

The second tendency to which we have alluded might be regarded by an optimist as a strong testimony to the efficacy of the Education Acts; by a pessimist as a melancholy illustration of the mischiefs produced by false analogy. Every boy or girl comes by a certain amount of spelling; and *nearly* every boy or girl, heedless of the warnings with which the English language bristles, forthwith proceeds to jump to some tempting but erroneous conclusion, illustrating most aptly the process of arguing from the known to the unknown. Thus a child, discovering the orthography of 'jerk,' straightway begins to talk of *Burkshire* for *Bark*shire, of *Dur*by instead of *Dar*by, of *Hurt*ford instead of *Hart*ford. And so the true and racy and vernacular pronunciation is lost by degrees. One longs for the days when, according to Lord Brougham, Mr Fox habitually spoke of the capital as *Lunn*'on, of Birmingham as *Brummagem*, of a merchant as a *mar*chant, of a shire as a *sheer*, just as Mr Windham would speak of doing things 'a' purpose.' How our present unfortunate tendency is to be arrested, it is difficult to see; but perhaps the literature of the 'kailyard,' which has left scarcely a village in these isles without its historian, may at least contribute substantial assistance towards preserving uncontaminated and unspoilt the pronunciation of our local names.

## THE TENTH MUSE.

'Sporting literature has been termed the tenth Muse.'

A DISCOVERY of interest has recently been made,
And some little curiosity is here and there displayed;
It has interested circles so remotely placed apart,
As the readers of the *Sportsman* and the lovers of Greek art.

We had all of us imagined in the days when we were young,
When as schoolboys we enjoyed the verse which classic bards had sung,
When we revelled in our Horace, and knew Homer's ev'ry line,
That the number of the Muses had been limited to nine.

But although we may have thought 'enough' was better than 'a feast,'
We are told the Muses' family has since then been increased;
With the new pronunciation and the changing thoughts of men,
We must greet the new-found sister, and address the 'Nine' as 'Ten.'

It may interest philanthropists to hear it has been urged
Here's a striking new example of a 'tenth' which was 'submerged;'
For she was not known for centuries upon the earthly stage,
Though in medieval times she must have been past middle age.

For in good old days there must have been some sportsmen stout and bold,
And some good old songs were sung, no doubt, and good old stories told;
When old Rameses, for instance, shot his game in regal style,
And when Pentaur sang his praises, in the valley of the Nile.

We can welcome her, new risen, as one greets a new-learnt truth
Which, though older than the hills, yet blooms in everlasting youth.
Not a sense of creeping weakness could the Muses' sister feel
As she cantered through the centuries from Nimrod to John Peel.

We can fancy her a damsel yet, appropriately clad,
In the classic drapery of Greece, when Greece was young and glad;
Or can picture her in modern dress, divided skirt and spats,
In an easy Norfolk jacket and the newest thing in hats.

And she teaches her disciples what is best in earthly song—
To be tender to a fault, but set their foot upon a wrong;
And, when writing of their prowess and proficiency in sports,
To distinguish 'twixt romances and historical reports.

When the cricketer of sixty tells how he was wont to bowl,
And the old crack shot recounts his bags, she teaches self-control,
And she checks, by gently hinting that the truth should be exact,
That exuberance of fancy which is not confined to fact.

Antiquarians and sportsmen, and, we might say, all mankind
Should rejoice to sing the praises of this latest modern 'find:'
Would some scholar kindly help to make her better known to fame,
And from out his inner consciousness evolve the Muse's name?

C. J. B.

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## A PLEA FOR THE COMMONPLACE.

By Halliday Rogers.

If, from the general catalogue of humanity, there could be constructed a 'valued file' in which all mankind should be classified in descriptive groups, there are perhaps few of us who would not be somewhat disappointed if we found ourselves included under the category of the Commonplace. You, dear reader, would not like to be described as a man whose most prominent characteristic is mediocrity. Are you not, indeed, convinced in your heart of hearts that such a description would not be accurate? You do not claim genius for yourself, perhaps, and are content to be left out of the list of the great ones of the earth; but to be commonplace is to be uninteresting, and that certainly neither you nor any one of us has ever found himself to be. In fact, it is just because we have all our lives found our own personality intensely interesting, that we find it difficult to accept the fact that other people fail to recognise this pre-eminent interest, and even find matter demanding more attentive consideration in their own bosoms. Our neighbours are often unappreciative; they allow our wittiest and wisest sayings to fall to the ground unobserved; yet when people are accustomed to regard their own scintillations as the most brilliant imaginable, we cannot wonder if they refuse to blink when we sparkle.

On the whole, then, since the fine aroma of distinction which suffuses our personality is in most of us so exceedingly rare that it fails to tickle any nostril but our own, are we not generally well content to dwell at peace on the quiet level of the commonplace? Do we not feel our hearts wonderfully well satisfied with the fireside joys of life, and something better than ambition gratified by the loyalty of our little realm of home, where all we say and do is irradiated, not with the tinsel sparkle of fashion, but with the purer light of love? Why should we desire a homage which, in effect, only raises a barrier between us and our fellow-men? The isolation of superiority is but a lonely business after all, and most of us find that an arm-chair beside our neighbours is both more comfortable and more sociable than a pedestal over their heads.

Human affection seems always to twine itself most closely about the commonplace. Striking qualities in those about us excite our admiration, and may awake our love, but any qualities, through long familiarity, cease at length to be striking, and, in course of time, the glittering glacier-peaks of admiration melt into the warmer river of affection. Is it not amid the uneventful quietude of our own homes, among the people who of all the world are most familiar to us, that our love finds its truest repose? I question if the wife of our most brilliant senator loves her husband best when he is swaying the hearts of thousands with the magnificent power of his eloquence, and not rather when she sees him sitting by the fireside in his slippers, with his five-year-old darling on his knee, listening, with a keener interest than he can always command in the House of Commons, to her reading of the time-honoured remarks regarding 'Tom's cat that sat on the mat.'

Most of us have, at some time or other, been acquainted with families in which there was one member, generally on the female side, whose voice was seldom heard, and whose health was rarely inquired after; one whose existence was almost unnoticed except when her absence aroused an impatient sense of inconvenience in those on whom her work devolved, and whose functions in the family life seemed negative till they were intermitted, when they became painfully positive for other people; one, in short, whose mission in life seemed to be to wash the cups from which others had quaffed their *elixir vitæ*. Very often she is an elder sister—a gentle soul, little given to *ex*pression, but only to a *re*pression whose power would be terrific were it not self-directed and invisible. She helps her mother with the children's

mending, helps the children with their lessons, and, as these same children grow up into youth and maidenhood, and push her, without any malevolent intention, prematurely into the mysterious shadow of 'the shelf,' she looks after her sisters' marriages and sees her brothers through their college scrapes and experimental love-affairs, settling down finally into an old maiden auntie of universal benevolence and an unlimited supply of sweets. She is, to quote George Eliot, 'one of those benignant lovely souls who, without astonishing the public and posterity, make a happy difference in the lives close around them, and in this way lift the average of earthly joy.' And this maiden auntie, in the eyes of all around her, is a very commonplace person. She has no special talents or accomplishments, but has all the ordinary ones in an ordinary degree. She is not much accustomed to any one's admiration, least of all her own; nevertheless she is a very comfortable person to have in the house, and, commonplace as she is, the day comes when we find out that she has had more of our love than any of her brilliant relatives.

Shakespeare himself has taught us to love the commonplace. When Macbeth and Banquo have fairly rid their good old king alike of 'malice domestic' and of 'foreign levy,' and have come to receive their well-merited thanks and praise from their liege lord, how does he greet them? Macbeth, 'Bellona's bridegroom,' 'Valour's minion,' advances with stately dignity and is received with nervous gratitude, respectful appreciation, and just a suspicion of timid reserve. Behind him follows Banquo, a type of that cautious courage and honest prudence which characterise the ordinary Scotsman of to-day, with no ceremonial airs or princely dignity, but beaming with honest delight in his victory, his leal heart throbbing with gladness at the good service he has done his king. And while Macbeth stands by receiving congratulations with dignified courtesy and holding his head high with an incipient regal pride, Banquo is swallowing down a lump in his throat as he feels himself enfolded in old Duncan's loving arms. There is no taint of crime as yet upon Macbeth; he is a striking figure in the eyes of his countrymen, famous for his valour, lauded and admired. Banquo is only a brave soldier with little but the accident of rank to distinguish him from many a score as brave and true as he. Yet which of us having, with little emotion, made his best bow to a distinguished personage, would not, like Duncan, turn with more heartfelt warmth to receive the hand-grasp of a brother man?

There is a novelist of the present day who, perhaps above any other, has succeeded in writing books whose every sentence is pregnant with a far-reaching meaning. His characters are ready with valuable epigrams before they have got down-stairs in the morning and sparkle with repartee through sultry afternoons. The cabman at the gate accompanies his salute with an original apothegm charged with immortal wisdom. Lovers attain to the crucial point of a proposal through a labyrinthine discussion on international politics and an interchange of theories regarding the philosophy of government. The theories are interesting, the conversations brilliant; some critics place the author in the forefront of the novelists of our century. Certainly in cleverness it would not be easy to find his rival, and few will deny him the meed of admiration which that thoroughly occidental and modern quality deserves. But even cleverness palls sometimes, and we are glad to lay down the book to discuss the weather with our friend Simpleman, or listen to Mrs Commonbody's remarks on the quality of the milk supplied by the new Dairymen's Co-operative Society. Intellectual, and altogether superior as you are, dear reader, I cannot suppose that you are indifferent to the repose of a pipe of tobacco (or, madam, a cup of tea) and foolishness. A multitudinously convoluted fire-cracker, exploding in epigram every thirty seconds, may be an object worthy of our attentive consideration; but if the period of study be prolonged beyond due limits, there is a risk of wearying the ear and permeating the atmosphere with a thirst-breeding odour of explosives. And then, what more welcome to the thirsty lips than a draught of clear, cold water? What more refreshing to the wearied intellect than a whiff of the pure, all-pervading ozone of the commonplace? Who, however highly he has appreciated the conversational gymnastics of our author's *dramatis personæ*, will not find it wonderfully restful to turn his back upon them for a while and stroll with good Gilbert White into his garden at Selborne and follow with interest, though possibly not with excitement, his calculations of the varying inches in the daily peregrinations of his tortoise? We find a sweeter nature awakened in ourselves in considering the domestic gossip of the hedge-sparrow than in tracing the complicated rascalities of even the most magnificent of adventurers, and we listen with a more loving interest to the amorous chirpings of Cock Robin and Jenny Wren than to any description of the intricate matrimonial entanglements of even the most highly cultured of county gentlemen. The fire-cracker may be the result of centuries of science and civilisation, while the cold water was as good in Eden as it is to-day; yet the cooling draught is always refreshing to the thirsty soul, while the fire-cracker does not always afford the exact species of exhilaration demanded by the jaded spirit. Not that fire-crackers are to be despised! Which of us, being present at a pyrotechnic display, would not willingly help to swell the admiring chorus of Oh! and Ah! Only, exaltation is apt to react in exhaustion, and most of us find our repose in the commonplace. Life cannot be all fire-cracker.

'Man, do you know, I like your books,' was the compliment a writer received lately from a friend. 'They 're so thoroughly like the thing'—that is, like the *ordinary* thing. The same writer in discussing a prominent preacher chanced to remark: 'Yes, one cannot help enjoying him, he knows so well how to meet the needs of everyday life.' Again the importance of the commonplace! And the preacher, chatting with his wife about the dinner where he had met a cabinet minister, might, quite naturally, say: 'After all, my dear, a cabinet

minister is quite a tame animal—conducts himself just like an ordinary mortal; and of course we like him all the better for that.'

Such are the common opinions of civilised society—the *common* opinions, which, whether we like it or not, are generally accepted as true. Any satisfaction we may have in the occasional appearance of the Eccentric as a variety presupposes the existence of the Ordinary as a basis rendering such phenomena possible—as the neutral background which lends brilliancy to the gayer figures—or as the conception of Silence, without which we could have no definition of Sound. In all cases Eccentricity must preserve some hold on the Ordinary, or cut its possessor adrift from sympathy with the wider life of mankind—a result which would make even the eccentricity of genius intolerable. For what is the life of any man worth if it is not in sympathetic touch with the lives of his fellow-men, and what will preserve this sympathetic touch but familiarity with the joys and sorrows, the loves and hates, the everyday emotions of humanity, which, though capable of infinite diversity in individual history, are yet the common heritage of the race, and produce, in the larger view, a universal identity of experience in all nations and ages? For, after all, surely it is true that only in so far as our hearts beat, stroke for stroke, in unison with the great, common heart of humanity, can there be any true greatness in us at all.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XVIII.

THEN came the second opportunity. It was three weeks after the first. The occasion was the first reading—or was it the second?—or a Bill for the prohibition of more than five—or was it fifty?—hours' labour in the day, or something to that effect.

However, we knew it was coming, and Robert got me a seat in the Speaker's Gallery, where I sat during the questions with as much patience as I could command. The Gallery was not crowded; the strangers were people up from the country, with a few Americans. They had opera-glasses, and whispered the names of the members whose faces they knew. The House of Commons is one of the sights of London, which is the reason why so few Londoners ever go to it. As for the House of Lords, I wonder how many Londoners have ever seen that august body in deliberation.

The Bill was introduced with a somewhat short and self-excusing speech. I wish I could remember what the Bill really proposed. Not that it matters, however. As the subject was not attractive, the House rapidly thinned. There, again; we are the most political people in the world, but the moment a subject is introduced which deals with the realities of life, the welfare of the millions, the case of the unemployed, the rule of India, the agricultural depression, the safety of the empire, the condition of the navy, the weakness of the army, the departure of trade, the silver question, the House is swiftly and suddenly thinned or emptied. I suppose the reason is, that the human brain can only stand a certain amount of dull speech, and that these subjects generally fall into the hands of dull and uninteresting speakers. I really do not know what this speaker said. Presently he sat down. Then Robert arose. I think I was more anxious about his success than he was himself. He was perfectly calm and self-possessed; in his hand he held a small bundle of papers; he stood before them all, a striking presence; and he began speaking slowly, with measured phrase, and with his rich, musical voice, which at once commanded attention. Of all the gifts of oratory, the most useful is a rich and flexible voice. Then his first speech, of three weeks ago, now almost forgotten, was again remembered; and the House became quickly filled again.

He spoke on a labour question, from his own point of view, as one who was at once a craftsman and an employer. 'I am, myself,' he said, with the pride of a duke, and the appearance of a gentleman of ancient lineage—'I am, myself, a Master Craftsman.'

Then he proceeded, from his own experience, and from quotations from Blue-books, to marshal his facts, and to set forth his arguments. I did not listen: it was enough for me to let that rolling music of his voice play about my ears: and to watch its effects upon the faces below. Could he grip those faces? He could. Could he move those faces? He could. The average Parliamentary face is singularly cold. One might as well expect that one wave out of all the others could move a hard rock. Yet Robert moved that rocky face. Could he make those faces smile? He could.

I think, not being a critic, that my cousin, like Mr Gladstone, possessed the wonderful gift of being able to invest the baldest facts and the most intricate figures with interest and charm. Like a novelist, he made them personal. He connected figures with men, and brought facts into touch with humanity. And this he did, as it seemed, spontaneously, without effort or any appearance of lecturing. In the House of Commons a man must not be a lecturer, but an orator. The lecturer is necessarily a critic or a teacher. As lecturer, without imagination, he explains carefully how the orator, the poet, the novelist, the dramatist, produces his effects. He knows exactly, and can tell all the world how it is done—the trick of it. Yet he cannot produce the thing himself. Therefore he is of no use in the House. The orator, poet, dramatist, novelist, on the other hand, produces these effects continually. Yet he cannot tell you how he does it.

Robert, then, had this gift of making things attractive. He spoke for an hour or more. The members remained in respectful silence until he worked them up into producing their signs of approbation, of which the House is never chary when it is moved.

Lady Frances gave a dinner party—a political

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dinner—at which some of the heads of the Party were present. And she invited Robert. Among her guests was old Lord Caerleon, to whom he had already been introduced. It was a large party, and Robert's place was down below, among the younger men, who were civil to him. But, of course, in the conversation, it was impossible for him not to feel that he was an outsider.

After dinner, however, Lord Caerleon again talked with him apart. He talked as one who knows the game, and as one who has played it, and now looked on rather tired of it.

'I have read your speeches, Mr Burnikel,' he said, much as a schoolmaster may speak of a boy's set of verses. 'As reported they were fair. I am told that they produced—ah!—some effect upon the House. It is said you have a good delivery, and a good voice. Is that so?'

'It is so,' said Robert calmly. 'I have a good voice by nature, and a good delivery by art.'

'Yes.' Lord Caerleon looked just a little astonished at a young man who thus immodestly claimed these gifts. 'A good voice is a great thing. You have begun well, Mr Burnikel. But a good beginning, in the House, counts for nothing. The House is filled, to me, with the ghosts of men who, in my recollection, made a good beginning.'

'I have made a good beginning, Lord Caerleon; and, with your permission, I intend not to become a ghost at all.'

'Very good. Very good, indeed. But, Mr Burnikel, how are you going to get on? Permit me—I understand for some mysterious reasons of your own, you still wish to be considered an Independent member. You told me so, if I remember rightly, in this house two or three weeks ago.'

'That is so. I am returned by my constituents as an Independent member.'

'I don't think it matters much what they think. But I suppose you talked the usual stuff—voting to order, no conscience, changing opinions, and the rest of it.'

'All the rest of it,' said Robert quietly.

'Of course you did. Now then, Mr Burnikel, let us go into the question of Party for a few minutes—not the whole question of Party, on which you have read—or ought to have read—your Constitutional History—but that part of the question that affects you personally.'

'You do me great honour.'

'I talk to you, sir, because I think that you may possibly—I don't know—turn out an acquisition to either party. Otherwise, of course, one cannot at my age, and with my experience, pretend to take the least interest in the average member. I take the personal side, then. You propose, I believe, to make a career in politics.'

'I do.'

'Lady Frances tells me—you told me so yourself, if I remember rightly—that you are extremely ambitious. I am pleased to hear it. Well, you cannot be too ambitious. Get me a chair: I think I will sit down. So—thank you. Ambition,' he went on, 'the desire for personal distinction, is one of the finest gifts that a boy can receive. I always had it. You would, I daresay, if we were to compare symptoms, and if you were dissected, present the same phenomena. And my highest ambitions have been gratified, but not satiated. Believe me, sir, the ambitious man enjoys the winning of every step—one after the other; he is never satiated; he can never say "enough."'

'Well, sir,' said Robert, 'you have never had occasion to regret having embarked upon this splendid career. You have been First Lord of the Treasury. Well, my lord, what you desired and attained, that I have the audacity also to desire. Perhaps I shall attain it.'

'Not if you continue in your present course. The one condition which was imposed upon me is also imposed upon you. You must rise in the customary manner by becoming a faithful servant of your Party.'

'That we will see,' said Robert, obstinate and incredulous.

'How then do you propose to climb? My dear sir, before you rises an inaccessible precipice. There are only two ladders. Would you fly?'

'I wish to climb by doing good work.'

'My case, too—exactly my case. I kept on saying that while I was at Oxford. It is really a very fine thing to think, though it is a very foolish and, indeed, a boyish thing to say. Mr Burnikel, there is only one possible way of climbing; and that is by one of the only two ladders. No other way exists—believe me, young man. If there were any other way it would have been found out long ago.'

'There was the case of John Bright.'

'He had to join the Party, remember. John Bright was in every way exceptional; he wanted neither money, nor place, nor power, nor rank. You, I should imagine, want everything.'

Robert was silent.

'So that's settled. If you want to climb, enter by the usual gate, and you will find the ladder waiting for you. Let us pass on to consider the noble work by which you desire to make a mark in history. Noble work, for a politician, means great and beneficent measures. You, as an Independent member, would never be able to pass any considerable measure: not any single measure of the least importance. Why? because all great measures are adopted, as soon as it is found possible to pass them, by the Government. As for moving public opinion so as to make these measures possible, that is done by essayists, leader writers, authors, poets, dramatists, and other intelligent persons, who nowadays prevent a Minister from being original in his ideas. You, as an Independent member, would have no chance at all—not the least ghost of a chance—even of introducing a Bill.'

'I always thought'——

'Think so no longer. Look about you, and face the facts. They are these. An Independent member, whatever he could formerly accomplish, which wasn't much, will never more be able to introduce or to pass any measure, good or bad; he can never become a leader in the House; he can never have the least chance of proving himself a statesman: all he can hope to do is to get the House to listen to him, and through the House, the outside world;

and believe me, sir, on the most favourable condition possible, you will never, as an Independent member, acquire half, or a quarter of the influence over your country that is enjoyed by an anonymous leader writer on a great daily paper.'

Robert made no reply.

'Will such a position content you, sir? Does such a position gratify your ambitions? Why, you have just told me what they are. Pray, sir,' Lord Caerleon looked up sharply with his keen eyes under his shaggy eyebrows, 'will this content you?'

'No; it will not.'

'Let us go on, then. You have told me that you have been pleased, in the education of your Shadwell constituents, to speak of party allegiance as a slavery, a stifling of conscience, a suppression of manhood, and so on. You did talk like this?'

'Certainly. It is the only way of talking.'

'So you think. Now let us look at it in this way. There is a party which in the main clings to the old things, and only admits change when new and irresistible forces command change. There is another party which is always desiring change, because they think that things might look prettier, or because things would be more logical, or because things might help the people, or themselves, by being changed. In the main, every measure belongs to one or other of these parties. Is not that so?'

'Perhaps.'

'Every measure which is brought forward by one or other of the two sides, has been talked about, advocated, discussed in newspapers, in magazines—everywhere—long before. It is brought forward at last when one party has made up its mind to support it, and the other to oppose it. The House is divided into two camps, in which are the two armies. The Bill is proposed and meets its fate. All is done in order, according to the rules of the game. You understand?'

'Of course.'

'What would you have? A House filled with a mob of six hundred undisciplined separate individuals—all clamouring together—all fighting to bring forward some fad and fancy of their own. What a House would that be? What kind of legislation would you expect of such a House?'

Robert, at the moment, could suggest no kind of legislation.

'Suppose you think over the matter from this point of view, Mr Burnikel. Construct, that is, in your imagination, the House filled with Independent members and see how it will work. Oblige me by doing this.'

Robert bowed gravely.

'I daresay that you have already recognised this view of the question. But there are times when the mind seems more especially open to the apprehension of plain truths. This is perhaps one of those occasions. The very name of Lady Frances fills one with the idea of Party.'

'I will, at least, consider your view.'

'Well—and now, Mr Burnikel, I want to speak quite plainly, and, I take it, you are not a man to be offended with plain speech. Very good. You are not a rich man, I believe; nor a man of family.'

'I have already told you that I am a boat-builder—a Master Craftsman, and my income is small.'

'I have heard as much. Well: your birth and position should be no bar to your ambitions. You have heard that I began with much the same disadvantage. You will very soon find your way about: you are in excellent hands so long as Lady Frances takes an interest in you: and I hope that you will discover, as I did, that this is the very best country in the world for a young man of ability, and courage, and ambition.' He rose from the chair. 'So, I have said nearly all I wished to say.'

'Thank you,' said Robert humbly. He was touched by the comparison of the man who had succeeded with himself and his own case.

'Not quite all. Some of the people think that you may possibly be a coming man. I'm sure I don't know.' Lord Caerleon, who had worked himself up into some eagerness, became all at once limp and tired. 'There are too many wrecks. I have had too many disappointments. But—I say—I don't know. Anything may happen. I don't think I could have made such a clever speech as yours of the other day. I don't know. Anyhow, we are watching you. And—I don't know—it depends entirely on your own ability and common-sense. I believe you may find friends and backers—when you give up nonsense, and are content to play the game according to the rules. Good-evening, Mr Burnikel.'

He inclined his head with dignity; the interview was at an end.

'I was very glad,' said Lady Frances, after this conversation, 'to see Lord Caerleon talking so long and so earnestly with you. It is a sign that he takes a personal interest in you. Believe me, Mr Burnikel, it is a great honour to have been able to interest that old Parliamentary hand.'

'I am indeed very much obliged to him for the trouble he took to convert me to his views.'

'I will tell you a secret, as people always say when they tell a thing that everybody knows. Lord Caerleon came here this evening on purpose to meet you, and have the talk with you.'

'Did he, really?' Robert, who was not to be dazzled, blushed like a girl.

'Let us talk again about this subject, Mr Burnikel. I cannot talk freely to-night. Come to-morrow afternoon—it is not my day—and we will consider the thing calmly, and from your own personal point of view. Oh! I understand it perfectly—but ambition—Mr Burnikel—ambition must use the appointed ways. We belong to our own generation: we are subject to the conditions of our time: and—*enfin*—you must not waste what might be—and shall be—a great career, for the sake of a visionary scruple.'

Robert departed in a thoughtful mood. The observations made by the noble Lord went straight home. If, by remaining an Independent member, he obtained neither power nor place, nor even the introduction of the great, remarkable, never-before-imagined measures of which,

in ignorance of his possibilities, he had vaguely dreamed, he might as well keep out of Parliament altogether, and go on haranguing the working-men of Shadwell.

The day after this dinner, Frances wrote me a letter.

'I had on the table a copy of the *Morning Herald*. It contained a leader against him and his last speech. Quite a leader of the old stamp; I had thought the trick of writing such leading articles was gone. Every sentence perverted; every phrase misinterpreted, and made to mean something different. A masterpiece of party malignity, a leading article, in fact, that cannot fail to do our friend all the good in the world.

'I handed him the paper. He had not yet seen it. Well, you would hardly believe that a real politician could be so young and so foolish. He actually flew into a rage over it; he lost, for a moment, command of himself.

'"My dear friend," I said, "the thing is so exaggerated that I thought you had written it yourself."

'"Written it myself? Myself?"

'"Written it yourself. Don't you understand, Mr Burnikel, that what the young politician wants, is plenty of abuse from the other side. There is a story of a certain aged statesman who very kindly advanced a young man of the opposite bench, in whom he took a fatherly interest, by personally abusing him for a whole twelve months. In three years that young man was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Now, if we could only find some good man on the other side to abuse you—it is difficult, but it might be done."

'"Rise through abuse?"

'"Certainly, I will tell you why. First, because it keeps people talking of you, thinking of you, and giving you increased importance in the Party; and next, because the abuse is always grossly exaggerated, and people compare it with your printed utterances. If you were rich enough, you might pay a journalist so much a year to abuse you twice a week!"

'He threw down the paper. "Mean artifice!" he cried. "Does this also belong to Party?"

'(Eleven o'clock).

'I have just opened a note from him. He has joined us. Yes. The Independent member has vanished.

'"Dear Lady Frances," he says, "I have thought over what you said this afternoon; you have convinced and converted me. I am now quite sure that the only way of working the machinery of Government is by means of Party. You have shown me that I have been quite wrong. I shall join your Party as one of its private soldiers, and I shall set myself to learn the obedience and discipline of which you spoke." There, George, I have converted him. Now it was not by my arguments at all, but by those of Lord Caerleon that he was converted. There were all the signs of conviction on his face last night after that conversation. I thought, indeed, of inviting him to sit down on the stool of repentance before the world. But do you think he is capable of confessing himself converted by a man? Never. By a woman, perhaps, although he is too much absorbed in his own ambition to think much about women. Never by a man. I am contented, however, with my share of the work. You made your cousin a gentleman, my dear George. You gave him manners. At first, I plainly see, he was probably little better than a self-satisfied prig of the boorish sort; a lower middle-class, prejudiced, book-learned, ignorant prig; yet with wonderful capacities. I shall make him a model statesman of the modern kind. What else can we, between us, do for him?'

'Well, my dear Frances,' I said to myself, folding up the letter, 'the next thing you might do for him—if you would, just to oblige me—is to make him a model husband, and so get him out of my way.'

## SOME FACTS ABOUT THE OPIUM HABIT.

WHETHER or not the recent Royal Commission on opium has satisfied any one, it has at least supplied the public with information which is interesting, even if it is disproportionate to the time and labour involved in collecting it. The Commission opened its inquiry on 8th September 1893, and its Report is dated 16th April 1895. It visited Calcutta, Patna, Benares, Lucknow, Ambala, Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Jeypore, Ajmer, Indore, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Bombay, and Burma. It examined seven hundred and twenty-three witnesses—four hundred and sixty-six Indians and Chinese, and two hundred and fifty-seven Europeans—of all sorts and conditions, from missionaries down to Lieutenant-governors. And, finally, it produced seven solid volumes of report and connected papers. It is not proposed in the present article to reopen the discussion of the many vexed questions which the Commission may fairly be held to have closed; but simply to glean a few grains of information which may make some aspects of the question plainer, or, at least, throw a little light on the habits of life of those vast masses of our fellow-men, with whom we westerns have scarcely anything in common, save the most general attributes of humanity.

In the first place, what is opium? It is a very common *materia medica*. Its name is in common use, nearly always with a sinister meaning. For we think of De Quincey, driven to the habit of opium-taking by toothache, and continuing it, till he drank in one day a number of wine-glasses of laudanum, which we will not mention for fear of falling under the condemnation of the Psalmist. Or we think of Coleridge's splendid genius sapped and spoiled by it. Or we think of the even more melancholy *morphinomanie* of the dainty Parisian ladies who figure in the pages of M. Hervieu. And then we are, and naturally, filled with righteous indignation, and talk about Our National Crime. But let us first of all see

what opium is. Every one knows that it is an extract prepared from the juice of the poppy head, and most people know that its characteristic element is morphine. Opium is, as a matter of fact, a substance containing some eighteen active principles, sixteen of which—though they have very high-sounding names—are of no consequence. We need only consider the two chief constituents, morphine and anarcotine. The latter is an alkaloid of the nature of quinine, and with the same tonic qualities: it is commonly called *narcotine*, but as it contains no narcotic properties, the name is misleading, and should be abandoned. The percentage of morphine and anarcotine in the three chief kinds of opium in use in the world is shown in the following table:

| | Morphia. | Anarcotine. |
|---|---|---|
| Patna Opium | 3·98 | 6·36 |
| Malwa " | 4·61 | 5·14 |
| Smyrna " | 8·27 | 1·94 |

This consideration reveals two interesting facts. The opium which is in medical use in Europe is Smyrna opium; that from which almost all the drinking and smoking extracts in use in India are prepared, is Patna opium. In other words, De Quincey's opium contains at least *twice as much morphia* as ordinary Indian opium. And further experiments made by the Government Analyst at Hongkong—and published in the *Gazette of India*—tend to show that in China at all events—where, however, opium is habitually smoked, not drunk—the morphine is not the element for the sake of which the drug is taken. For it was found that Indian opium—which has the lowest percentage of morphine—is the most highly prized, and a smoker of nine years' standing, to whom various samples were submitted, without any remark, for his opinion, pronounced against those which contained twenty to twenty-five per cent. of morphine, in favour of those containing the lowest percentage. The conclusion is, that we must not judge entirely by De Quincey.

The other fact is even more interesting. In 1857 it occurred to Dr Palmer at Ghazipur to treat malarial fever with anarcotine instead of with quinine. He was markedly successful, and the drug is now in common use as an antiperiodic. But, as we have seen, the characteristic of Indian opium is the preponderance in it of precisely this element. Can we then infer that opium is a prophylactic against malarial fever? To a certain extent we can, for statistics show that those who take daily forty-five grains and upwards of opium, take enough anarcotine thereby to protect them absolutely against malarial poison, while any one taking over sixteen grains will be more or less fortified. It may be mentioned, also, that the morphine element contributes its share as a prophylactic. In the light of these facts, it is interesting to note that in many districts opium-consumption bears a close relation to the greater or less prevalence of malaria. In Assam, for example, in the damp and low-lying country on both banks of the Brahmaputra, the average annual consumption, per head, is three hundred and fifty-seven grains, the average for the whole province being one hundred and forty-one: and in the Bhagalpur district of the Patna division, the most malarious part has forty-two per cent. of the opium shops of the district for only twenty-seven per cent. of the population. One of the medical witnesses gave the following lively description of the conditions of life in Eastern Bengal. 'When a man wants to build a house, he first of all digs a tank, and with the earth from which he has dug the tank he raises a mound, and on the top of that mound he places his house. The elevation of that mound depends entirely upon the height to which the annual floods rise. The floods rise with fair regularity; but sometimes they go two or three inches higher than the average, and then the inhabitants of those houses have to live on rafts inside their houses, and their cattle are tethered up to their bellies in water. These people have generally no boats. They paddle about on rafts made of the plantain-tree, and the boys go to school in what I call wash-hand basins. They are earthen *gumlas*—earthenware pots. The boy squats at the bottom of the gumla, and paddles to school.' These poor people are often five miles from their nearest neighbour, and some two millions of them are dependent for qualified medical aid on a single European doctor with one assistant. What wonder that opium is their household remedy, and that, when a man, disabled by malarial fever, finds that a dose of a quarter or half a grain of pure opium makes him a new man, and enables him to do the day's work without which his family would starve, he takes it.

One of the commonest uses of opium in India, and one which most strongly offends western sentiment, is its administration to infants and very young children. The evidence, given to the Commission, went to show that between sixty and ninety per cent. of the infants are dosed with it. 'The practice,' says Sir W. Roberts, 'is begun in the first few weeks or months of life, sometimes even from birth, and is continued up to the end of the second or third year. The dose is usually one-sixteenth to one-twelfth of a grain to begin with, and this is gradually increased to a quarter or half a grain, and even to one or two grains, according to the age and necessities of the child.' Sometimes it is given in the form of a pill, sometimes a sucking mother smears it on her nipple. It is given partly as a remedy for the ailments of infancy, partly to keep the child quiet. One witness gives this quite Theocritean picture of peasant life: 'A peasant woman who has to work in the fields gives her child some opium, and puts him in a basket in the corner of the hut, or, perhaps, she takes her child with her to the field, and puts him in a small basket and gives him a little opium to keep him quiet.' Fatalities and cases of poisoning rarely occur, and it should be carefully borne in mind that this practice is discontinued usually at the third year, and certainly at the fifth, and has no connection with the habit which may or

may not be formed when the child is grown up.

But opium is not only used as a medicine. It has what may be called its society use, and it is of course against this that the anti-opium movement is chiefly directed. We do not propose to discuss the matter, but simply to collect a few facts as to the occasions on which it is polite, indeed indispensable, to take opium. First of all, let it be remembered that, whereas in China opium is habitually smoked, in India it is usually drunk, and the habit of smoking it is, even by those who drink it, looked down upon as disreputable and demoralising. Its use in connection with ceremonials is commonest in the Native States, and especially among the Rajputs and allied castes. It is there an invariable feature of all the great occasions of life—betrothals, weddings, birth of a male child, first shaving of a male child's head, for twelve days after death, at reconciliations, &c. For instance, at the betrothal ceremony, it takes the place of our wedding-cake. It is provided by the bride's family, and consumed first by the bridegroom, and then by the whole company, who drink it from the palm of the host's hand. No reconciliation of enemies is possible without it: 'If either of the two parties decline to take opium, it is understood that he is not disposed to abide by his promises.' In some castes letters are begun with a prayer 'asking the addressee to take, on the writer's account, double the quantity of his daily allowance.' 'When a respectable old man dies, the use of opium in honour of his memory is indispensable. During the first eleven days after his death, when the people from the surrounding villages come in crowds to offer condolence, *kasumbha*—a decoction of opium—has to be supplied to them and their servants.' Afterwards, on the thirtieth day, a great entertainment is given, and the host's credit is proportionate to the amount of opium he distributes. Of its use on such occasions, the Maharaja of Durbhanga in his note very judiciously says that to stop it 'would be not only an unnecessary restriction on the freedom of the subject, but it might, and, I think, would, lead also to the increased consumption of alcohol. This fear was expressed by a great number of witnesses.'

Few points brought to light by the Commission are more remarkable than the conflict of opinion which exists as to the relative injuriousness of opium-smoking and drinking when carried to excess. As has already been observed, the former is the fashion in China, the latter in India, and the medical evidence varies with the fashion. It is true that Sir W. Roberts says that 'it cannot be taken to have been adequately proved that moderate opium-smoking, taken by itself, and apart from its surroundings, and from disease or semi-starvation, has any prejudicial effect on health.' Yet 'opium-smoking was strongly denounced before the Commission by Indian witnesses of all classes, many of whom were not opposed to the use of crude opium in the form of pills as a stimulant or restorative.' The opinion of medical and other officers in the farther east was almost unanimous in favour of smoking. 'I always consider that one dram swallowed will require the same treatment as three drams smoked,' writes an English doctor of twenty years' experience at Chefoo. But it seems to be universally admitted that smoking is the more *seductive* habit, which doubtless accounts for its prevalence among the Chinese. In this connection we cannot do better than quote the words of Mr Allen, Consul at Chefoo, words which will add to the desire felt by so many for the opening up and development of China by one of the Western powers: 'I firmly believe that the abuse of opium-smoking is an effect of evil, not a cause; a punishment, not a vice. Consequently, the remedies for the evils of opium-smoking to excess will be found, not by restricting or forbidding the opium trade, but by promoting among the Chinese a healthier state of things, material, mental, and moral, and thereby dissipating those feelings of *ennui* and discontent which produce the desire for the delights of opium.'

## THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

### CHAPTER II.

THE coach was crawling softly up the hill. In daylight half of the passengers would have walked up the ascent which was within a short distance of Duntrum, but they were all benumbed with the cold and the darkness, which was so intense that John, when he looked out, could see nothing but the white speck of the lamp, travelling along a black line which might be a hedge or a wall, and was only visible as the light passed over it. It was like putting out his head into some awful abyss of nothing, his eyes hurting him in this black gloom which abolished them and their use. The big vehicle groaning under its burden crept on, labouring like some huge animal, jingling, creaking, reluctant, going on through the cold and the dark.

John shouted 'Stop! Stop!' with a stentorian voice. 'A lady has fallen out of the coach! A passenger has fallen out of the coach!' he shouted, repeating it again and again, then opening the door, got out himself, dropping upon the invisible road. But it was not till some minutes later that the coach could be brought to a standstill, and he could get possession of one of the lamps, tearing it out of its place.

'She must be lying in the road,' he said; 'she was an old woman unable to walk.' He held the lamp to the ground as if at any moment he might tread her underfoot. By this time other dark figures were detaching themselves from amidst their heaped-up wraps from the top of the coach and jumping down, stamping their feet upon the iron and ice of the frozen ruts.

'What is it? Who is it? An old body? Bless us all, an old body. She will just get her death!' There was a chorus of voices and

of warm breath going up on the still air. The guard and John, each with a lamp, walked down to the bottom of the hill, accompanied vaguely by several scarcely decipherable attendants.

'I fell asleep,' he said, explaining himself to the night, scarcely conscious of any auditor, 'and then she was sitting there close up in the corner, as she had been since we left Edinburgh, and would never speak: but when I woke up, the door was wide open, swinging, and there was nobody'—— He added, after a moment, as if he had suddenly discovered that face: 'Some woman passing on the road shut to the door with a bang: and that woke me.' It seemed to him as he related this that he was telling an incident in a dream: and yet he was sure it was quite true.

'A woman on the road; did you see a woman on the road? there's few foot-passengers here at this hour of the night,' said the guard.

'I saw her as clear as I see you.' He held up his lamp instinctively to the face of the other which was bent like his own on the ground.

'One of you,' cried the guard, 'hurry up the hill and stop her if she's gone that way. She canna have gone far on this steep road. Stop her and see what she knows.'

But no wayfarer was found on the ascending road, nor could all the light of the lamps find any trace of any one who had fallen. The inhabitants of the first wayside cottage at the foot of the hill were imperiously knocked up by the guard and put upon the trace.

'We canna stop the coach whatever happens,' he cried, 'but we'll send out a search party from Duntrum immediate. How long were you sleepin'?' he added peremptorily to John, who looked at his watch in the light of the lamp and answered:

'Perhaps an hour.'

'An hour is a long time,' said the guard, knitting his brows. 'As far back as the brig we would be then, and at a smart pace, for the horses, poor things, scented their stables. Take your lantern, lad, if you have one, and go as far as that.—Ou ay, ye'll be paid, you needna be feared for that. Will ye come, sir, or bide? I daurna stop the coach.'

John looked into the blankness of darkness before him and shivered, but it was not this only that moved him. He felt certain that the catastrophe, whatever it was, must have happened within a much shorter time than an hour, that it had just occurred, indeed, when he woke, and when the sudden blast of the cold wind roused him with its searching chill. He felt convinced that he and his companions had already come to the furthest limits in which the accident, if it was an accident, could have occurred. His head was confused with the effort to find an explanation. What was it? After searching so far, he became convinced that the clue was not to be found on the road. Where then was it to be found? He made no answer either to this question in his own mind or to the guard, but turned back, leaving the others with the sleepy and startled cottagers, father and son, who had been roused from their beds, for it was already late, and were reluctantly accepting the directions of the guard, whose red coat made a spot like a fire in the darkness, lighted up by the lantern which he had attached to his belt. John turned back and began to reclimb the hill, throwing the flash of his lamp on every roughness of the road, and making his way back to where the coach smoked into the night, the breath of the passengers and the emanations from the horses forming a mist of life, which rose dim yet consolatory across the light of the lamp in the midst of that chill of winter and darkness. As he came up to it his foot caught upon something almost under the hindmost wheel, and he gave a loud cry, which brought every one on foot around him. He set down his lamp on the frozen ground, and they all clustered over it in a circle. It was the heavy bundle of the mail-bags strapped together, one end of the leather strap still entangled with the step of the coach. The guard pulled them up with an exclamation.

'Dod! she's trailed the mails with her,' and then he too uttered a cry, which was fierce with instant terror and dismay. 'But where's the bag from Dunscore?'

The two lamps were immediately fixed upon this new problem, and their light shone upon a circle of faces, the guard's blanched with sudden alarm, all turned towards that dark mass gleaming with its metal clasps.

'It's come loose,' said one voice; 'it'll be on the road.'

'Bah! a wheen letters,' said another; 'you'll no stop us in the cold for that.'

'It's just a simple accident,' said the third. But the guard held up to the light the ends of a strap cut through, clean and clear, evidently by some very sharp instrument.

'It's been nae woman, it's been some robber in disguise, it's been a got-up thing,' he cried, throwing a glance of suspicion at John who stood aghast, holding the lamp unconsciously quite close to the bundle of the mail-bags, and gazing at them as if there was something there that could elucidate the mystery. He began to put one thing to another confusedly in his mind.

'A got-up thing. Could it be a got-up thing? It was a woman certainly,' he said to himself but aloud, 'a woman certainly, and a small woman.'

'Maybe a laddie in a woman's dress,' said an officious bystander.

'Were there mony letters in't?' said another, with unseasonable curiosity.

'And what,' said another authoritatively, 'had the mail-bags to do in the inside of the coach?'

This question made a silence in the group, which the guard broke suddenly and loudly.

'Get back to your seats,' he said, 'and Jamie, push them to their stiffest, those beasts of yours: this has to be seen into. It's robbery on the Queen's highway,' he said, with a vague threat which cowed them all.

John got to the lodging which had been prepared for him, with a much perplexed and disturbed brain. It annoyed him beyond reason to think he had perhaps taken a mis-

chievous boy for a lady, and wasted his polite attentions upon a young thief; yet perhaps, because he did not wish to believe this, this became an idea quite impossible to him after a little thought. He could not quite tell how he came to the conclusion, but he felt perfectly confident that a woman it was, perhaps not an invalid, as appeared, nay, certainly not an invalid; he remembered now the swift movement of surprise she had made when he suddenly opened the door on her side with the soup he had taken such trouble to get for her. She had flung herself aside from the door, but it was a woman's movement, not that of a boy. And then the woman's face at the opened door, looking in one moment from outside, closing it with such a hasty bang. No doubt of that being a woman's face, a young face, a pretty face, in a glow of colour as he remembered it. Could that be the wrapped-up old rheumatic person with the poultice on her cheek? His heart gave a jump partly of self-derision, the dolt he had been! not to discover a bonnie lass even underneath the mountain of veils and wraps. He could have sworn that not the cleverest should have so taken him in. But why, after all, should that be *her?* Most likely it was somebody passing, a country maid on the road, good-natured, giving a push to the open door as she passed. Would a fugitive have shut it with a clang like that? Not likely!

John was very ready for his supper and for his bed afterwards, being young and healthy: but his sleep was very broken, and that woman's face kept looking in upon him, from between the curtains and behind the door, at every turn and toss. He began to see it, better than he had done in the real moment of seeing it; a pretty face, rather redder than was consistent with his idea of beauty, with a curious flash in the eyes, and anxious lines in the forehead. He saw it perfectly clear in those visions of the night, the hair dark and ruffled, a hood half drawn over the head, the lips apart. No doubt at all that it was a pretty face. And he remembered she glanced at him with a sort of laugh about the corners of her mouth, which changed to a look of fright as she saw him wake up. He had not thought of it at first, but certainly that was her expression, and the clang with which the door closed was probably due to that surprise. Was this the old woman with the rheumatics in her head? Could it be she who had squeaked and stormed at him, and ordered him to 'snoozle?' He kept going over and over it in his broken sleep, seeing her more clearly every time he woke, reading more and more meaning in the details of her face which came to him one by one. Were the eyes blue or brown? Was the ruffled hair light or dark? He could not make out those most essential details, yet he thought he should recognise her wherever he saw her. The glimpse he had got of her in reality seemed nothing to the light upon her which came from his dreams. It was like seeing her again and again, and getting familiar with her face. He thought that if he ever saw it again, it would haunt him all his life. But he should see it again, of that he was determined. Then he suddenly thought to himself with a gleam of surprised pleasure what a good thing it was, after all, that he had come to Duntrum! This seemed all at once to him a good, a delightful, a most entertaining and charming thing, but, I fear, he would have been quite at a loss, if he had been asked for an explanation, to say why.

The incident, as was natural, made a great noise in the country, and there was an examination held before the sheriff at which John was the principal witness. He described the old body to the great amusement of all present, the lump on her cheek, and white edge of the plaster in which it was tied up, just showing beyond the great black muffler in which her face was enveloped, the Spanish veil, with large thick silken flowers, between the interstices of which only the fact that there was a face could be discovered, the shrill strange voice which he now felt to be assumed. And, finally, the young face that had appeared at the window.

'You were awoke by it—by what?' said the questioner, 'by the sharp closing of the door?'

'Yes,' said John.

'Then, if the noise only woke you, how could you see the face of the person who made it?'

'No, it was not the noise,' said John, 'it was the blast of the cold air coming in: and then the face appeared in the open, against the night, looking up a little, catching the light of the lamp. For a moment it moved with the coach, then the door was shut.'

'Moved with the coach?' said the interrogator. 'Do you mean she was walking by the side?'

'I begin to think,' said John slowly, 'that she must have been on the step: then dropped out of sight, and shut the door.'

'Are you sure, Mr Percival,' said the sheriff, 'that the pretty face at the door was not a dream? We all know that pretty faces are part of young men's dreams: and you are not sure at which moment you awoke.'

'I did not say,' said John, 'that it was a pretty face.'

'Ah!' said the sheriff.

'Still it is true: it was so: and young: but it was not a dream. I saw the lady quite clearly.'

'It was a lady, then? You thought at first it might be a country lass passing.'

'I am not sure that it was a lady,' said John, 'but I certainly think so—I'—— He paused, then with a slight start of astonishment, seemed to stop an exclamation that was on his lips.

'What is the matter?' cried his questioner. 'You are not so sure as you were that you saw any young woman at all?'

'I am perfectly sure—on my oath, and with complete recollection of what happened, that I saw,' cried John, 'exactly what I have said, a young woman with a great deal of expression in her face, and a hood on her head, looking in at me for a moment through the open door.' He did not look at the sheriff as he spoke, but strained his eyes, interrogating the faces before him between the table at which he stood and the door. His heart had not

quieted yet from that start, though his mind had. He had thought he saw her again, the same face, and had been startled, and then had said to himself how unlikely it was, and looking again had found there was no such thing before him, among the score or two of people who had assembled in the room. There were very few women at all: it must have been a temporary illusion, for certainly now there was no one visible who resembled that face at all: but his heart continued to beat, though he succeeded in quieting his mind and reason as I have described.

Many curious things happened in connection with this mystery. The letters which had been posted in Dunscore on that night—as was proved by the postmarks—almost without exception reached their destination within a day or two, but with the Edinburgh postmark added to that of Dunscore. There was an exception, and that was one letter addressed to the Duntrum Bank, in which John by this time had taken his place, a favoured supernumerary, with all the prestige of his Edinburgh antecedents and connection, to learn the country work. It was curious that the incident with which his name was already associated, and which formed so remarkable a part of his scanty and young experience, should thus be brought under his notice again. He heard nothing else spoken of for the first month, at least, of his dwelling in Duntrum. The one lost letter was from a small bank in the little town of Dunscore. It had enclosed several bank bills to be collected and other papers of commercial value, and was in fact, perhaps, the only important missive in the stolen bag, judging from a commercial point of view. From the discussions in the bank where he acquired the last information on the subject, John learnt that various unfortunate persons had reason to rejoice over the loss of this letter. Two or three poor men almost bankrupt had their ruin staved off for a moment, and the dread period of protested bills and mercantile dishonour deferred at least for a time: and there were many whisperings and questions whether any of the persons concerned could have been capable of so bold a stroke. But even the inventive genius of a country town, always so bold in attributing guilt, could not come to any agreement in respect to this. It could not even be said that any one was suspected. The thing had been accomplished so mysteriously in such a complete way, without leaving a trace, that the local inquisition was completely baffled. John found with mingled annoyance and relief that his own vision of the young woman at the coach door was not relied upon. He had probably dreamt it, most people thought. Like the sheriff, the community concluded that it was nothing wonderful if a young man suddenly awakened should think he saw a girl's face; probably he had been dreaming about some particular girl. And in those days the hypothesis of a woman having done any deed of note was rarely accepted and with difficulty. The natural rôle of the woman in those days was to keep quiet and behind backs. She was not suspected of taking any leading part. The wrapped-up invalid in the country whom the guard and several other persons besides John had seen, must have been a man in this disguise everybody was certain. It was not a thing that could have been done by a woman. No, no; no woman could have had the nerve to do it, the people in Duntrum said.

All these things John Percival turned over in his mind, and examined as much as he had the opportunity of doing. He listened to all the gossip about all the persons concerned, and especially of those who might be supposed to be advantaged by the loss of the mail-bag, with very keen interest, and formed within himself one hypothesis after another, several of which perished in the framing, so difficult was it to make the circumstances fit in. And in the meantime he himself became a personage of great importance, and much sought after in the gentlest society of Duntrum, which was understood to be very exclusive and difficult of access. John was the representative of Percival's Bank, one of the oldest establishments in Edinburgh, which was very much in his favour. And he was, besides, gifted with a story to tell, which was almost a greater recommendation. Over and over again during that winter he was required to give his famous description of his companion in the coach, of his own attempted attentions, the soup he procured in vain, the wraps that were kicked away. There was one circumstance which he never mentioned, but which touched his heart with the strangest thrill of kindness, which was that his tribute of the oranges had disappeared along with the old lady. It was as if she had not liked to hurt his feelings by rejecting his benevolences altogether. This curious experience inspired John with a slight inclination towards the dramatic which he had not been conscious of before, and almost made him believe before the season was over that perhaps if he had been left to follow his own devices, he might have been a great actor as well as a great artist or poet. At last, however, he got over his inclination to start at every girl's face he met and examine it critically on the score of a fancied likeness to the young woman of his vision. He said that most girls were like each other, as his final conclusion. They had all fine complexions in Duntrum.

Nevertheless, there was one evening at one of the many little dances that were given in that cheerful place, when John's composure was very much put to the test. He was taken to this entertainment by his own chief comrade and crony, young Maxwell, the son of the resident partner in the Duntrum Bank, who was in something of John's own position, more highly favoured than the other clerks and naturally one of the *élite*.

'Come, and I'll show you the flower of Wittisdale, the rose of Duntrum,' said this young man. 'She has been away in Edinburgh the whole winter; but mind you, none of your cantrips here. I warn you off before you see her. I'll have no interlopers cutting me out. Turn the heads of all the others if you like, with your acting and your stories, but this one is mine.'

'They are all just as like each other as apples in a basket,' said the cynic John.

Nevertheless, when he went lightly into the brightly lighted room following his friend, John in a moment felt his heart leap into his throat: for there standing a little behind the mistress of the house with a curious little air of consciousness which seemed to him to prove that she was on her guard and ready for the startled look which he gave her, full in her face as if it had been a blow—to his extreme confusion and surprise there stood suddenly before him the woman of the coach door, the woman of his dreams.

## PHOTOGRAPHY IN COLOURS.

Ever since it became possible to obtain a picture by casting an image formed by a lens on a chemical surface sensitive to light, there has existed the idea that such pictures would some day be produced endowed with all the lovely colours of nature. Even the best photograph, it must be admitted, falls very short of the original from which it was taken. In form, in perspective, it is perfect, its one shortcoming being that it is in Monochrome. If we peep beneath a photographer's focussing cloth just before he takes an outdoor picture, we shall see on the ground glass screen of the camera a very beautiful thing; a perfect image in miniature of the landscape clothed in all its natural tints. We can see the same thing on the white table of the Camera Obscura which can still be found at places of holiday resort. The Parisian scene-painter Daguerre used such an appliance to help him in his work, and it is said that his first experiments were prompted by the longing he had to make those fleeting coloured pictures permanent.

Again and again has it been asserted that the problem of photography in the colours of nature was solved. Companies have been formed to purchase secrets which were known only to one man, this individual being generally a seedy adventurer who had nothing to sell—but who recognised the value of that commercial doctrine which teaches that where there is a demand, a supply is sure to follow. Within the past twenty years half a dozen such projects have been brought before public notice; people have believed in them, and have invested their money in them, but we are still as far from Photography in the colours of nature as was Daguerre and his contemporary workers of half a century back.

It is true that advances have been made in the better rendering of coloured objects. That is to say, the photographer is now able by the means which Chemistry has placed at his disposal to render the colours of an object in their true tone relation to one another. Until quite recent years a photograph would reproduce blue as white, yellow and red as black, and would in the same way play havoc with many other colours. But this defect has been now remedied, and an oil-painting or other coloured object can be reproduced by the camera with the colours expressed by correct gradations much in the same way that a skilful engraver would translate them into Monochrome. We are also no longer bound in a photograph to one or two arbitrary tints, such as black, gray, and purple brown, but can have a photograph produced in any one colour which we may desire. Another forward step is found in the matter of permanence, so that a photograph of to-day need not be the fleeting thing that it once was, but can be made as permanent, at any rate, as the paper upon which it is supported.

But all this progress in the art, satisfactory though it be, brings us no nearer the solution of the problem of photography in the colours of nature. True it is that there are many methods by which photographs are printed in colours, and very effective some of these pictures are, but they employ coloured inks or pigments of some kind, and although they have a photographic foundation, it would be false to describe them as photographs in colour.

In the meantime, as a kind of contribution to the subject, Mr Frederick Ives of Philadelphia has produced a wonderfully clever instrument which he calls the Photochromoscope, by which the images of certain objects appear clothed in as near an approach to natural colouring as it is possible to imagine. In general appearance this instrument resembles the old-fashioned stereoscope, for it has two eyeholes, through which its mysteries are viewed. And mysterious and wonderful do the pictures shown by this apparatus appear to be, for not only are the objects coloured, but they stand out in such relief that it is difficult to realise that one cannot grasp them with the hand. But they cannot be described as photographs in colour, by which is generally meant pictures direct from the camera, in which different parts of the subject reflect to the eye the same tints as are found in the original. For Mr Ives' pictures are but illusions, visionary things which are conjured up by a combination of coloured screens, reflectors, and plain photographs obtained in a special camera. Each picture is in reality made up of six different photographs of the same object—their images being combined into one by the help of the reflectors and with the further aid of the eyes which view them. The pictures for this instrument are produced in a special form of camera, the manipulation of which will present no great difficulty. It resembles the camera used for stereoscopic work in that it has twin lenses, but here nearly all resemblance to an ordinary camera ends. It takes on one plate simultaneously three pairs of pictures, one pair selecting from the original all the red portions of the subject, another pair picking out the blue-violet portions, and the remaining pair dealing with the green parts. This is managed by coloured screens and reflectors which allow only rays of certain colours to pass them, and as a result there are produced three pairs of negatives of the same subject, each different and incomplete.

From these negative pictures positives are printed on a duplicate plate of the same size, and when these are finished and dry, the plate is cut across twice with a diamond, so that the pairs are separated into three distinct stereoscopic pictures.

We have now, so to speak, a dissected picture. We have pulled the original to pieces and have sorted out its colours into their component parts. But it must be distinctly understood that our paired positives exhibit no colour whatever; they are in sober gray, black, and white, like the ordinary product of the camera, but all the same the image in each case represents a certain colour sensation, red, green, or blue violet as the case may be; and on these plates too are registered the mixed colours of the original, each plate analysing the tints and picking out its own part of the compound colour.

According to the old theory of Brewster, the colours of the spectrum can be sorted out into primaries, secondaries, &c., the three primary colours being Red, Yellow, and Blue, the mixture of any two of these primaries producing a secondary tint, which is complimentary to the remaining primary. Thus we may mingle blue and yellow, and produce green, which is complimentary to the primary which we have left untouched—namely, red. Or we may mix red and yellow to make orange, which is complimentary to blue; or red and blue to make purple, which is complimentary to yellow. And the theory is correct so far as mere pigments are concerned, as any one can ascertain for himself by the help of a child's paint-box. But when we come to experiment with the pure light from the spectrum itself the theory falls to pieces. It was Young who first pointed out that all colour phenomena could be accounted for, by supposing that the retinal nerves were of three kinds, each being sensitive to a particular colour, one set of nerves being excited by blue violet, another by red, and the third by green, a mixed colour such as yellow exciting both the red and the green nerves in certain definite proportions. Young's theory remained in abeyance until Helmholtz and Maxwell confirmed his results, with the result that it is now generally admitted that if there be three primary colours they must be red, green, and dark blue or violet.

Mr Ives has kept the Young-Helmholtz theory constantly in view while working out the details of his Photochromoscope, and it must be admitted that practice has in this case borne out the truth of theory in a very satisfactory manner. The three pairs of photographs, obtained in the manner already described, are framed in a flexible holder so that they fold over, and embrace three sides of the Photochromoscope, which are furnished with glasses of the necessary tints. Each photograph absorbs its own proper colour sensation; and these are combined upon the retina by means of reflectors, each one adding its quota of colour to the combined picture.

A few decades back a stereoscope and its double pictures could be found in every drawing-room, and visitors never seemed to tire of looking at the resemblance to solid things thereby produced. The Photochromoscope gives the same excellent effects with the added charm of colour, and we may presume that possibly these improved pictures may become as popular as their plain predecessors. It seems certain at any rate that by means of the special camera, which will be presently introduced, any amateur photographer of intelligence will be able to take the triple negatives, and from them can prepare 'Chromograms' for insertion in the new instrument. The process is at present only applicable to such objects as will bear a somewhat long exposure; for what is commonly known as instantaneous work, it is inadmissible.

## POLITICS AND THE MAY-FLY.

By John Buchan, Author of *Sir Quixote*, &c.

The farmer of Clachlands was a Tory, stern and unbending. It was the tradition of his family, from his grandfather, who had been land-steward to Lord Manorwater, down to his father, who had once seconded a vote of confidence in the sitting member. Such traditions, he felt, were not to be lightly despised; things might change, empires might wax and wane, but his obligation continued; a sort of perverted *noblesse oblige* was the farmer's watchword in life; and by dint of much energy and bad language, he lived up to it.

As fate would have it, the Clachlands ploughman was a Radical of Radicals. He had imbibed his opinions early in life from a speaker on the green of Marchthorn, and ever since, by the help of a weekly penny paper and an odd volume of Gladstone's speeches, had continued his education. Such opinions in a conservative country-side carry with them a reputation for either abnormal cleverness or abnormal folly. The fact that he was a keen fisher, a famed singer of songs, and the best judge of horses in the place, caused the verdict of his neighbours to incline to the former, and he passed for something of an oracle among his fellows. The blacksmith, who was the critic of the neighbourhood, summed up his character in a few words. 'Him,' said he in a tone of mingled dislike and admiration, 'him! He would sweer white was black the morn, and dod! he would prove it tae.'

It so happened in the early summer, when the land was green, and the trout plashed in the river, that Her Majesty's Government saw fit to appeal to an intelligent country. Among a people whose politics fight hard with their religion for a monopoly of their interests, feeling ran high and brotherly kindness departed. Houses were divided against themselves. Men formerly of no consideration found themselves suddenly important, and discovered that their intellects and conscience, which they had hitherto valued at little, were things of serious interest to their betters. The lurid light of publicity was shed upon the lives of the rival candidates; men formerly accounted worthy and respectable

were proved no better than whited sepulchres; and each man was filled with a morbid concern for his fellow's character and beliefs.

The farmer of Clachlands called a meeting of his labourers in the great dusty barn, which had been the scene of many similar gatherings. His speech on the occasion was vigorous and to the point. 'Ye are a' my men,' he said, 'an' I'll see that ye vote richt. Ye're uneddicated folk, and ken naething aboot the matter, sae ye just tak' my word for't, that the Tories are in the richt and vote accordingly. I've been a guid maister to ye, and it's shurely better to pleesure me, than a wheen leein' scoondrels whae tramp the country wi' leather bags and printit trash.'

Then arose from the back the ploughman, strong in his convictions. 'Listen to me, you men,' says he: 'just vote as ye think best. The maister's a guid maister, as he says, but he's nocht to dae wi' your votin'. It's what they ca' inteemedation to interfere wi' onybody in this matter. So mind that, an' vote for the workin'-man an' his richts.'

Then ensued a war of violent words.

'Is this a meetin' in my barn, or a penny-waddin'?'

'Ca't what ye please. I canna let ye mislead the men.'

'Whae talks about misleadin'? Is't misleadin' to lead them richt?'

'The question,' said the ploughman solemnly, 'is what you ca' richt.'

'William Laverhope, if ye werena a guid plooman, ye wad gang post-haste oot o' here the morn.'

'I carena what ye say. I'll stand up for the richts o' thae men.'

'Men;' this with deep scorn. 'I could mak better men than thae wi' a stick oot o' the plantin'.'

'Ay, ye say that noo, an' the morn ye'll be ca'in' ilka yin o' them *Mister*, a' for their votes.'

The farmer left in dignified disgust, vanquished but still dangerous; the ploughman in triumph mingled with despair. For he knew that his fellow-labourers cared not a whit for politics, but would follow to the letter their master's bidding.

The next morning rose clear and fine. There had been a great rain for the past few days, and the burns were coming down broad and surly. The Clachlands Water was chafing by bank and bridge and threatening to enter the hay-field, and every little ditch and sheep-drain was carrying its tribute of peaty water to the greater flood. The farmer of Clachlands, as he looked over the landscape from the doorstep of his dwelling, marked the state of the weather and pondered over it.

He was not in a pleasant frame of mind that morning. He had been crossed by a ploughman, his servant. He liked the man, and so the obvious way of dealing with him—by making things uncomfortable or turning him off—was shut against him. But he burned to get the upperhand of him, and discomfit once for all one who had dared to question his wisdom and good sense. If only he could get him to vote on the other side—but that was out of the question. If only he could keep him from voting—that was possible but unlikely. He might forcibly detain him, in which case he would lay himself open to the penalties of the law, and be nothing the gainer. For the victory which he desired was a moral one, not a triumph of force. He would like to circumvent him by cleverness, to score against him fairly and honourably on his own ground. But the thing was hard, and, as it seemed to him at the moment, impossible.

Suddenly, as he looked over the morning landscape, a thought struck him and made him slap his legs and chuckle hugely. He walked quickly up and down the gravelled walk. 'Losh, it's guid. I'll dae't. I'll dae't, if the weather juist hauds.'

His unseemly mirth was checked by the approach of some one who found the farmer engaged in the minute examination of gooseberry leaves. 'I'm concerned aboot thae busses,' he was saying; 'they've been ill lookit to, an' we'll no hae half a crop.' And he went off, still smiling, and spent a restless forenoon in the Marchthorn market.

In the evening he met the ploughman, as he returned from the turnip-singling, with his hoe on his shoulder. The two men looked at one another with the air of those who know that all is not well between them. Then the farmer spoke with much humility.

'I maybe spoke raither severe yestreen,' he said. 'I hope I didna hurt your feelings.'

'Na, na! No me!' said the ploughman airily.

'Because I've been thinking ower the maitter, an' I admit that a man has a richt to his ain thochts. A'body should hae principles an' stick to them,' said the farmer, with the manner of one making a recondite quotation.

'Ay,' he went on, 'I respect ye, William, for your consistency. Ye're an example to us a'.'

The other shuffled and looked unhappy. He and his master were on the best of terms, but these unnecessary compliments were not usual in their intercourse. He began to suspect, and the farmer, who saw his mistake, hastened to change the subject.

'Graund weather for the fishin',' said he.

'Oh, is it no?' said the other, roused to excited interest by this home topic. 'I tell ye by the morn they'll be takin' as they've never ta'en this 'ear. Doon in the big pool in the Clachlands Water, at the turn o' the turnip-field, there are twae or three pounders, and aiblins yin o' twae pund. I saw them mysel' when the water was low. It's ower big the noo, but when it gangs doon the morn, and gets the colour o' porter, I'se warrant I could whup them oot o' there wi' the flee.'

'D'ye say sae,' said the farmer sweetly. 'Weel, it's a lang time since I tried the fishin', but I yince was keen on't. Come in bye, William; I've something ye micht like to see.'

From a corner he produced a rod, and handed it to the other. It was a very fine rod indeed, one which the owner had gained in a fishing competition many years before,

and treasured accordingly. The ploughman examined it long and critically. Then he gave his verdict. 'It's the brawest rod I ever saw, wi' a fine hickory butt, an' guid greenhert tap and middle. It wad cast the sma'est flee, and haud the biggest troot.'

'Weel,' said the farmer, genially smiling, 'ye have a half-holiday the morn when ye gang to the poll. There'll be plenty o' time in the evening to try a cast wi't. I'll lend it ye for the day.'

The man's face brightened. 'I wad tak it verra kindly,' he said, 'if ye wad. My ain yin is no muckle worth, and, as ye say, I'll hae time for a cast the morn's nicht.'

'Dinna mention it. Did I ever let ye see my flee-book? Here it is,' and he produced a thick flannel book from a drawer. 'There's a maist miscellaneous collection, for a' waters an' a' weathers. I got a heap o' them frae auld Lord Manorwater, when I was a laddie, and used to cairry his basket.'

But the ploughman heeded him not, being deep in the examination of its mysteries. Very gingerly he handled the tiny spiders and hackles, surveying them with the eye of a connoisseur.

'If there's anything there ye think at a' like the water, I'll be verra pleased if ye'll try't.'

The other was somewhat put out by this extreme friendliness. At another time he would have refused shamefacedly, but now the love of sport was too strong in him. 'Ye're far ower guid,' he said; 'thae twae paitrick wings are the verra things I want, an' I dinna think I've ony at hame. I'm awfu' gratefu' to ye, an' I'll bring them back the morn's nicht.'

'Guid-e'en,' said the farmer, as he opened the door, 'an' I wish ye may hae a guid catch.' And he turned in again, smiling sardonically.

The next morning was like the last, save that a little wind had risen, which blew freshly from the west. White cloudlets drifted across the blue, and the air was as clear as spring-water. Down in the hollow the roaring torrent had sunk to a full, lipping stream, and the colour had changed from a turbid yellow to a clear, delicate brown. In the town of Marchthorn, it was a day of wild excitement, and the quiet Clachlands road bustled with horses and men. The labourers in the fields scarce stopped to look at the passers, for in the afternoon they too would have their chance, when they might journey to the town in all importance, and record their opinions of the late Government.

The ploughman of Clachlands spent a troubled forenoon. His nightly dreams had been of landing great fish, and now his waking thoughts were of the same. Politics for the time were forgotten. This was the day which he had looked forward to for so long, when he was to have been busied in deciding doubtful voters, and breathing activity into the ranks of his cause. And lo! the day had come and found his thoughts elsewhere. For all such things are, at the best, of fleeting interest, and do not stir men otherwise than sentimentally; but the old kindly love of field-sports, the joy in the smell of the earth and the living air, lie very close to a man's heart. So this apostate, as he cleaned his turnip rows, was filled with the excitement of the sport, and had no thoughts above the memory of past exploits and the anticipation of greater to come.

Mid-day came, and with it his release. He roughly calculated that he could go to the town, vote, and be back in two hours, and so have the evening clear for his fishing. There had never been such a day for the trout in his memory, so cool and breezy and soft, nor had he ever seen so glorious a water. 'If ye dinna get a fou basket the nicht, an' a feed the morn, William Laverhope, your richt hand has forgot its cunning,' said he to himself.

He took the rod carefully out, put it together, and made trial casts on the green. He tied the flies on a cast and put it ready for use in his own primitive fly-book, and then bestowed the whole in the breast-pocket of his coat. He had arrayed himself in his best, with a white rose in his button-hole, for it behoved a man to be well dressed on such an occasion as voting. But yet he did not start. Some fascination in the rod made him linger and try it again and again.

Then he resolutely laid it down and made to go. But something caught his eye—the swirl of the stream as it left the great pool at the hay-field, or the glimpse of still, gleaming water. The impulse was too strong to be resisted. There was time enough and to spare. The pool was on his way to the town, he would try one cast ere he started, just to see if the water was good. So, with rod on his shoulder, he set off.

Somewhere in the background a man, who had been watching his movements, turned away, laughing silently, and filling his pipe.

A great trout rose to the fly in the hay-field pool, and ran the line up-stream till he broke it. The ploughman swore deeply, and stamped on the ground with aggravation. His blood was up, and he prepared for battle. Carefully, skilfully he fished, with every nerve on tension and ever-watchful eyes. Meanwhile, miles off in the town the bustle went on, but the eager fisherman by the river heeded it not.

. . . . .

Late in the evening, just at the darkening, a figure arrayed in Sunday clothes, but all wet and mud-stained, came up the road to the farm. Over his shoulder he carried a rod, and in one hand a long string of noble trout. But the expression on his face was not triumphant; a settled melancholy overspread his countenance, and he groaned as he walked.

Mephistopheles stood by the garden-gate, smoking and surveying his fields. A well-satisfied smile hovered about his mouth, and his air was the air of one well at ease with the world.

'Weel, I see ye've had guid sport,' said he to the melancholy Faust. 'By-the-by, I didna notice ye in the toun. And losh! man, what in the warld have ye dune to your guid claes?'

The other made no answer. Slowly he took the rod to pieces and strapped it up; he took the fly-book from his pocket; he selected two fish from the heap; and laid the whole before the farmer.

'There ye are,' said he, 'and I'm verra

much obleeged to ye for your kindness.' But his tone was one of desperation and not of gratitude; and his face, as he went onward, was a study in eloquence repressed.

## 'HARVEYISED' STEEL ARMOUR FOR THE NAVY.

Public attention has, of late, been keenly directed to the British navy, and the estimates recently advanced for its augmentation; causing the memorandum, issued by the First Lord of the Admiralty, to be scanned with even more than the usual interest. Turning to the section of that document dealing with 'Ordnance and armour plate,' we learn that during the past year 'various experimental armour plates have been submitted for purpose of trial. None of these, however, have as yet shown qualities equal to those possessed by the "Harveyised" steel armour at present used. Consequently, armour of that description is still being contracted for.'

In view of the large amount of 'Harveyised' steel being now turned out, we purpose laying before our readers some succinct account of this new material, its special properties and advantages, concluding with some brief remarks on its manufacture.

The Harvey process is one by which low grade or soft steel is converted, at moderate cost, into material possessing great decremental hardness on its face—namely, intense hardness is produced on the surface of an otherwise soft plate; the advantage of such treatment being that great resistance to penetration is secured, with an almost total absence of cracking. Had the armour plate the same intense hardness throughout as its surface, it would shatter and crack on being struck by a projectile, whereas by hardening only the face, the resistance to penetration of the face is combined with the tenacity and resistance to crack of the back, and the happy combination of great tenacity against shot, and no danger of splitting or shattering (hitherto deemed inseparable from very great hardness), is attained.

The 'Harveyising' of plates is performed by taking ordinary armour plates and planing one surface. The plate is then placed in a special furnace, with the planed surface upwards, and covered with a layer of animal charcoal, equal in thickness to itself; another plate is then laid with its planed surface downwards on the animal charcoal, which thus forms a sandwich between the two armour plates. Both plates are then completely covered in sand, and the furnace being closed, heat is applied, and maintained at a uniform temperature of some eighteen hundred degrees Fahrenheit, for about a fortnight, during which the charcoal gradually yields up its carbon to the plates, imparting to their surfaces great hardness; about a week elapses before cooling is sufficiently advanced to enable the plates to be removed, and nothing then remains, but machining and the subsequent process of chilling, for their completion. Simple as this process may appear in general outlines, its practical application is far from being unattended with difficulties in actual execution; not the least of which consists in maintaining a constant and uniform heat for a fortnight. For this purpose, tubes pass beneath the lower plate, right through the furnace, and permit rods about half an inch in diameter to be inserted from each side, and the temperature taken by pyrometers.

The furnaces themselves call for some passing comment. Built of firebrick, with iron stay bars, according to the size of plate to be dealt with, they are furnished with a firebrick floor to carry the plates, the heat from coal fires passing over the plates, thence returning through flues beneath the floor to the chimney. The plates are lowered into the furnace, and removed from it by an overhead 'traveller' commanding the site.

The progress of 'Harveyising' has been as rapid as it is remarkable, England possessing three works and Scotland one work where the process is carried on. Her Majesty's ships *Renown*, *Majestic*, and *Magnificent* are equipped with 'Harveyised' steel armour, and further large orders are under execution.

Foreign nations are also utilising the new process, France, Germany, and Austria having extensive works fitted for its production. The United States Government also manufacture the armour; going further a-field, Japan is using the plates for her battleships. Meanwhile, official experiments by the governments of Great Britain, the United States, France, and Russia, leave no doubt as to the great value of Harveyised armour. Enough has been said to justify the conclusion of the official report: 'The consequence of adopting this new system (that is, "Harveyising") will be a great saving in cost for a given defence. By means of these improvements the power of defence obtainable with certain thicknesses and weights of armour has been very greatly increased, and this circumstance must considerably affect the designs of battleships to be laid down in the future.'

## AFTER SUNSET.

One tremulous star above the deepening west;
The plash of waves upon a quiet beach;
A sleepy twitter from some hidden nest
Amidst the clustered ivy, out of reach.

The sheep-bell's tinkle from the daisied leas;
The rhythmic fall of homeward-wending feet;
A wind that croons amongst the leafy trees,
And dies away in whispers faint and sweet.

A pale young moon, whose slender silver bow
Creeps slowly up beyond the purple hill;
And seems to absorb the golden afterglow
Within the far horizon lingering still.

An open lattice and the scent of musk;
Then, through the slumbrous hush of earth and sky,
A tender mother-voice that in the dusk
Sings to a babe some old-world lullaby.

E. Matheson.

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## DEATH VALLEY.

The place to which the rather forbidding name of Death Valley has been given, is situated on the borders of California and Nevada. It is one of the loneliest, hottest, and most deadly and dangerous spots, not only in the United States, but in the whole world. It is no more than thirty-five miles long, and eight miles wide. It is a vast, sandy plain, standing something like 200 feet below the level of the sea. Originally a lake, it is now nothing more than the sink of the Amargosa River. On both sides, throughout its whole length, it is hemmed in by mountain-ranges rising to 11,000 feet above the sea-level; that on the west being the Telescope range, and that on the east, the Funeral range. Looking down the valley from one of the 'divides,' reveals a region which seems, on the first blush, to be much like other deserts in the Western States of the Union—the Colorado Desert, the Gila Desert, the Mohavè Desert, and the rest. But actual experience shows it to be a very different sort of place. In the waste regions just named, the sands are hot and blinding, and water is a rare commodity. In the Death Valley there is water, but it is highly impregnated with chemicals, and is poisonous. Stretching from the foot of the mountains are glittering fields of salt, alternating with miles of white sand, drawn in places into high mounds by the whirling blasts that sweep down the gorge. The land appears in curving outline like the waves of the sea. The hummocks are made of the so-called 'self-rising earth;' the crust is two or three inches thick, and very brittle; and underneath is a thin, slimy, salt mud of unmeasured depth, from which rescue is impossible.

Another curious feature of the valley is the phenomenon known as 'salt earth.' Innumerable pinnacles, each tapering to a point as fine as a needle, and each a foot big, rise in certain places in close array from the ground. They are as hard as stone, and as dangerous to animal life as sharpened steel.

Death Valley received its name in the days of the Argonauts. About the middle of the year 1860, a wagon train, made up of a party of about thirty emigrants, passed through the Mormon settlements, *en route* for the New Eldorado. They ascended the Funeral Mountains, threaded their way down one of the few gorges, and entered the valley. Only two men managed to reach the other side: the others were killed by the heat and thirst, or by falling into the hidden quicksands. Only a few months ago an investigating party sent out by the United States Land Office, found at a lonely spot in Mesquite Valley, an offshoot of Death Valley, an old wagon head, a tire, and some pieces of old iron, relics of the famous emigrant train which descended the valley thirty-six years ago, and perished—every one of the party of forty being lost. Incidents such as these—and they might be multiplied—earned for Death Valley a most unenviable reputation, and emigrants making across country for the gold-fields, learned to give it a wide berth. But a story got abroad that there was precious metal in the neighbourhood, and men, lured by the goblin gold, and consequently careless of their lives, started to explore it. A survivor from one of the early emigrant trains brought into San Francisco a story of how he stumbled along in a cañon of the mountains west of the valley, and found a spring of water; and how, sitting idly by the spring, he broke off a bit of the exposed rock, and was surprised to find it was of metallic substance. It turned out to be silver, and there was a rush to the place, in the hope of finding a rich seam. A little later, a band of Mexicans came across a gold vein near the Amargosa River bed, east of Death Valley, but the Pintes of the desert came along and killed every one of them. In 1871, Lieutenant Wheeler, on an exploring trip, ordered his guide to cross the valley on foot. The guide declared it was impossible; so the Lieutenant called two soldiers,

who, with fixed bayonets, compelled the man to lead the way. Within two hours, one of the soldiers staggered back to camp, hardly able to walk; the others were lost—they became insane, and strayed away to die. Not many years ago a Frenchman, named Isidore Daunet, with six companions, attempted to cross the valley on the way to Arizona. The party started, and before they realised their condition, their water-supply was gone. Half wild with their sufferings from thirst, they cut the throats of their pack animals, and drank the spouting blood. Daunet and one other man escaped with their lives; the rest perished. Two days afterwards, the Frenchman tied up his head in a white handkerchief, and put a bullet through his brain. Almost invariably the victims of the valley—save when they fall into the quicksands—go mad before they die. It is another illustration of the old saying: *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.* A prospector, named O'Brien, reached some coyote holes on the edge of one of the small dry lakes, with which the valley abounds. He found a little water which he drank eagerly; it only exaggerated his thirst. His brain gave way, and he began digging in the sands with his hands. His dead body was found some days later under a gorse bush, and the fingers of both his hands were seen to be worn to the bone, from unavailing attempts to dig for water. A curious delusion often takes possession of sufferers. The dreams of water become realities. They see at a little distance away green fields and bubbling streams, where others might find nothing but the unending succession of white hummocks of sand. More than one man, too, has been found stripped naked and walking about on the burning sand, with his clothing above his head—to keep it from getting wet! A borax company works just on the brink of the valley, and the surveyor attached to the staff said recently that it is impossible to go for an hour without water, without becoming a raving maniac, so intense is the heat. One man died from the heat whilst lying still inside his adobe house on the company's property. Another, while riding with a canteen in his hand on top of a load of borax, fell over and expired. He was so parched, so we are assured, that his head cracked open over the top.

The animal life of this strange quarter of the globe is, in many respects, unique. One of the greatest curiosities is the deadly 'side-winder' snake, which is not found outside the deserts. It is a little rattlesnake, about eighteen inches long, and flops about from side to side, instead of crawling like other reptiles. Its bite is fatal in three minutes. The gila monster, a poisonous lizard hardly less deadly, is also found there. Then there are rats with extraordinary ears, which bulge out at the side to an extent known in no other animals. There are 'kangaroo rats' and 'kangaroo mice,' which get over the ground with a succession of vigorous hops. Their hind-legs and tails are surprisingly long and powerful. Dr E. H. Merriam, of the Department of Agriculture, who led an exploring party into the neighbourhood three years ago, says they are not, in the true sense, either rats or mice, but belong to species quite distinct. Another of the curious rodents of the valley is the scorpion mouse, which feeds on scorpions, and, on the whole, has a good time of it. Again, there are the grasshopper mice, with a strong taste for centipedes, and the pocket mice, with huge wallets outside their throats for the storage of provisions. During March and April, a species of gnat, which might beat a Jersey mosquito at his own game, appears on the scene, and stings both men and 'burros' to madness. And at night-time, all the year round, countless lizards, up to two feet long, squirm out of their holes; the rattlesnakes wriggle across the alkali crust; horned toads creep about; and scorpions and tarantulas of enormous size sharpen their claws, and hurtle around in search of prey.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XIX.

And now I have to relate the occurrence of a very surprising incident. It was not only surprising in the way it happened, accompanied by circumstances that have a kind of supernatural appearance, but also in the time when it happened. Had it been earlier, or had it been later, this history might never have been written. Had it never happened at all, what might have become of Isabel? And for myself, I might as well have jumped off my own quay into the flowing river for all the hope or joy of living that would have been left to me. The wonder of the thing is that it was not found out long before. A hundred times and more the place had been searched: an accident might have revealed the secret: a jar, a fall, might have thrown open the hiding-place: a casual cabinet-maker might have found it out had he looked in the right direction. But kindly fate left the discovery to me.

The room allotted to me for a bedroom was that in which old John Burnikel's bare and naked four-poster was standing. When I was first shown the room, it had no other furniture than the four-poster, and the old man's sea-chest. They had now clothed the forlorn bedstead, and put in certain chairs and things so as to make a habitable room of it. The window faced south, and as it was on the second floor, it looked over the boat-shed upon the river. Here I slept every night in the bed where the old Master Mariner died, quite untroubled by any thoughts about him or the long-lost diamonds, and unvisited by the ghost of their former owner.

It was in the beginning of August, when the nights are still short. Perhaps it was a hot night: perhaps there was more noise of passing steamers from the river than usual—the Silent Highway is generally much noisier than Cheapside by night as well as by day; whatever the cause, I woke up, starting suddenly into wakefulness: it was early dawn, but the light was

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rapidly increasing. My blind was up; my curtains drawn; my window wide open. I lay lazily watching the sky in the south grow lighter—gray at first, and then suffused with some of the eastern glow—a tender, subdued glow, like the colour on Isabel's cheek, which so quickly comes and goes—the tell-tale glow. Perhaps had I not begun to think about Isabel I might have gone to sleep again, in which case this thing would not have happened.

The gray hues passed away; the rosy hues passed away; there remained the clear deep hue of early morning before the smoke begins, when the sky is sometimes like the sky of Africa for clearness and for depth; and when the river, with its bridges and its boats, all asleep in silence, save for the wish and wash of the ebb and flow, is an enchanted stream.

Presently I closed my eyes again. Contrary to reasonable expectation, I did not go to sleep. It was that kind of hopeless wakefulness which makes sleep past praying for—I insist upon this point on account of what followed, which was not a dream—for I was awake; but a kind of vision, and only remarkable because it coincided with the discovery.

Do not suppose that I attribute this vision to any supernatural interference. Nothing of the kind. Neither the ancient mariner, the master mariner, nor the unfortunate Nabob of whose existence I first learned in the vision, ever appeared to me, or afflicted me with terrors. I have never been in the least afraid of ghosts. Had old John Burnikel come to my bedside, I would have had the secret of the diamonds out of him before I let him go, as sure as my name is George Burnikel. But he never came. He made no sign. I think he must have forgotten in the other world all about his diamonds: his ghost never once appeared to me. Had it done so, I would have had the great secret, I say, out of him in no time. 'Ghost!' I should have said, 'where are those diamonds? Who stole them? What is the truth about them? If they were stolen and have long since been dispersed, let me know. If they still remain to be discovered, somewhere or other, tell me where they are. I adjure thee—I command thee—by all the charms and spells that you ghosts are fools enough to dread, tell me where those diamonds are.'

That is what I should have said. But the only man I know who ever claimed to have raised a ghost—and that was also the ghost of a sailor—told me that he was only too glad to let him go back again below, below, below; and that, though as brave as most, he did not dare to ask any questions. I don't believe a word of it. However, ghosts are scarce; perhaps I should have behaved in the same manner. And this I take it is the case with most; otherwise we should know more about certain things whose uncertainty is sometimes disagreeable. All you have to do is to raise your ghost, and not be afraid of him. There was no ghost, and yet the air seemed this morning full of the Burnikel legend. There was the sound of a ship slowly making her way up the river—a Hamburg or Norwegian steamer, perhaps: one is never allowed perfect calm at Wapping. I lay on my back in the old wooden four-poster, which they had fitted with a spring mattress instead of a feather-bed, and I recalled the wonderful story: how the old man one night displayed his bag of precious stones, worth anything you please; how he told the cousins it would be theirs; how a day or two afterwards, he was found dying, and told them, collectively, that they knew where the bag was kept; how they did not know, but searched and could not find it, and accused each other, and fought and separated.

I lay on my back recalling this odd story, which was chiefly interesting because it was a story without an end.

Another interest it might have, if one were to consider how John Burnikel got those diamonds; because the old man's romance of the Great Mogul and the invitation to fill his pockets in the Royal Treasure vaults was clearly too ridiculous; it was so very plainly invented with intent to deceive.

Now the first thing that happened after this awaking was a vision. It was a very odd vision. To begin with, I was not asleep. To this day I cannot understand how this vision, of all others, came to me. One never dreams original plots of novels; quite new stories never come to any one; and this story, except for one little half-forgotten circumstance, was quite new. Some novelists have pretended that their plots come to them in dreams, but I do not believe it. Dreams and visions are erratic, incoherent, and unconnected things for the most part. That makes my vision all the more remarkable.

I suppose I must have dropped into some kind of bodily torpor. I am sure I was not asleep, because all through the business I knew that I was lying on the bed, although the action of the piece, so to speak, was elsewhere. However that may be, it is really useless to explain or account for a vision. The one that came to me was, so to speak, a magnified and embroidered piece of work, springing from something that Isabel had once told me. Why, I had quite forgotten it. She was talking about her people, who were no more illustrious in station than my own; and she informed me that once there was a strange man among them who had run away to sea, and come home again in rags, twenty years later, raving about a fortune he had lost in India. Nothing more than that. A very slight material of which to construct a vision. Yet it came, and as long as I live, I shall believe that the vision was somehow a revelation of the truth sent to me just before the great discovery.

It began by my stepping out of the house—but I knew all along that I was in the bed—and walking down the narrow lane leading out of the High Street to Wapping Old Stairs. There I found, sitting on the stairs, an elderly gentleman dressed in clothes extremely shabby. He wore a coat of brown cloth, he had worsted stockings, hat frayed and worn at the edge—quite a poor man he seemed to be. From his dress, it was evident that he belonged to the eighteenth century, which I like to consider as a picturesque period.

He sat upon the top step of Wapping Old

Stairs, and he looked across the river. And as he gazed, the tears ran down his face.

It is not often that one gets the chance of talking to a man of the eighteenth century, but it seemed not unnatural. I sat down beside him as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

'What, sir,' I asked timidly, 'is the cause of this grief?'

He sighed heavily. 'My diamonds!' he said. 'My diamonds!'

'What diamonds? I am a stranger to your time, worthy sir, and I know nothing of your diamonds.'

'What troubles me,' he said, 'is that I think I must have lost my soul in getting them together, in which case I have thrown away my soul for nothing.'

'Dear me, sir, this is serious indeed.'

'Yes, young man; they were amassed by scraping and grinding, and squeezing and skinning. Never were people ground down more miserably, and it was I who did it, in my master's service. In the service of the devil, I think. And now I have lost the diamonds as well. What have I got in exchange for my soul?'

I ought to have thought of John Burnikel at this point, but I did not.

'Tell me more about the diamonds,' I said.

'Once I was a Nabob,' he began, fetching a sigh as deep as an artesian well.

'Really? A Nabob? I thought a Nabob had a carriage and four, and troops of servants.'

'Once I was a Nabob.' Then he stopped, and looked around him suspiciously. The watermen lay asleep in their boats. It was a Sunday afternoon in summer. The ships were moored in long lines down the river from London Bridge, which we could not see for the bend, down to the Lower Pool. 'Is there no one here but yourself?' he whispered.

'No one. And I belong to the next century.'

'So you do. And you can't lock me up in a madhouse, can you? Oh! It's dreadful to be in a madhouse when you are not mad: horrible: they knock you about: they starve you: they abuse you: they chain you up: when you are not mad at all. Young man, never, if you can possibly help it, lock up any one in a madhouse.'

I promised him that I would not.

'They put me in on account of these lost diamonds. They said I was mad.'

'What diamonds, then?'

'Sir, it relieves my grief to tell the cause. I was one of those unlucky youths who cannot remain at home and do what the others do. I had to run away when I was fourteen to prevent being apprenticed to some vile trade—saddlery, I believe. So I ran away and went to sea—and when we got to Calcutta, because the captain was a brute, and the mate was a brute, and the bo's'n was a brute, I ran away from the ship, and went up-country, and entered the service of a native Prince. And him I served for twenty years and more — served well — squeezed, and ground, and skinned his people for him. And I got rich in his service, for he gave me great presents. I told you—I was once a Nabob. Great presents he gave me, though he was a devil.'

'Very good, so far.'

'When he let me go, I carried down to Calcutta all my treasure in jewels and gold pieces. I bought jewels of which I understood the value very well, with my money, and put them in a bag with what I had already—a long, narrow, canvas bag—and put the bag in a leathern belt, where it could not be seen. And then I took passage in a Homeward Bound, with all my fortune upon my person, worn night and day in that narrow leathern belt. Lots of people brought treasure home from India that way. It was thought a safe way.'

'Well?'

He sighed heavily. 'On the voyage,' he resumed, 'I believe soon after sailing, I was taken ill: it was brain fever, sunstroke, or something. When I came to myself again I was on shore—brought ashore and taken to Bedlam because I was still disordered in my wits with my fever—or my sunstroke.'

'Oh! You were taken to Bedlam.'

'I was taken to Bedlam, and kept there—I don't know how long. When they let me go, and I remembered things, the belt was gone. The belt with the diamonds was gone, I say!'

'Who took it?'

'I don't know. Some sailor on the ship, perhaps. The keepers at Bedlam, perhaps. So I went home to my own people who lived at Canterbury and were saddlers. And when I went home in rags they drove me out; and when I raved about my diamonds, they locked me up again in another madhouse.'

All this time I never thought of old John Burnikel at all.

'That was very unlucky. What was the name of the ship?' I asked him.

'I cannot remember. I have never been able to remember.'

'Or of the captain?'

'I cannot remember.'

'What is your own name? Can you remember that?'

'Samuel Dering.'

'Oh! Are you by any accident related to Captain Dering and Isabel, his daughter, both living in the year 1895?'

'They will be my great-grand-nephew and my great-great-grand-niece.'

'Then they ought to have the diamonds if they were found?'

'Certainly they ought. I give them to Isabel. Please tell her so.'

'And the name of the captain.' For just then I remembered the old sailor. 'Was it John Burnikel?'

'It was.' He sprang to his feet. 'Captain Burnikel it was. Where is he? Where is he?'

'Dead, my friend; dead for nearly ninety years. As dead as you yourself.'

He looked at me reproachfully, and the vision vanished. I was lying in the old man's bed, and gazing at the sky. It was an odd trick of the brain, more especially as I had never heard any hint or suggestion of the kind. But to this moment I have believed that I dreamed the truth, and that old John Burnikel simply cut the belt from the waist of a passenger,

gone mad for the time with sunstroke or some other cause; that the passenger recovered after landing, but could not remember the name of the ship or the captain, and that he was the great-grand-uncle of Isabel.

Nothing in the story at all, perhaps, except for the accident which followed.

My eyes fell upon the sea-chest. It was a large iron-bound trunk; the sea-chest of an officer, not a common sailor, who is only allowed, I believe, a sea-bag.

The more I looked at that chest, the more I thought about the unfortunate Nabob, turning all his fortune into precious stones, and tying them up in a canvas bag worn as a belt. The vision, I repeat, was so clear, the words were so plain, that I had not the least doubt about the truth of the thing. John Burnikel had grown rich suddenly by robbing a sick man of his fortune. No one suspected him; no one can trace gems unless they are very large indeed; no one thought that he possessed any precious stones till the last year or so of a very long life, and then he accounted for their possession by a cock-and-bull story. Had the injured man, this poor ruined Nabob, found him out, he could bring no charge against him, for he had no kind of proof. And then an irresistible desire seized me to search the chest once more on my own account. It had been ransacked, I knew, time after time, by Robert and his predecessors. Never mind, I must look for myself.

## CIDER.

Cider is one of the most ancient beverages. The name is also ancient and curious: our English word, which appears as *cidre* and *sithere* in 14th-century writers, is by the best authorities believed to represent the Greek word *sikera*, used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew *shēkar*, usually rendered in the Old Testament 'strong drink.' The word was, however, specifically used for the fermented juice of apples ere the name or the thing was used in England. The Romans certainly cultivated apples in England; and cider has been made and drunk here since that date, if not from earlier ages. It has not maintained its hold on popular taste, however, in competition with some other drinks. Beers and wines have driven it into the background, and it is now mainly confined to the great orchard districts of England. There has, it is true, been an attempt to promote it in favour lately; and the authors of the enterprise contend that it is far less alcoholic, and therefore far less injurious than any of the known intoxicating beverages; that it is finer in flavour than cheap champagnes or inferior Burgundies; that it is in itself wholesome, refreshing, and the possessor of certain curative properties; and that if it became the national beverage again, there would be far less drunkenness and intemperate addiction to alcoholic liquors, and a great improvement in the social tone of the people consequently. This may be a dream, and it may not; but while those interested are busily pushing cider before those who look for a wholesome stimulant, we may with some profit regard it as drink of importance in itself, and also of great historical interest.

A half-forgotten poet has said:

> Where'er the British spread
> Triumphant banners, or their fame has reached,
> Diffusive, to the utmost bounds of this
> Wide universe, Silurian cider borne
> Shall please all tastes, and triumph o'er the vine.

But this is rather reckless patriotism. As a fact, the finest cider is not made by the British grower, but in Normandy. They have in that province brought cider-making to perfection. The total produce every year there amounts to hundreds of millions of gallons; and it is made with the utmost care. To begin, they choose the site of the orchard with judgment, and see that the soil is of the type which apples love; and they are equally thoughtful in selecting the varieties of the apple most fit for cider. Indeed, for the very finest cider, their solicitude is so great that none but the second or third year's fruit of the trees is used; and when the process of fermentation is reached, nothing is left to chance. Chemists of great experience watch the changes in the liquor; and the skill with which the process is regulated is based on the knowledge gathered from long practice. The result is, that some Normandy cider is equal in delicacy and flavour to fine champagne, and many cheap champagnes are simply sophisticated cider.

This deception is very general. The great bulk of the cider made in Normandy goes to the champagne districts, and is used to make cheap champagne, and to form the body of other wines too. Port, it seems, can be made, and often is made of cider, the colour being imparted by logwood or red-beet juice, and the flavour by the addition in very nice proportions of the root of the rhatany. This, it is said, is an imitation so excellent that the flavour would deceive a good judge of port. It is quite certain that all the cider made in Normandy does not, by a very large proportion, go on the market as cider; and that it is sold in the guise of cheap wines, both white and red. Certainly, than the champagne cider of Normandy there is nothing more delicate and effervescent, unless it be the same product of California, when at its best.

But in England there are ciders of great fragrance and delicacy, and there is no reason, its advocates say, why cider of this quality should not be more frequently made. The industry seems to be confined to well-marked districts. Macaulay spoke of 'Worcester, the queen of the cider's land;' but he was quite wrong. Worcester, though much given to cider-drinking, is not nearly so important an orchard or cider-making centre as the next county of Hereford. They make capital cider in Norfolk; but the counties which make cider in large quantities and use it as the staple beverage of the people, are Hereford, part of Worcester, and Shropshire, Devon, Somerset, and the west generally. Even there, however, you find many classes of cider. The very worst is the rough, crude liquor, made as a harvest drink by the farmers themselves. This stuff, hard and coarse enough to rasp the throat like a file, is served out to the labourers in the harvest fields, and

they drink quarts of it in a day. It is just as disgusting to watch this stuff being made as to drink it. Intrude upon a Hereford farmer at such times, and you will see bruised, half-rotten windfalls shovelled into the mill, with all manner of dirt, and even of living things. In the mixture the component parts are unrecognisable; and all is juice that comes from the press there. It is not this cider, however, that the poets sing and benevolent men recommend as a national beverage. Nor even do they advocate the general sale of the 'thin, acrid, harsh kinds of cider which have given the drink a bad reputation,' and are nevertheless still on sale at every wayside inn throughout the cider-lands. They want to produce cider from 'special varieties of the best vintage fruits,' and so to give the people at a far lower price the advantage of 'a high-class liquor which shall be capable of taking the place in this country of the light wines of Germany and France.'

The manufacture of cider is not a complicated process, though it must be conducted with great care and judgment if the best results are to be attained. It is true that the deterioration of English cider is said to be due chiefly to the persistence of the growers in using antiquated methods. But that does not mean that they require new or costly machinery; it is simply a bare statement of the fact that they ought to select the varieties with the greatest care, grow them in the most scientific way, and use for eating only those apples which are not good enough for cider. When this stage has been reached, the next part of the work is simple. The apples should be neither over-ripe nor green; they should be free from injury, just full-ripe, at that stage in which the sugar in the fruit is at its greatest quantity. They should be placed in a mill, which breaks them up and reduces them to a pulpy state; and this pulp is next put into a press and the juice squeezed out to the last drop. Then it is left for fermentation, a process on which much of the quality of the cider depends. It must proceed slowly, and must be closely watched all the time; it is really a process which can only be successfully conducted by those who have a scientific knowledge of the conditions and the changes going on. In the end, the cider is drawn off, and the finest qualities are bottled and may be regarded as pure wine.

It is claimed that this cider, when pure and well made, is not merely an extremely wholesome drink, but is also very helpful to those who suffer from certain complaints, such as gout and rheumatism. It is quite positively declared that cures of rheumatism by this beverage can be mentioned; and that cider drinkers are far less subject to either disease than those who quaff other compounds. The curative property is ascribed to the malic acid contained in the liquor. Cider does not, even at its strongest point, contain a large percentage of alcohol, and the makers contend that its qualities are more wholesome and less 'heady' than those of any other liquor consumed in England. But for those who object to take alcohol in any appreciable form it is still possible to utilise the juice of the apple or pear. It has long been a complaint that very few temperance drinks are really palatable or refreshing; and it is said that by arresting the fermentation of cider at a given point, a liquor containing only about three per cent. of alcohol can be produced, which will still retain the wholesome flavour of the fruit, be both palatable and refreshing, and will have much less alcohol than is often found in drinks sold as 'non-alcoholic.' However this may be, there can be little doubt that cider is much more wholesome than spirits, than bad wines, and than heavy and muddling beers; and there is some reason to watch with interest the efforts of the Association which has been formed lately to bring it into more general use in these islands.

## THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

### CHAPTER III.

When he reviewed afterwards, in quietness, the bewildering impressions of that night, John said to himself that it was the attitude of Miss Wamphrey which struck him before he had seen her face, and before he knew who she was, and that she was the object of young Maxwell's devotion; but probably this was only an idea developed afterwards, when he had begun to think of her in the character of a mysterious creature with a secret, for, indeed, to nobody else did she appear anything but a pretty girl in her twenties, very nicely dressed, with a little air of having descended from superior heights of fashion upon those circles of Duntrum which felt themselves so exclusive. Marion had spent most of the season in Edinburgh: she had even been in London: and various other girls in the assembly had already noted several points in her attire as things that were doubtless 'to be worn,' since she had just come from these fountain-heads of fashion. But what John remarked, or thought he remarked, was that she stood as one might to whom there might possibly arise an occasion to fly, which was a quite absurd exaggeration of any possibility, even if he were right in his surmises; also, which perhaps was more likely in that hypothesis, that she looked as if she expected something to happen, and glanced up behind the fan, of which she made greater use than a rustic Scotch maiden was apt to do (which was one of the things that struck the other girls as probably a new development of fashion), or over the shoulder of the chaperon whom she followed like her shadow (which also was not a habit common among the young ladies of Duntrum), with a certain keen look of alarm, of expectance in her eyes. It happened that John saw her, after his eyes, as he thought, had been attracted to her by this peculiarity of attitude and look at a moment when she had dropped her fan to greet a friend, and before she perceived himself in the little crowd.

'Hallo!' he said to himself in the sudden surprise of recognition, and unaware he said it aloud.

'What's happened?' said Maxwell by his

side; 'do you see anybody you know? By the way,' he added, 'it is Marion Wamphrey; of course you must have met her in Edinburgh. I wonder I never thought of that before.'

'Which is Miss Wamphrey?' said John. He looked in the other direction that he might not betray himself, and then looked again to see that the girl had put up her fan, and that (as he thought) the something she was expecting had happened. She had seen him. Her eyes had taken a roundness which they had not before, the alarm of expectation had gone, and a sort of panic had come in its place. He saw her (or thought he saw her) obliterate herself behind the larger form of the lady with whom she was for a moment—then look out again over her shoulder, as if standing on tiptoe. Of course, she must have expected, John thought to himself, all that was happening or was about to happen. She must have known she would meet him. She must have been prepared to be recognised. She must be now at the height of a great crisis of mind, wound up to face it out, hoping that perhaps he might have been less quick of observation, less certain of recollection than she was.

'That's her,' said Maxwell, with a wave of his hand towards the group, 'playing keek-bo with somebody over Mrs Brydon's shoulder. Just like her saucy ways! You'll find Marion no country cousin, I can tell you, Percival. There's not one of your Edinburgh fine ladies more—— Eh? think you have seen her before? I'll be bound you have seen her before! She's been spending the season, I tell you, in Edinburgh, and you that have your *entrées* everywhere'——

'Not so much as that,' said John, with modesty; 'and you must remember I have had all the fun cut off this year'——

'Never mind, I am sure you must have met her. Come along, and compare your experiences. I think I'm a man of great magnanimity not to hold you off; but it's better to run the risk of trusting you,' he added, with a laugh, 'than to give you the attraction of the forbidden.'

Somehow, however, their progress was slow through the little crowd, quite a little crowd, John felt, to one accustomed to the Assembly Rooms of Edinburgh. But somehow, everybody seemed to get in the way between himself and this lady. Had there not been a whisper sent out through the friendly ranks: 'Oh, keep him off me! that man with his story about the stage-coach. I cannot abide these funny men with their stories.' Young Duntrum, which had admired John quite long enough, was delighted to hear that so popular a girl as Marion Wamphrey did not want to hear the story which all the others had held their breath at. It was a victory, after all, for Duntrum over the invader in their midst. And accordingly they circled round him, and called attention to a hundred insignificant things.

'Did you hear the meet was at the Four Elms to-morrow, Percival?' 'Man, do you know there's every prospect of a fine frost.' 'Percival, my sister has a word to say to you about the Philharmonic.' 'Percival, I'm saying'—— He had to stop again and again to respond to their appeals; while, on the other hand, his companion shuffled impatiently about, waiting, and grumbled: 'Come on, man, never mind, be done with your civilities. She will have given away every dance before we get near her,' Maxwell said. Finally, John found himself standing face to face with this strange heroine of his thoughts. He said to himself that, but for her own looks, he might have been shaken in his conviction that it was she. The face that he saw before him, with hair smooth as satin, and crowned with flowers, as was then the fashion, in the midst of the ball was difficult to associate with the ruffled aspect, the flush of excitement, the strange light in the eyes of the woman at the coach door. But she stood straight up to meet him, like one who is strongly set in her own defence, as if she were standing at the bar: and there was in her eyes a watchfulness, a preparedness, as of a man who keeps his arm ready to return a blow. Perhaps all this was merely in John's eyes. Maxwell seemed to see nothing unusual in the look or air of the girl whom he admired. The gay group around fluttered and jested. Nobody within sight or hearing had the slightest suspicion of anything in Marion Wamphrey that was not always there. She did not hold out her hand to him, welcoming the stranger as the other frank and kindly maidens would have done; but that was because Miss Marion was always a little high and mighty, and now and then put on airs, as one who had been out in the world and knew the fashion.

'You mustn't think anything of that,' Maxwell said afterwards; 'it is just her way. I like her to have a way of her own, not like all the rest,' said the young man in love. But John Percival was not satisfied that it was her way. She seemed to look at him in the eyes as if trying to cow him, as if on the faintest movement on his part she were ready to strike. And this on his part excited him, and made him anxious to strike.

'I think,' he said, 'that Miss Wamphrey and I have met before'——

'I told you so,' said Maxwell, 'I told you both so. I was certain you must have met before.'

If this ass had not broken in with his assurances about a thing he could know nothing whatever about, John felt sure she would have shown more consciousness than she did. As it was, her colour, he was sure, wavered a little; but she said, with a little burst of laughing surprise: 'Oh, how condescending of you to remember! I recollect well seeing you, Mr Percival. But it was only seeing you, not meeting; for you were at the grand end of the Assembly Rooms, among all the lady patronesses, and I was only at the foot of the room, and knew nobody.'

'There's one for you, Percival,' said Maxwell delightedly. Though John had, it was certain, had a great *succès* in Duntrum, they were all coming to think that it might do him good to be a little taken down.

'That is very hard upon me, especially as it was so much to my loss,' said John; and then he thought he would carry the war into

the enemy's country. 'But I confess,' he added, 'I remember nothing about the Assembly Rooms. I think we have met in other circumstances.'

She gave him a broad look from her fully opened eyes, with a faint elevation of the eyebrows.

'There I confess you have the advantage of me,' she said steadily, holding him with that look, 'as I, it appears, had of you on the former occasion.' Then, with the faintest turn of her head, too dignified to be called a toss, she withdrew this embarrassing look from him, with a wave towards Maxwell of the card attached to her fan. 'If you want any dances from me,' she said, 'it will be better not to lose any time.'

'You cruel Marion,' cried the young man, 'it is all filled up, every line.'

'You should not have been so late,' she said with a laugh, and they stood for a moment with their heads together, in the easy intimacy of having known each other all their lives. And then followed a little ball-room battle, while John stood, somewhat grim, looking on.

'I that was going to ask how many you would give me!' from him, with tender reproach: and 'There will always be the extras, you know,' from her.

'And it's easy to mistake about an extra—if you'll be good,' said Maxwell, in a lively whisper: and they laughed together over the card which he was manipulating. John was determined he would hold his ground. She was a very pretty girl, and she was in a state of suppressed excitement (or at least he thought so), which made her doubly interesting. And it was he who was the cause of her excitement. Whatever is the reason, it pleases a man, at least of John's age, to feel that he is the cause of a woman's emotion. He was not daunted by the *persiflage*, but waited calmly till the end of the discussion; then he said:

'Is there no hope, Miss Wamphrey, for me?'

'Oh, Mr Percival,' she said, turning round with an air of having forgotten him, which would have done no discredit to a great lady at a court ball: and then she shook her head. 'I am afraid no more than there would have been for me, at the Assembly Rooms, if I had aspired to dance with one of the stewards,' she said, laughing, 'but you can look for yourself.'

'Come, give him the last of the extras, Marion,' said Maxwell, delighted to exercise a little patronage.

'If you are not at home and fast asleep before that,' said Marion, raising her eyes quickly, with a dart, to John's face.

He felt it like a blow, but very carefully inscribed his name at the very bottom of her list, and retired with a bow of much dignity—at which, with secret wrath, he heard her laugh with Maxwell as he turned away. It was to be war then? She meant to turn him into ridicule before he could unmask her as the heroine of the strange adventure which everybody knew. John was very moody all the evening, and did not half fulfil the expectations of the merry country ladies, who thought it was the business of their partners to be amusing as well as to dance well. John fulfilled the latter requirement, but then they all danced well at Duntrum. They did not know the waltz in those days. They danced pretty figures of country-dances and reels, and other cheerful things. It had never occurred to them that quadrilles were dull—they were the height of the fashion, and the different figures respected as almost a revelation. Nobody 'sat out,' and if perhaps the assembly was simple, and some of the dances a little old-fashioned, it was very gay.

It need not be said that in the state of mind in which he was, John stayed till the last moment, and presented himself to Miss Wamphrey just as she was following her chaperon to the door, holding together a dress which had been slightly damaged in the rapidity of a last reel. There was a glance of battle in his eyes as he came up to her, with a reminder that this was his dance, which kindled an immediate response in hers.

'I cannot stay another moment, May,' said the chaperon crossly. Marion shrugged her pretty shoulders, with a look which spoke volumes of repugnance, and reluctance, and scorn, and made John furious.

'I cannot break my word to this gentleman, if he insists upon it,' she said.

'Seeing I have held on all these hours, *and not gone to sleep*,' said John, with something savage in his tone, 'only for this.'

There was a last dreary quadrille being formed, and she gave her hand and allowed herself to be led to it, to fill up a side place. They stood side by side in silence for a moment, and then Marion said:

'It is very noble on your part, Mr Percival, to hold out so long. I am so sorry to have been the means of breaking your night's rest.'

'It is not the first time, Miss Wamphrey,' he said.

'Not the first time! This is too much of a compliment. We are not accustomed in the country to have such pretty things said to us.'

'There was nothing so far from my intention as saying a pretty thing,' said John.

'This is more and more tremendous, Mr Percival! It was an ugly thing, then, you meant to say?'

'What I meant,' said John, 'was to let you know that I have not forgotten our meeting, which has cost me many a thought.'

'Dear me,' said Marion, 'is this all because I said I knew nobody at *that* ball? Comfort yourself. I knew nobody grand like the lady patronesses: but I had plenty of partners, and there is no need to be remorseful, even if you have the most tender conscience, on account of me.'

'You know very well it is not that I am thinking of,' said John, in a low tone.

'Well, I should not have expected it to be. A young man like you, in the best society, is not likely to trouble himself about a country girl he doesn't know.'

'At all events, the other occasion was a very different matter,' he said.

'What other occasion? One would think there was some great mystery between us. If you will come down from these stilts, and tell me what you mean'——

'That is just what I am most anxious to do—if I could for a moment suppose you had forgotten it! It was rather a different thing from a meeting at a ball.'

'You had better wait a little,' she said sharply, 'it is our turn for this figure.'

And then they danced. I forget now what these figures were called. It was the one in which the lady on one side is led off by the gentleman on the other side, who advances to the abandoned partner with a lady in each hand. John was the man who had to stand and look on. She had recovered all her spirit, all her freshness, it appeared, and made of this innocent performance a parade of gaiety and grace. She came up to him and retired from him, holding the hand of the other with the most coquettish defiance, and swept him such a curtsy as she might have made to the king—deeper even, with mock deference and scorn, which was considered very amusing by all the lookers-on. 'You should have seen Marion dancing L'Été' (or whatever it was) 'with the man from Edinburgh,' they all said afterwards. John had been 'too much made of' since his arrival and his adventure: it was delightful that he should thus be made to feel 'put back in his place' without any one being to blame. And John, I will not deny, felt the sting: but he was stimulated by it, not depressed. In the quiet of the interval that followed, while the others were dancing, he made his attack on more decided lines.

'Where,' he said—'I have always been very curious—did you hide all those dreadful things you had on? The hoods, and the handkerchiefs, and the veil.'

A spark flashed up into her eyes—was it possible there was a laugh in it that showed through both the affected wonder and the actual fear?

'What in the world do you mean?' she said; 'the handkerchiefs and the hoods and—have you gone mad, Mr Percival?'

'Not a bit,' said John, 'nor you either. We're two very sane people. How you flashed it off in a moment might be just a woman's skill—but not to drop it on the road, not to let it be found anywhere, that's what I have always admired; it shows you have great force, and it really looked, you'll forgive me for saying, as if you had done such a thing before.'

She turned round, swerving a little from his side. 'If you're exposed it's your own fault,' she cried hurriedly, and in a very low tone. 'I am afraid to dance with you any more.'

'Oh, you need not be afraid,' said John. 'I am not mad: and I will not publish it, not at least at this moment; but stand still, or I'll not answer for what I may do.'

She stood still, a thrill running through her; but even at that moment contrived to make her tremor invisible to the others, with glances towards him and elevations of her eyebrows, and little movements of her hands. She was no soft girl to be crushed by anything he would do, but a resolute woman meaning to fight every step, and with all the odds in her favour, well known and popular, whereas himself nobody knew.

'Perhaps this is not the best moment,' said John, 'but I thought I must warn you. I was very much taken in, and you must have had your laugh at me: but I was awake to all the circumstances in the end.'

'It is a good thing,' she said, suddenly forgetting herself, 'that you are awake sometimes; for a better sleeper'—then she stopped, and a deep red flush covered her face—'dreamer of dreams,' she added quietly, 'I never heard of. Did you dream all this, Mr Percival, or is it a story got up out of a book?'

And then they danced again, extraordinary interruption to such an interview. John could not help, when he took her hand, giving it a fierce grip of hostility, almost unawares. He was brought to his senses when it was with equal fierceness and almost equal strength returned. She was not looking at him, but moving in the dance with a smile on her face. Many a close clasp of love has been given in such circumstances, but seldom one of actual defiance and ferocity. Her eyes, though they were not on him, blazed, the colour forsook her face, and its very paleness shone. She had perhaps never looked so beautiful in her life.

'Come away, Marion, come away,' said Mrs Brydon, 'I cannot wait a moment longer.'

'This is the last figure,' said Marion over her shoulder, and she danced it to the end, but quickly disengaged herself before the concluding galop, and, seizing her friend by the arm, hurried away. John did not follow to get their cloaks and carriage, as he ought to have done. There were plenty of attendants ready. He sat down, grim, in a corner to think it over, and could not be persuaded to join the young men's rear-supper, or any of the closing festivities of the night.

## NEW TAXES AND OLD ONES.

By Maltus Questell Holyoake.

Few persons regard the taxes with the equanimity of the poet Byron who sang:

> I like the taxes—when they're not too many.

Many or few (and *when* have they been few?), they have always been unpopular, for taxation is a universal affliction. There is no human being in the world who is not taxed, or for whom taxation is not paid, in some form; for taxation, like disease, attacks us in many insidious guises—from the time we are 'infants crying in the night,' until the last grim ride to the cemetery. The connection between taxation and disease is greater than may be imagined. In a London asylum there is a patient suffering from disease of the brain, who is returned as 'insane from over-taxation.' Taxation, though generally regarded as a dull and uninteresting topic, is a matter of vital and cosmopolitan importance. About eighty-three per cent. of the imperial revenue in 1894-95 was derived from taxation—the rest being from posts and telegraphs, crown-lands, Suez Canal shares, &c. The revenue of 1895-96, over 100 millions sterling—the largest in our history, and somewhat exceeding requirements — has

caused the suggestion to be made that there might be some remission of certain taxes. A brief enumeration of a few of the local and imperial exactions in force in this 'land of the free,' will serve to show the fiscal network that environs us. There are inhabited house duties, income-tax, land-tax, probate duty, legacy duty, succession duty, estate duty, birth and death certificates, marriage licenses, licenses for certain businesses, and duties on certain manufactures. Locomotion is taxed—carriages, cabs, and omnibuses all requiring licenses, and even the trains pay a railway duty on first and second class passengers. In the matter of liquids, beer and spirits incur both duties and licenses—wine, tea, and coffee pay a customs duty, and for water there is the rate. Dried fruits are subject to customs dues. Licenses are required for the use of armorial bearings on carriages, plate, jewellery, and note-paper; for the sale of patent medicines; and keeping male servants—Susan in her neat cap and apron, however, is duty-free, 'for which relief, much thanks,' as Hamlet says. Dogs, little and big, we all know, are taxed. Tobacco is doubly taxed, there being a manufacturing duty, and a retail license. The vendors of jewellery containing a certain proportion of the precious metals, must be armed with a gold or silver plate license. One must not shoot game or sell it without special licenses, and to blaze away at the humble sparrow entails a gun tax. An endeavour to 'lighten our darkness,' involves the gas rate. Uncle who receives family plate or jewellery in pledge, has to be provided with both pawnbrokers' and plate certificates. The clergy are entitled to certain fees for the burial of their parishioners. When the burial is in a cemetery, the chaplain attached to it performs the service. After paying his salary, the established ministers collect the balance of the fees for themselves, thus levying a tax on every corpse in their parishes. Thus poor man is hemmed in on all sides with taxation. Birth, marriage, death, food, habitation—all make separate revenue demands upon him. Only the air he breathes is free (if contaminated), and the time may come when of even that some needy Government may declare:

> We will capture e'en the wind-god,
> And confine him in a cave;
> And then, through our patent process,
> We the atmosphere will save;
> Thus we'll squeeze our little brother,
> When he tries his lungs to fill,
> Put a meter on his windpipe
> And present our little bill.

When Mr Goschen was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he imposed a stamp duty on bonds, which in the city was known as the Goschen stamp. His successor at the Treasury, Sir William Harcourt, removed this duty; whereupon a city Chaucer commemorated the event in the following lines:

> One merrie daye oure Chancellor
> Passed into lawe ye notion,
> That certayne Bondes be yearlie stamped
> With an adhesive 'Goschen.'
> Righte much vexation didde itte cause;
> 'Twas measure ille-assorted;
> But gladness in ye citie reigns,
> For now ye stamp's 'Harcourted.'

History reveals the existence of many peculiar taxes in bygone days. Duties on salt, candles, bread, meat, leather, bricks, soap, starch, paper, hats, windows, bottles, advertisements, corn, and sacramental certificates (in Scotland) helped at various times to replenish the finances of former sovereigns. Another tax of the past was one on buttons. The vacuous wight who 'hadn't got all his buttons,' was then fiscally a fortunate man. There is still in existence an ancient tax for the maintenance of the city militia; it is one halfpenny in the pound on the annual assessment, and is collected by the corporation of London; it was first levied in Charles I.'s reign.

In other climes various taxes, wise and unwise, are resorted to in order to provide revenue; and oil, matches, matrimony, bustles, greeting cards, musical instruments, eggs, cycles, placards, lotteries, betting, entertainments, and commercial travellers are some of the fish caught in the net of the tax collector. To meet the cost of constructing and maintaining their large harbours, the French Government extract a tax of two francs from all passengers entering their channel ports—that is, ordinary travellers. In Turkey a license tax is collected from foreign merchants trading there. The English Commissioners in Central Africa tax all males over fourteen years of age, six shillings per head, which has to be paid in money, or a month's work given; in some places six baskets of maize are received as an equivalent. In Portuguese Africa a hut tax is levied, and six shillings and eightpence (that well-known legal charge) pays taxes for a man and his family for one year. It has recently been resolved in France to tax all employers twenty francs for each person in their service wearing livery. A large number of prepared human skeletons are exported annually from Germany and France to America, on which the United States revenue authorities levy a heavy duty. The dealers in these gruesome articles recently petitioned against the protective taxation of these immigrant skeletons. From skeletons to angels is a natural transition. It appears that quantities of angels made on the Continent are exported to the land of the Stars and Stripes for the decoration of Christmas trees, and for school entertainments, and are subject to a duty of thirty-five per cent. Cork legs also come under the purview of the fiscal officials of the nation that rejoiced in a M'Kinley tariff; upon which a New York satirical journal wrote:

> A foreigner man—Emanuel Stork,
> Arrived one day at the Port of New York,
> But he couldn't get in,
> 'Cause he hadn't the tin
> For the tax on his leg, which was cork.

Mr Powderly, the head of the Knights of Labour organisation, is responsible for the following additional suggestive verses:

> But if Mr Emanuel Stork
> Had a sound leg instead of a cork,
> He'd be sure to get in
> Without any tin
> To crowd some one else out of work.

This is a humorous expression of the sentiments which led to the lately made restrictions on immigration to the States. In the land of 'the merry Swiss boy,' tax stamps are sold to enable the poor to pay their taxes by instalments, and revenue obligations are gradually acquitted by the weekly purchase of a few twenty-five centime stamps. A new tax has been created in Russia on all money passing in and out of the country. The tax amounts to one copeck on every hundred roubles, but each traveller furnished with a passport for abroad will be allowed three thousand roubles with him, free of duty. Any amount in excess of this sum must be declared —the penalty of omission being the confiscation of one-fourth of the sum concealed. In Saxony there is a town of one thousand seven hundred and fifty inhabitants, in which persons who have not paid taxes for three years are not allowed to frequent public-houses, and landlords are liable to penalties for serving them. A list of the names of one hundred and sixteen people who have not paid taxes since 1891 is exhibited at the inns. The tax defaulters set an example of sobriety, anyhow, to their law-abiding brethren.

Many persons consider with regard to taxation, 'tis better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others we know not of,' and bearing in mind what a veritable Old Man of the Sea taxation is already upon the backs of householders, propositions for fresh taxation are naturally regarded with impatience, and the inventor of a new source of revenue is certain of universal disapproval. A great statesman, dead some years, held the opinion that the inventors of new taxes deserved that

> Their names—their human names—to every eye
> The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
> Exalted o'er their less abhorr'd compeers—
> And festering in the infamy of years.

Notwithstanding this dreadful condemnation, there are odious people prepared to run the risk of unpopularity. The present writer was one. In 1883 he suggested the imposition of a proportional stamp duty on tickets of admission to theatres, music halls, gate-money race meetings, betting rings, and enclosures. The *Daily News*, in commenting on the propensity to suggest that somebody or something shall be taxed as a trait in man's nature that has hitherto escaped the notice of the moralist, remarked with reference to the present writer: 'There is a gentleman who has actually established an office, with a staff of clerks, for the purpose of promulgating a scheme for augmenting the revenue by imposing a stamp duty on theatre tickets. He is, we believe, not a theatrical manager.' As a matter of fact, the present writer was a revenue official of many years' standing, and it was more in accord with the fitness of things that he should point out fresh modes of raising revenue, than is the case with the financial reformers who issue journals, send lecturers on tour, and employ collectors to obtain funds to advocate their schemes of taxation. There was nothing remarkable in his proposing a new duty—it was as natural as for a lawyer to propose an amendment in the law.

The number of new taxes emanating from the busy brains of embryo Chancellors of the Exchequer is legion. Propositions for the taxation of books, dinners, amateur actors, hunting, photographs, cats, short stories, cycles, pianos, immigrants, billiard tables, bachelors, clubs, mineral waters, organ grinders, titles, villa names, tennis grounds, statues, pictures, boots, chimneys, telegraphs, telephones, electric lights, church and chapel goers, second Christian names, letters to newspapers, have already been made. A tax on beauty is another suggestion. How glad some of us would be to be eligible to pay it! A license duty on marriage engagements, also proposed, would serve as a verification and registration of the step preliminary to matrimony. In Paris there are no private undertakers, burial being undertaken by the municipality. It has been proposed to levy a fresh tax on funerals by raising the existing charge for graves. As in that city of pleasure theatres are taxed, this may be considered as the 'from grave to gay' of taxation. A few years ago there was considerable discussion as to the propriety of establishing turnstiles, and levying entrance fees in the museums and places of historical interest in Paris. M. Lockroy, the then Minister of Public Instruction, disclaimed the principle of charging admission fees to places which are maintained by public taxes, and are therefore the property of the people; but admitted the probability of a charge being made for admission to the Palace of Versailles one day. In England the public are already thus taxed, admission fees being required on certain days to the Tower of London, and South Kensington Museum. The principle is also acted on by lordly owners of certain historical English castles, who check indiscriminate crowds by charging each visitor a shilling for admission; which amounts are, it is needless to say, handed over to local charities. It has been recently proposed by the French Government to tax operations on the Paris Bourse or Stock Exchange, a duty being levied on both the purchase and sale note, according to the amount of stock changing hands. It is expected to yield twelve million francs. A scheme was also submitted to M. Peytral, the French financial minister, to control outside stockbrokers. It proposes, virtually, their abolition; a loan to be issued to compensate them for their loss of business. A tax upon the profits of the authorised brokers remaining would be imposed to repay the loan. In France sixty-three per cent. of the revenue comes from indirect taxation, that on registration in connection with the changes of ownership of property being the most important.

In England a proposal has been made, 'that powers should be given to county councils to sanction the establishment in every locality of licensed betting-offices, and that a percentage be deducted from all transactions for the benefit of the deserving poor, or as a sinking fund for old age pensions.' It would be interesting to learn if the proposer would consider persons who had beggared themselves by betting as deserving poor. The fund for old age pensions is thoughtful, as the necessity for them would manifestly be increased if the

proposed offices were opened. The total of stakes run for by horses amounts to nearly half-a-million pounds. It is suggested, with more reason, that the revenue should appropriate ten per cent. of this sum. Lately, the English bookmakers have proposed to tax themselves by charging registration fees on those who betted in Tattersall's ring of twenty-five pounds a year, graduated down to three pounds a year on those who betted in the half-crown rings and outside, the money to be used to provide a special police staff for the protection of the betting public against welshers, talepitchers (whoever they may be), and men who make a living on the turf by surreptitious methods. A similar self-imposed tax, it appears, is in force in Australia. The financial committee of the French Chamber of Deputies have been considering whether they should check the trade extension of large shops, like the Bon Marché, by taxing every different branch of business in colossal firms. The shop assistants petitioned against the change, considering it would cause a contraction of expenses which would injuriously affect them without benefiting the small shopkeepers. A tax has been proposed on the wooden fences and dead walls which disfigure many estates, and shut out from the public view green fields, picturesque woods, and pleasant parks, spoiling Nature's landscape. The taxation of land values, ground rents, and betterment as a source of revenue is being constantly urged upon the Government. A plan to rearrange the wine, spirit, and beer dealers' licenses on a *pro rata* scale, as in the case of publicans' licenses, has been formulated. A recent proposal of a fiscal nature is one to tax French *rentes* as a concession to socialism. The French budget estimates of 1896 contain about 48 million francs, raised on account of carriages, horses, &c., including 10 million francs from a proposed tax on servants. Mr Goschen's proposition, when in office, to re-impose the tax on horses which was in existence some twenty-six years ago, was the occasion of the following epigram:

'A tax upon horses,' said Goschen, 'I hope
Will meet with the cordial support of all classes.'
Perhaps so—but think how much wider his scope,
If he only would put a small duty on asses.

'Ought the inventor of a new tax to be rewarded?' is a question that has been asked in the press. It will be interesting and instructive to those with a propensity to make tax suggestions if by way of a conclusion the view taken by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury is given. When in 1888 Mr Goschen imposed the brokers' tax, a city gentleman held that he was entitled to some remuneration out of the Exchequer for having suggested it. 'My Lords,' it was stated, declined to entertain the demand for the following reasons—that they did not admit that the suggestion made by the applicant was the same as the tax imposed, that similar suggestions were received from many other quarters, and that they refused to admit the principle that any citizen suggesting a new mode of raising the national revenue had any claim whatever to a pecuniary reward payable out of the national funds. The tax inventor in question should have lived in the times when prizes were offered for the best suggestions for new taxes, 'the good old days when George the Third was King.'

## THE RESIDUARY LEGATEE.

By William Pigott.

The day that old Major Dalrymple was buried seemed singularly in keeping with so solemn an event. The light never advanced beyond a semi-obscurity, and the air was heavy with the smell of rotting leaves. There was a wild look over the country in the morning, bleak fields, long uncompromising hedgerows, gaunt trees dropping softly and silently the last of their quota to the decaying vegetation in the dikes. Towards evening, when the funeral was over, the darkness fell quickly, and with a damp chill that made the blacksmith's shop in the village, with its glowing forge, seem a strangely inviting and comfortable place.

In the library at the Hall, a fire was burning, and it was needed. It shone brightly and continually upon the cross-barred ceiling, and glinted, as it flickered and fell, now upon the glass window of a bookcase, now upon an old Dresden ornament, now upon the huge brass inkstand which the major had used—and no one else had dared to use—until a month before his death.

It lighted the faces of two people, who were seated in front of it, a girl and a young man. They were dressed in deep mourning, as was fitting, for one was the ward and the other the nephew of the deceased, and their faces looked white in the gloom. He was holding her hand, which betokened an understanding; and the subject of their converse was, not unnaturally, the disposition of the property of the late major.

'Perhaps he never made one?' said the girl.

The man was not disposed to accept this view. 'He would make one,' he said, a little bitterly, 'if it were only to cut me out.'

There was a moment's pause, and then the girl crept closer to him. 'I can never make up to you, Harold,' she whispered, 'for all you have lost through me.'

Her lover slipped his arm round her waist. 'I feel wonderfully content to let you try,' he declared.

'You see,' the girl said thoughtfully, her eyes fixed upon the glowing coals, 'you had such a splendid chance.'

'I was hoping,' said Harold, 'that I had it still.'

'Don't be silly. You know what I mean. The major was a rich old man, with no living relations in the world but his two nephews, Gilbert Macgregor and you. That was your chance.'

'And also Gilbert's chance,' said the young man pertinently.

'It was a chance for both of you. For a

long time you were on your trial. Everybody knew it; you knew it yourselves. Most people said Gilbert Macgregor would be chosen.' She paused, and concluded, näively: 'I said Harold Cecil.'

She received what such a remark naturally provoked; and after a time Harold had leisure to make an observation. 'And you were right,' he said, 'and all the rest of the people were quite wrong.'

The girl smoothed her hair, and continued her retrospect. 'Yes, I was right. The major asked you to come and live with him, which was very kind of him, and of course you came. He treated you as his son; everything here was put at your disposal; you had all you could possibly wish for while he lived, and the assurance of being his heir when he died. To all this there was attached a single condition—not expressly stated, perhaps, but understood—and you broke it.'

'When a condition is an impossibility,' observed Cecil, with a show of reason, 'a man is bound to break it.'

'Oh, but this was not an impossibility. It was really a very simple thing: you were not to fall in love with his ward. And—and you'——

'Well?' said Harold calmly.

'And you did,' she snapped, fiercely returning his gaze.

Her eyes were sparkling in the firelight, and it gleamed upon her skin, which was soft and white. Harold felt that an attempt to contravene her statement must eventually bring him to disaster; so he confirmed it at once, which was satisfactory to them both. 'In consequence,' he remarked, 'I was dismissed with ignominy, and Gilbert installed, to try his hand at the impossibility.'

'Which,' said the girl paradoxically, 'he proved to be no impossibility.'

Cecil was obviously sceptical. 'Three months was not long to hold out,' he observed. 'And, besides, there was the question of expediency. I wonder,' he added reflectively, 'why the major was so dead against either of us marrying you?'

The girl laughed softly. 'Do you know who I am?' she asked.

The question seemed to amuse Cecil. 'I know that you are the dearest little woman in all the world,' was his very natural reply, 'and that you were my uncle's ward, and that your name is Mary Johnson; and if you ask me if I want to know any more, I can tell you that I do not.'

'You see, you have taken me on very slender credentials,' said the girl, smiling. 'Now, how do you remember the major?'

'He was a dear old man,' replied Harold; 'a bit touchy, perhaps, and impulsive, but a dear old man, and as proud of his blood as the combined peerage.'

'"There never was an Eccles,"' observed Mary inconsequently.

'So I have heard,' replied Cecil. 'But at present I can't say that I care particularly whether there was or was not.'

'Well, there never was a Johnson, either. My father was a self-made man. My grandfather worked as a common labourer. So my blood is of the ordinary colour. It would never have done for the inheritor of the Dalrymple estates to marry a person with blood of the ordinary colour.' She looked intensely serious as she finished, and Cecil felt vaguely uncomfortable.

'You would not chaff me out of marrying you,' he remarked, 'even if I were the inheritor of the estates.'

'Perhaps you are? The will has not been read.'

'That is a mere formality.'

'He turned you out; but he may not have altered his will.'

'Oh, surely'——

'Three months is not a long time, Harold.'

'Quite long enough,' said Harold.

'Supposing it were a will in your favour with a condition?'

'It will not be. He saw me break a condition in his lifetime.'

Mary was not disposed to argue. 'We shall see,' she said.

'I suppose we shall,' Cecil agreed, 'but I wonder when? The lawyer should have been here for the funeral. That was at two o'clock.' He took out his watch. 'It is now five, and there is no sign of him.'

The door softly opened, and softly closed. In the interval, a man had entered the room. He was thin, clean-shaven, and jaunty in manner. There was the suggestion about him of the trimmed and studied humorist, chastened by a solemnity fitting the mournful occasion. His dress was properly funereal. In his left hand he carried a bunch of keys. Obviously, he was a man of culture, but one couldn't avoid the feeling that he would have made an excellent groom.

His eyebrows lifted slightly when he saw the couple by the fireplace; then he tripped up to them. 'You have found a pleasant fire,' he pattered. 'With our spirits at so low an ebb, we find a fire distinctly comforting.'

'We were talking about this lawyer, Gilbert,' said Harold. 'I suppose the old gentleman hasn't put in an appearance yet?'

'I am disturbed to say no. By the delay, we are seriously incommoded. It brings us to a standstill. It brings us to a palpable halt.'

'I suppose it does,' said Harold. 'But the point is, we want him to play propriety. I don't relish the idea of turning out to-night, eh?'

Gilbert was balancing himself on his toes, with a perpetual up and down motion that suggested a wire framework. 'You touch on a delicate point,' he tittered. 'The position is assuredly embarrassing—he, he. I earnestly trust the good man will arrive.'

'I think,' said Harold, 'I will go and make some inquiries at the stables.' So saying, he rose from his seat and went out of the room, leaving his *fiancée* and his cousin together; which, had he thought about the matter at all, he might have considered was not altogether a wise thing to do.

Mary rose as the door closed behind him. Her lips had tightened, her bearing had become more assertive. She looked for a moment

at the keys which Gilbert carried in his hand; then raised her eyes to his face. 'You came here for a purpose,' she said.

Gilbert hooked the split-ring to his little finger, and lightly jangled the keys. 'You allude to these little articles,' he said pleasantly. 'They are my uncle's keys, and your remark—as your remarks always are—is distinctly pertinent. I thought it best,' he babbled on, 'even in the absence of the family adviser, to go cursorily through the papers, to make a preliminary investigation, to take a dip at the brink—so to speak—in preparation for the plunge it will be necessary to make later on *in medias res*. The office is a painful one, but it seemed to fall naturally to me, as a man of business, while Harold—I say it in all goodwill—Harold is a man of pleasure.'

Mary heard him through with some impatience. 'I suppose,' she suggested, 'you mean you are going to look for the will?'

'It is possible,' he said airily, 'that I may come across it—it is possible.'

He waved his hand, and set himself to walk—or, rather, to bounce—up and down the room. To a person who knew Gilbert Macgregor, this was a sure indication that he was about to say something which he considered important. Mary, therefore, moved swiftly and silently in the direction of the door.

'You will not go,' cried Gilbert, steadying his antics, 'I entreat you?' There was no help for it. So she stayed.

'It has been my privilege, Miss Johnson,' he began, 'to live for three months beneath the same roof with you. Will you allow me to assure you that it is impossible for a man to remain that length of time in your immediate propinquity, and not become, as it were, your slave.' As he warmed to his work, he jerked off again on his jaunting parade. 'If I have appeared to you heedless, inattentive, perhaps cold, believe me it was only that I feared to presume. I was overcome with emotions, but I hesitated from the dread of misconstruction. You enjoy, as I knew, a considerable property; which, I was distressed to think, might be deemed an attraction to a man of slender means. With the death of my revered uncle, that fear may be laid aside. I cannot doubt that I am in a position which will render the sincerity of my motives no longer open to suspicion. I come before you as a supplicant. As such, I would entreat of your bounty no more than a morsel of grace—a sign that my suit has been heard and has not displeased. If I have failed to offend, I am satisfied. Miss Johnson, I tremble.'

As he uttered the concluding words, he twitched himself to a standstill, facing the girl. Her colour had gradually risen during this oration, the muscles round her mouth had hardened, her face had assumed an expression of indignation.

'You are silent,' piped Gilbert. 'I have presumed. Forget it.'

'I will not forget it,' cried the girl, drawing herself up, and facing him boldly. 'You choose to affect ignorance, but you know that I am engaged to your cousin, and your proposal is an insult. As to your pretended scruples, your behaviour was not actuated by any such delicate motives as you have the effrontery to suggest. You knew that to make any advances in my guardian's lifetime was to court his displeasure, and lose your chance of the money you coveted beyond everything. So you waited till his death, and now come to me before the sods are laid upon his grave.' She whipped her skirts away from him, and with her head very much out of the perpendicular, walked majestically to the door. She opened it, and turned to throw a final shaft: 'You take it for granted that the money is yours; but remember—the will has not been read.' Then the door closed behind her with a snap.

By the girl's tirade Gilbert was not extensively disturbed. He was able to believe that he had suffered an undeserved imputation, and considered himself to be disillusioned. But her concluding words rankled. Was it possible that the major had taken his ward into his confidence? Did she know of the existence of a will unfavourable to himself?

As the possibility presented itself, a spasm of apprehension passed through him. To inherit the major's wealth was a matter of enormous import to Gilbert Macgregor. He had staked heavily on the expectation of it, and to lose the inheritance meant ruin and loss of honour. Though his mind rebelled against placing any significance upon the girl's words, they had taken root in his brain and increased his anxiety to get speedily forward with the work of finding the will.

He locked the door, pulled the heavy curtains across the window, and lighted the lamp which stood upon a small table by the side of the major's desk. The room was oblong. The whole of one side and end was lined with cases and shelves filled with books. In the middle of the opposite side stood the fireplace: the great oriel window broke out from the remaining end. An old oak cabinet of interesting workmanship stood in the niche between the fireplace and window; the space in the corner being filled by an iron safe. The corresponding niche between the fireplace and door was occupied by a bureau, with blue china ranged upon the ledges above it. The major's desk stood in the centre of the room, facing the bookshelves. Tables and chairs completed the furniture.

The most likely place for a valuable document to be kept in was obviously the safe. It was accordingly to this that Gilbert first directed his attention. He found the key, and succeeded in swinging open the heavy door without difficulty. There were five shelves in the interior, each bulging with documents, title-deeds carefully tied up in brown paper, insurance policies, stock and share certificates, miscellaneous papers all valuable to the owner, but of little account to anybody else. He took them out and twice went through them carefully. There was no sign of the will. Considerably disgusted, he returned them to their shelves, and snapped the door back in its place.

He turned from the safe to the cabinet which stood beside it. It was composed of four cupboards—two small ones at the top, two

larger ones at the bottom—with a long, shallow drawer between them. He opened one of the upper cupboards. It contained innumerable fragments of broken china—pieces of old Sèvres tea-cups, the broken remnants of a beautiful Satsuma bowl, a valuable blue Hawthorne vase in several sections—all, evidently, gems from the major's collection, which had proved their perishable nature, and been set in a safe place with a view to renovation. Under ordinary circumstances, Gilbert might have spent some time in examining these interesting fragments; but now he merely gave a grunt of dissatisfaction, closed the cupboard door, and opened its fellow. The contents were of a widely different order. There were theatre programmes for fifteen consecutive years, newspaper cuttings of varying dates, ranging over an even greater length of time, and some old pamphlets and small dun-coloured volumes, which the major, no doubt, had enjoyed in his youth, but which in his mature years he had judged it wiser to keep under lock and key.

Gilbert closed the cupboard and savagely dragged open the drawer beneath it. Almost the first object that his glance rested upon was the will. He took it out with fingers that perceptibly shook, opened it, and pressed out the folds. The major directed the payment of his just debts—a superfluous clause which lawyers, being paid by the folio, think it best to insert—and left several legacies to old retainers and friends, and five hundred pounds to his ward. These preliminaries Gilbert merely skimmed over: he was interested in nothing but the residuary devise. When he reached it, the words swam before him in a mist, and he was forced to set the will down while he gained some control over his nerves. Presently he raised it again. The words had steadied themselves, and he read them: *All the rest, residue and remainder of my real and personal property, whatsoever and wheresoever, I give, devise, and bequeath to my nephew, Harold Cecil, in fee-simple, for his own absolute use and benefit.*

Gilbert's face had become as white as the paper he held in his hand. The blow had fallen so heavily that it left him for a time without the power to grapple with the facts. He was simply crushed, and could not rally. There was a cloud on his brain which would admit nothing but a dull sense of the impossibility of the proposition that, in spite of his care, in spite of the assurances he had received from his uncle, he was left to face ruin and dishonour.

This state of mind could not last long. He was naturally a man of energy and resource, and under no circumstances was it possible for his brain to remain long inactive. He closed and opened his eyes several times, like a man trying to accustom himself to a strong light, emptied his lungs with a dull, whistling sound, and once more set himself to study the offending clause. It was a singularly lucid and thorough one: no man in his senses could conceivably entertain any doubt as to its meaning: had he had the drafting of it himself, he felt he could not have improved upon it, except in the particular of the name. He stared at that until the letters assumed distressing proportions. They spelt 'Harold Cecil,' and by no ingenuity could he make them spell 'Gilbert Macgregor.'

The date of the will was the 15th August 1892. That was some months before Cecil had received his dismissal. Gilbert's spirits revived as he realised this. There would be a later will, by which the one in his hand would be made void. But almost as the possibility presented itself, he was forced to admit that it was only a possibility. The major had been an orderly man, whom he had heard more than once condemn the practice of accumulating superfluous papers. If this will were valueless, why had it not been destroyed? Why was it kept among his uncle's counterfoils and magisterial documents in the cabinet drawer?

His cogitations had advanced to this point, when he detected the sound of carriage wheels on the road. He listened, and heard them turn in at the gates and crunch upon the gravel in the drive. So the solicitor was coming at last! In a moment, his mind had grasped the salient features of that event, as they affected himself. After the man of business had entered the house he must stand or fall by the slender chance of a later will. Until he came he had it in his power to make sure of half the estate. His nerves were in a deplorable condition. A little matter was awaiting his attention, and he hesitated. The sound of the wheels on the drive grew louder and seemed to deafen him. With an oath, he crushed the will on to the fire, and the flames caught and lapped round it.

He held it in its place with the poker, till it turned to black ashes and dropped away. Then he made a few slight readjustments in his dress, and tripped out into the hall. He opened the front door; but the trap proved to contain no more interesting occupant than the groom who was driving.

'Another futile journey, James?' said Gilbert affably.

'Yes, sir,' replied the man. 'There's been a bit of a haccident, sir. Only just got word. Main line's blocked, and London passengers won't be in for another hour, they say.'

He drove off in the direction of the stables, and Gilbert skipped back into the house. He returned to the library, and sat down at the major's desk. The false alarm had shaken him, and he sat for some moments motionless, with his head between his hands. On reflection, he was not inclined to regret the interruption. At the worst, he would now share the estate with his cousin under an intestacy; and there still remained the chance of a later will which would give him the whole.

The desk was fitted with a line of drawers down each side, and Gilbert, continuing his search in a somewhat desultory way, opened the top one on the right. It held writing-paper and envelopes. The second was half filled with unpaid bills. He pulled at the third, but it proved to be locked. The first key that he tried overcame the difficulty, and he drew the drawer open. It contained a miscellaneous collection of papers, arranged in an orderly way. There were several bundles of tradesmen's receipts, waiting for the file,

the major's bank books, and various printed forms, relating for the most part to the transfer of stock. But Gilbert had no inducement to dip deeply into the contents of this drawer; for a document, lying well to the front, at once commanded his attention. It was a sheet of foolscap, neatly folded, and endorsed by the major's own hand:

*Codicil to my will of the 15th day of August* 1892.

Had it been a new will he would have pounced upon it with alacrity. Being a codicil, he drew it out slowly, and with a certain misgiving. He had never thought of a codicil. It was only a few lines long, and manifestly contrived without legal assistance. For so small a document it was astonishingly sweeping: *This is a codicil to my will of the 15th August* 1892. *I direct that wherever the name of my nephew, Harold Cecil, occurs in my said will, the name of my nephew, Gilbert Macgregor, be read in its place, and that my said will be given effect to as though the name Gilbert Macgregor had been originally inserted therein, and not the name Harold Cecil.* Then followed the signature and attestation.

A person of duller wits might have experienced a momentary satisfaction at reading this. The mortification of Gilbert Macgregor was instant and complete. He realised that the codicil was so worded that without the will it was useless; that, indeed, it was worse than useless: that it was a menace; for it showed the existence of a will which his every interest demanded should now be kept secret. He had set a crime upon his conscience; and the net result was to deprive him of half his inheritance. The paper dropped limply from his hands, and he sat staring with hopeless eyes upon the long lines of books which fronted him.

Presently he roused himself, walked across to the fire, and dropped the tell-tale codicil upon it. He watched it till the ashes broke; then moodily returned to his seat, sank his head upon the desk, and so remained.

The lamp was burning low, and it is possible that he slept. He heard a coal fall in the grate, the smothered tones of some clock in the house striking the hour, and without, as it seemed, an appreciable interval, the sound of voices near him. He partly raised his head and saw two people standing at the farther end of the room: one was his cousin; the other, a white-haired old gentleman, whom he recognised as the family adviser.

'I think, Mr Cecil,' the latter was remarking, 'that it will be convenient to proceed to business at once. I have the will in my bag.'

Gilbert sat up with a gasp. A new will, after all? He should have known that so slender a document as the codicil could only be meant as a safeguard. But now his nerves played him false! He realised that it behoved him, as the person chiefly interested, to rise and greet the solicitor, to be cordial though chastened, to show him such attention as might set him at his ease. He saw Cecil performing the office, and performing it, as he considered, indifferently; yet his own attempt got no further than a bow. The lawyer returned it solemnly, and dipped his hands into a small black bag.

'By my advice,' he proceeded, turning over his papers, 'the will was executed in duplicate. Major Dalrymple took one copy; the other I retained'—he found the document he was looking for—'and have here.' He spread out the will, coughed solemnly, and continued: 'The document is somewhat lengthy, and it will be sufficient, I think, for our present purpose, to touch briefly upon its main features. There are various legacies, both pecuniary and specific, to friends, old servants and retainers. Some three or four thousand pounds is distributed in this way. There is a bequest of £500 to his ward, Mary Johnson. The residuary devise is in favour of his nephew, Harold Cecil.' The old man held out his hand to Harold. 'Will you permit me to congratulate you?'

There was some commotion at the desk. Gilbert had risen, and stood with pallid cheeks and starting eyes, his jaw moving helplessly. Obviously he was trying to speak, but could not form the words. He stretched out an unsteady arm and pointed at the solicitor. Some inarticulate mutterings came from his throat, and then the words, but hoarsely: 'The codicil, sir! You have not read the codicil.'

The old lawyer was taken aback. 'I have no knowledge of any such document,' he replied shortly. 'Major Dalrymple did, it is true, intimate at one time a desire to execute something in the nature of a revocation, but I was not favoured with his instructions.'

There was a pause. Gilbert's face was working convulsively. He could have given fifty thousand pounds for the sheet of foolscap he had dropped so sullenly into the fire, and have made a big profit on the transaction. He had fancied himself destroying a troublesome paper: in reality he was burning his inheritance, his honour, perhaps his life. Bah! there was an irony in it that galled him beyond endurance! With a loud cry, he seized the heavy brass inkstand on the desk, swung it over his head, and hurled it at the unoffending lawyer. The old man avoided it with some agility, and it crashed through the glass front of a bookcase. At the same moment, the door clanged; and the air was purer for the absence of a criminal.

## THE ANEMONE.

'One frail and fair anemone.'—SHELLEY.

SPRING smiles, and sudden silver songs arise;
Earth dons her ever fresh green garb in glee.
Note, 'neath the sun's gay glance, the soft surprise
Of innocent young waves. But o'er the lea
To-morrow Boreas rushes. An oak-tree
Defies him: then he harries all the way—
The first anemone crushed carelessly.
His loved young brother, Zephyr, comes next day,
And, wistful wailing, seeks his little playmate gay.

E. H.

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## THE LAND OF DATES.

Most people nowadays know the dates of Tafilet, but few people know much of the country from whence they come, for of the many travellers who have told us something of the land of the Moors, only one or two have penetrated beyond the Atlas Mountains. For this reason, there is a special and peculiar interest in the narrative which Mr Walter B. Harris has recently published of a memorable journey.* When Mr Harris (who is well acquainted with and has written much already about Morocco and Arabia) made up his mind to go to Tafilet, towards the end of 1893, it was because he heard that the (late) Sultan of Morocco was going there with an immense retinue, to visit the tomb of his ancestors. But the Sultan would have no Europeans in his train—except his French medical adviser, and his Scotch military adviser, 'Kaid' MacLean—so that Mr Harris had to make a route of his own. The Sultan went right through Morocco from Fez, and over the Atlas Mountains to the Sahara, so Mr Harris took a steamer from Tangier down the coast to Saffi, and there engaging servants and mules, marched inland for a hundred miles, in the first place, through a not particularly interesting country to Marakesh, the southern capital of Morocco, and sometimes called Morocco City. It lies almost in the shadow of the Atlas Mountains, whose snow-capped peaks, rising to a height of thirteen and fourteen thousand feet, form a wonderful background to a picture composed otherwise of tropical vegetation and Moorish minarets. Marakesh is almost hidden in a forest of palms, and looks wonderfully picturesque from the outside, but internally it is in a fearful state of dilapidation and squalor. The streets are narrow, though wider than those of Fez, and the houses are for the most part small one-storeyed buildings with the usual inner open court. They are built of mud, bricks, and concrete, and there are only two stone buildings in the place. The bazaars, however, are large and well supplied, where all manner of goods are on sale, from Manchester cottons to Moorish daggers and brass-work.

It was necessary, when preparations were all complete, to get out of the city with secrecy as to the object of his journey, so Mr Harris adopted the Moorish dress, and passed as a devout Islamite on his way to visit some sacred tomb in the interior. Here is his general impression of Marakesh: 'Briefly, it presents a maze of yellow streets leading here between the crumbling walls of tottering houses; there, through narrow, dimly lit bazaars with their tiny boxlike shops; and here, again, amongst the high, white walls of the residences of the richer class. Then out into great open dusty spaces, surrounded by half-ruined mosques with tiled minarets, and gardens, above the walls of which appear the tops of palms, olive, and orange trees, and the straight stems of glowing cypresses. Then, perhaps, one turns a corner and comes face to face with a drinking-fountain of exquisite tilework and carved wood, to stumble, as one gazes at it, into a manure heap or a hole in the road, broken in the roof of some aqueduct. And beyond, the wonderful range of white snow-peaks, the silent majesty of the Atlas Mountains.'

Before the ascent of these mountains began, however, there was a wide and dreary plain to be traversed, the soil of which had been turned into light yellow by the heat of the summer. This passed, the work of climbing becomes arduous, and by-and-by one passes from great heat into extreme cold. At times the track goes along the face of a precipice, anon through deep rocky defiles, and again across rushing streams. There is no game to speak of among these mountains, and often no vegetation, beyond the northern slopes which are exposed to the winter rainfalls. After leaving the area of

* *Tafilet: The Narrative of a Journey of Exploration in the Atlas Mountains and the Oases of the North-west Sahara*, by Walter B. Harris. (Blackwood.)

vegetation, food becomes scarce, and our travellers subsisted for days on green tea, boiled turnips, and dry figs, with occasionally a handful of walnuts—surely poor fare for such a toilsome journey. Both the toils and the diet told on Mr Harris, who was seriously ill when he did reach Tafilet, and would have died (for all the Sultan cared) but for the kindness of some friendly soldiers, and the attention of Dr Linares and Kaid MacLean.

The scenery of the Atlas is wonderfully grand. On the northern slopes are fine-wooded valleys, rich in olive and other fruit trees, but the south stretches away—'a dreary waste of stone and shale, presenting no feature of beauty beyond its gloomy grandeur.' This is because of the desert winds which dry up the soil on the south side, and then rushing up to the summits are transformed by the change of temperature into clouds which fall in heavy showers on the other side. All the principal rivers of Morocco, save one, rise in the Atlas Mountains, and the inhabitants are Berbers.

When one descends the further side of the mountains, the great plains have to be crossed, and part of the route which Mr Harris followed had never before been traversed by European. A vast sandy tract—a strip of the desert—had to be crossed, and over the sandy soil strewn with small black stones the party had to trudge often forty miles a day, to reach some oasis or water hole. One of the most interesting of these resting places is Dads, where Mr Harris tarried for some days enjoying the hospitality of the Shereef; but we must hasten on to Tafilet—although it should be noted that while at Dads Mr Harris found some remarkable caves and a curious ruin, which he proposes to return some day to explore.

At length the last oasis was reached, and 'issuing suddenly upon the great waste of sand, a strange but welcome sight met our eyes. Stretching away for a couple of miles along the edge of the desert, white against white hills, the whole dancing and shimmering in the heated air, lay the great camp of Mulai el Hassan, the late Sultan of Morocco. It was a welcome sight indeed, for whatever reception I might meet with from the Sultan and his officials, I knew this, at least, that my life was safe.' Not so safe after all, however, for Mr Harris was nearly left to die in a mud hut, and met with a very scurvy reception indeed, not even his own countryman, Kaid MacLean, being allowed to go near him for some time.

This, at any rate, was Tafilet, where the Sultan lay encamped with forty thousand men, expending five hundred pounds per day on fodder for the horses alone. It is said that this little expedition of his late majesty's cost no less than a million sterling, and the fatigues of it led to his own death ere he could regain Fez.

Tafilet is so called after a district in Arabia with a somewhat similar name. It consists of a long strip of irrigated land which extends for many miles along the parallel beds of the rivers Ziz and Gheris, which flow out of the Atlas Mountains. It comprises probably four hundred and fifty square miles of land under dense palm cultivation, and is divided into seven districts or provinces. So large an extent of country could only be cultivated by means of irrigation, and the system is most extensive. Nature favours the oasis in this way, that the gradual slope of the valley allows the water to be drawn away from the river without the employment of artificial means for raising it being necessary. The canals and conduits are so numerous that they are met with every fifty yards or so. Some of them are very large, with a channel twenty to thirty feet wide, and a depth of four or five feet of swift-flowing water even in the summer time. The channels of the larger canals are bricked and bridged wherever a road crosses the waterway. Most of the water-courses are raised by embankments above the level of the surrounding ground, so that by cutting away a portion of the bank, the stream can be turned on to the level of the soil, and the whole area quickly irrigated. Between the canals the cultivated plots are usually in square beds of ten to twenty yards square, divided from one another by low banks of earth, so that one portion can be flooded, when needed, without wasting water on other portions that may not need it. Sometimes small channels are cut along the top of these banks, so that minor streams can be carried in every direction and turned on when wanted.

All the oasis is under the date-palm, except one district, and whatever other minor crops are cultivated are grown under the palm-trees. So extraordinarily thick are the palm groves, that rarely in Tafilet can a view be obtained to a greater distance than one hundred yards in any direction, beyond which the horizon will be bounded by a forest of straight stems. Wad Ifli is the name of the central and leading district of the oasis, where the trade and religion centre, and where the prosperity is greatest. It is well sheltered from attack by the other six districts, and here are the sacred tombs, the headquarters of the Governor of Tafilet, the great market of Tafilet, and the abiding-places of the merchants of Fez, who carry on the trade not only with Morocco and the seaboard, but also with the distant Soudan. All that is prosperous and wealthy in Tafilet is to be found in Ifli, with its well-kept canals and limitless supply of water, its bridges and its high-walled gardens, with the tops of fruit-trees appearing above the walls, and the water-channels running under.

The line between the desert sand and the irrigated oasis is so clearly defined that one may, on the outer portions, step out of a green field of palm-trees into soft yellow sand over the ankles. So valuable is the land that the roads and tracks through the oasis are made as narrow as possible, and they twist and turn in an extraordinary manner amongst the fields and gardens. Here and there large open spaces are left for the purpose of drying the dates, and for the holding of local markets, or *sôks*. The villages are either square or oblong, and are surrounded by concrete walls of great thickness, protected at intervals by towers, and sometimes also by a deep ditch. The inhabitants are both Arabs and Berbers, with a considerable number of Jews, and poverty seems to characterise most of them; for although the

people of Tafilet are never absolutely wanting for food, few of them taste flesh-meat oftener than two or three times a year.

It is only by the culture of the date-palm that they are enabled to exist at all. These famous dates are sent by caravan all over Morocco and into the Soudan, while enterprising merchants of Fez carry them on mules and donkeys all the long hot road over the desert, and the cold, toilsome road over the Atlas Mountains to the coast to be shipped to London. Little do we think as we enjoy the fruit what a world of labour it represents, and what a journey it has made from its birthplace in the Sahara!

One must see the oasis, we are told, to realise the enormous quantity of dates grown at Tafilet, the gigantic forest of palm-trees so close together that one can see nothing else for miles and miles, save the thread-like lanes and the rippling water-courses. In the district of Wad Ifli grow the finest qualities, known as *Bu Skri* and *Bu Kfus*, which are so highly prized, and the trees are enclosed within high walls. These precious dates are said to spoil by travelling. The common varieties are eaten by the people, the cattle, the goats, and the horses.

When the dates are ripe, the labourers, who are very skilful in climbing, are sent up the trees to cut or shake off the fruit-laden branches. When they tumble to the ground the dates are collected into panniers, and taken on donkey-back to the drying-grounds, where they are laid out in the sun with a guard of women to see that no one steals his neighbour's fruit, though any one may pick up a handful for his individual consumption on the spot. The dates are plucked just before they are actually ripe, for if left to be fully ripe they fall of themselves and are rotted by the irrigation. At the drying-grounds the fruit is poured in great heaps upon the ground, and turned over by the women from time to time to allow the sun to reach the whole of it, and the sight of these great mounds of dates is a curious one.

There are various methods of treatment. One is to leave the dates to be sun-dried singly; another is to crush them into solid masses, which are sewn up in basket-work for transport; another is to crush them into lumps about the size of a turkey's egg. This last is preferred by the poorer natives for travelling purposes, as the lumps are easily carried; but oh! how indigestible they must be, as hard as a stone and as heavy as lead. The caravan route between Fez and Tafilet occupies ten or twelve days, and from the oasis trade-roads radiate in almost every direction, but little information is obtainable about them.

Besides dates, wheat and barley are grown in some portions of Tafilet, but millet and maize form, with dates, the principal food of the people. In the gardens, grapes, pomegranates, apples, pears, gourds, and melons flourish, as well as cabbages, onions, peas, and beans, but these are only cultivated by the richer classes, the favourite vegetable of the poor being the turnip. There is an export of prepared sheep-skins, famous all over Morocco, the fleece of the Tafilet sheep being very fine. There are also manufacturing gunsmiths and silversmiths, but their work is coarse. Sandals are made locally, but all the best shoes are imported from Fez. Antimony ('kohl') and lead are both found, and the lead is worked for bullets, but it is cheaper to import lead into Morocco from Europe than to work and transport the Tafilet mineral. There are no aromatic gums produced in Tafilet, but the Soudanese send large quantities there, which the merchants buy up and send on to Fez. The return caravans bring cottons, shoes, silk belts and handkerchiefs, iron bars, candles, sugar, and green tea. The imports are not all for consumption in Tafilet, and a good deal is sent on farther into the Sahara and Soudan. Unhappily, too, the slave-trade finds a profitable centre at Tafilet, and Mr Harris mentions that when he was there many slaves were brought in from the Soudan and hawked about the Sultan's camp at from thirty to one hundred and twenty dollars per head.

Except the domestic animals there seems to be no variety of animal life in Tafilet, and the domestic animals include camels, cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, goats, sheep, dogs, poultry, and pigeons. Gazelles are found in the desert, but do not approach the oasis; and a day or two's journey south the ostrich is encountered.

Such, then, is this strange spot in the distant Sahara, which to most people has been heretofore hardly even a geographical expression, but only associated with a dessert-dish. How difficult of access it is we have seen in the case of Mr Harris, who had to go in the garb of a Moor; and how physically trying is the journey is to be seen in his own illness and the Sultan's death. On the return to the seaboard Mr Harris had the company and protection of Kaid MacLean for a portion of the way, and on reaching Marakesh again had to remain three weeks to recruit. While there the Sultan arrived with the remnants of his host, thousands of the men and about a third of the animals having been frozen to death in the passes of the Atlas, or fallen over the frightful precipices.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XIX. *(continued).*

So I sprang out of bed, and dragging the box out of the corner into the middle of the room, I threw open the lid and began to search, taking out the contents slowly, one by one.

The chest had been left just as it was since the old man's death. Nothing had been taken away; only it had been searched a hundred times. Every separate member of the family had searched it over and over again for three generations in hopes of finding that lost fortune. But in vain. And now it was my turn.

The chest contained a collection, of course, which showed travel. It was divided into two unequal compartments; one about two feet six long, and the other about eighteen inches. Both compartments were provided with a tray about

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two and a half inches deep. The things in the chest were not arranged in order, but just lay about, one on the other, piled up, just as they were thrown in by the last who examined the contents. The things were not such as we should now call rare; they consisted of curios brought from voyages in the Far East, and sea-going things of the time. Thus, an ancient rusty flint and steel pistol belonged to the sailor. An Oriental dagger must have been picked up in some native ship in Calicut or Bombay. The mariner's compass, the roll of charts, the telescope, the sextant, the large silver watch—belonged to the sailor; so, I suppose, did a mummified flying-fish, which still preserved something of its ancient salt sea smell; a carved sandal-wood box, one or two Oriental pipes, a large figure of Buddha or somebody else, looking supremely wise and philosophic, or perhaps theosophic; certain silk handkerchiefs mostly eaten by moths, slippers in gilt leather, a book of Hindu pictures, ugly and fleshly, one or two things in mother-of-pearl, half-a-dozen gold rings, twenty or thirty silver bangles tied together; all these things spoke of the Eastern traveller, and, a hundred years ago, would be thought curious.

The first thing that made me jump was a leathern belt, lying at the bottom of the box. A leathern belt! Why, it confirmed, I thought, that strange story concerning the fever-stricken passenger. He had his leathern belt. Well, but anybody may have a leathern belt. And this was quite a common thing; a broad strap with a buckle, black with wear or with age. I took it out and examined it. Now, which was a very remarkable coincidence, the leather was double, it could be pulled open along the upper line, and there was room within for just such a long slim bag as was described by my imaginary Nabob. I passed my fingers along the whole length of this curious double belt—the secret holding belt. No, there were no jewels left.

Nothing more was in the box of the least importance; all the things lay on the floor beside the box; the thing itself, with its lid wide open, stood below the window, the full light falling into its two compartments. As you know, I am a fairly good hand at a lathe, and I am by trade a practical boat-builder, a craftsman; my eye is therefore trained. Now, as I looked into the empty chest thinking about that belt, I perceived that at the back of the chest in the larger compartment, the longer side was not quite at right angles with the bottom of the chest. The difference was very slight, an inclination of a very few degrees from the right angle; still, it was there, and to a practised eye, quite visible. But in the smaller compartment, the right angle left nothing to be desired. It was a true right angle. Was this accidental? I lifted the chest, and changed its position. Yes: there could be no doubt about the inclination of the lower two inches all along the back of the larger compartment. I turned the box over: the back was perfectly rectangular. But here, again, I observed a curious point. The chest was solidly built: the wood was thick all over: but the wood of the back was two inches thick. Why had they taken such extraordinary precautions to strengthen the chest? And then a strange sense of excitement fell upon me—because I was now quite certain that all these signs meant something which I was going to discover.

The chest was lined with paper of a pattern which contained, at intervals of four or five inches, a black thick line—one of these lines occurred just above the beginning of the angle. The effect of the line was, of course, to darken the part just above and just below. Now, when I looked narrowly into the place, I fancied that I saw below the line another which looked as if it was a solution of the continuity. Two inches below, at the very bottom of the chest, there was a mark of some kind, but not that of a solution of the continuity.

A practical man in the boat-building trade never goes about, even in his bedroom, without a good strong jack-knife, one that will serve many purposes, if necessary. I found mine, and I tested this apparent juncture. Yes: the blade penetrated easily. I passed it along the box, backwards and forwards—the wood creaked, being old and dry. What was the meaning of this slit? I turned the knife round. The wood slowly gave way and this part of the box, grindingly and grudgingly, opened. It turned on creaking hinges, being kept in place by two rusty springs. I dragged it quite open with my fingers. It was a long, narrow, slightly curved shutter, fitting tightly to the side of the box at a small angle, almost imperceptible. Behind, the thick wood of the box had been hollowed out: and thus a secret cupboard was found, the existence of which would never be suspected.

In that narrow recess lay the thing for which everybody had been searching for nearly a hundred years: the cause of the cousins' quarrel and separation: the long narrow bag of brown canvas stuff like one of the old-fashioned purses, only open at the end instead of the middle.

With a beating heart, I took it out. The narrow brown canvas bag—just as the ruined Nabob had told me—did he appear just then in order to tell me? I laid it on the bed. It was tied very tightly with string at one end—there were things in it! What things?

I threw the bag on the bed and leaned out of the window. The morning air was fresh; the sun was bright: the river—I could see it over the boat-shed—danced in the sunlight and the breeze. I sat there for some time—I know not how long—my brain running away with me, filled with confused murmurs—as of people all talking together: the original Robert and George clamouring for a division: old John himself telling us how the great Eastern king bade him fill his pockets and fear not: the poor old ragged Nabob sitting on Wapping Old Stairs in order to bewail his loss, and Isabel whispering that I should be better without these diamonds. A curious jumble of voices, and of thoughts.

Perhaps it was not the bag of diamonds.

I left the window. I dared to put the thing

to the proof; I cut the string with my knife, and I poured out the contents upon the sheet of the open bed.

Heavens! What a shower was that which descended! Danae herself never saw so fine a sight. They fell in a small cascade of splendid light and colour—diamond, pearl, emerald, ruby, sapphire, jasper, topaz, beryl, opal, hyacinth, turquoise, agate, every conceivable gem poured out of the long sack—two feet six long and three inches broad—and there they lay before me in a heap, glittering in the morning light. There were thousands of stones: large and small: not rough stones, but all cut and polished.

I had found the old man's precious hoard. What they were worth I could not imagine, nor have I ever learned. Only to amass such an immense sum in the service of an Eastern Prince, in twenty years, must, I should imagine, as the Nabob hinted, be extremely dangerous to the welfare of the soul.

I ran my fingers through the pile. I played with the pretty things. I threw them up to watch the light playing on them as they fell. I rolled them over and over. Then began various temptations: I am not ashamed to confess to the very elementary suggestion that I should 'sneak' those jewels. Said the voice of the Tempter: 'Nobody knows what you have found. Take the stones and go back to Piccadilly. There will be heaps and heaps for you to live upon in that bag as long as you are likely to live, and afterwards. Piccadilly is much more pleasant than Wapping. Boat-building is a mean, mechanical craft. Remember that you belong to that end of town. This is a Providential occasion: it is sent to you on purpose to restore you to your old position.'

To this Tempter—I don't know why he took the trouble to come at all—one could easily find a reply. 'Sir,' I said, with dignity, 'you do not know to whom you are speaking. Go away, sir. Go to the devil, sir!'

The second Tempter said: 'Why, just as this treasure would have belonged to the original Robert and George, had they found it, so it belongs to the new Robert and George, now that they have found it. Call him in quickly and share it with him. Halves. That will give you both plenty to live upon.'

To which I made answer on reflection: 'My grandfather had brothers and sisters. They went down in the world while he went up. I have cousins somewhere who have as much right to the inheritance as I myself. And Robert has brothers and sisters—no doubt, cousins as well. The inheritance belongs to them as well as to Robert. If every one of us has his share, there will not be much left.'

Then said the Tempter: 'Why tell the far-off, unknown cousins anything about it? Probably they are much better without their share; much best for most men to keep poor; they are out of temptation. Besides, there is not too much to be divided between you and Robert. You will be able to go back to the West End; it's a much more pleasant life. Here you will vegetate and grow stupid; your manners will fall from you; your ideas will grow sordid, like your business. Better go West again, and stay there. You will never again get such a chance. Boat-building is a mean, mechanical craft.'

'You too,' I said, with a struggle, 'may go to your own place, wherever that may be.'

I put back the stones in their bag. I closed the shutter: I filled the chest with its contents; I closed the lid, and pushed the chest back into the corner. Then I lay down on the bed and fell fast asleep.

When I awoke it was past six, and the life on the river had long since begun. Had I dreamed! At first I thought so. The dream of the unfortunate Nabob and his narrative was just as vivid as the dream of finding the diamonds. Fired with this thought, I sprang out of bed and tore open the box: yes, along the bottom ran that thin line which I had opened with my knife. I doubted no longer.

I had found the diamonds.

I dressed quickly and hurried down to the river, where I went out for a pull in one of our own boats—Burnikel & Burnikel. The exercise and the fresh air set my brain right. I was able to see the thing in its true light, namely—the find did not affect me at all. For nearly ninety years that sea-chest had been in the possession of the tenant of the house; Robert received it as part of his inheritance; to him, as to the eldest, the family house and the family business; to the others, a small sum of money each and the wide, wide world. The chest was Robert's, with all its contents; just as the old man's bed was Robert's, and all the furniture of the house was his.

After breakfast, the Captain retired to his own room. Isabel and I were left alone. She proceeded, according to her wont, to wash up the teacups—it is an ancient, homely custom among old-fashioned housewives, and belongs to a time when china was dear and very precious.

'You look serious, George,' she said. 'Has anything important happened?'

'Something very important.'

'Is it anything that will take you away from this place?'

Then I looked around, and considered this maiden, how sweet and good she was; and how much simpler and sweeter than the girls of society; and how lovely she was, especially when the colour, like the dainty delicate bloom of the peach, rose to her cheek: and how she loved me—that I knew; and how I was bent upon taking her away from her cold, unloving *fiancée;* and how she would never find any place in society where she would be happy; and how I could not live without her.

Of course, the chest belonged absolutely to Robert. The chest and all that it contained.

'No, Isabel, nothing will ever happen that will take me from your presence unless you command me to go.'

Despite my promise, some such words would fly out from time to time. My excuse is that I was thinking continually how to effect Isabel's release.

She made no reply, but went on washing up the cups and saucers.

'Isabel,' I said, remembering the tearful Nabob, 'do you remember telling me about a certain member of your family who came home from India, and always raved about a

lost fortune? Where did your people come from?'

'They lived at Canterbury once.' That was where the Nabob went. 'I do not know how long they lived there.'

'And about that man coming from India? Do you know anything about the fortune that he lost?'

'There was a man once—I have heard my great-grandfather, who lived to a very old age, speak of his uncle, who was a very strange man. He had been abroad, and he was wandering in his wits, and used to sit down and cry over a lost fortune, which he said was in a belt. That is all I know about him. My great-grandfather always said that he believed in the loss of the fortune. But why do you ask?'

'Only because I dreamed about him last night. Odd, wasn't it? Dreamed that he sat on the steps, and wept over his lost fortune.'

'You dreamed about him? About my great-great-uncle, of whom you have heard that strange thing!'

'Yes. It's a strange world. I dreamed about him. I will tell you some day—soon—what I dreamed. It's a very strange world, indeed, Isabel. And the most wonderful things get found out, years and years and years after they were done and forgotten.'

Then, for reasons of my own, I resolved to tell no one about the diamonds. One or two things had to be done before Robert should learn of his recovered inheritance.

## OUR NAVAL INCREASE.

If events had led to a coalition of the Great Powers against England ten years ago, the English navy would have been worsted, and English commerce driven from the seas. If such a coalition were to be formed to-day, England would make a good show against it. It is doubtful, indeed, whether her efforts would be very successful at first, but she would probably be able to hold her own sufficiently long to bring her 'staying' power into evidence. Before she was beaten, her wealth and manufacturing resources would come to the rescue, but only after a terrible sacrifice of life and capital.

But in the near future, if the lesson of the past has been well learnt, and if our vigilance and precautions be not again relaxed, we shall be able to regard the possibility of such a hostile coalition with confidence. For, granting that the naval progress of the past decade be maintained for the next five or six years, England will then be in a position to speak with paramount authority on all colonial questions, even in the face of a combination of all the powers.

A probable defeat, a hard struggle, a sure hope of victory. Such is the briefest summary of our position at sea in the immediate past, the present, and perhaps the future.

It was in 1885 that this country began to wake from her naval lethargy. Grave foreign complications arose at that time, and war seemed imminent. In face of such a possibility a careful estimate had to be made of our naval resources, and they were found wanting. Though war was happily averted, public attention had been roused, and the conviction that we were unprepared to meet any serious naval attack, produced a most painful impression throughout the country. In spite of paltry efforts at naval reform, that impression continued to deepen until all classes united in demanding vigorous action; and the Naval Defence Act of 1889 was the direct outcome of the agitation.

That Act provided for an addition to the navy of seventy ships, and ten of them were to be first-class armour-clads. This was indeed a step in the right direction.

After the Act of 1889 followed something of a lull, and not so much activity was shown in 1892–93 and 1893–94; though in that period were laid down the battleships *Majestic*, *Magnificent*, and *Renown*, and those great 14,000 ton first-class cruisers, *Terrible* and *Powerful*, with an ocean speed of twenty-two knots.

But the country had been roused too effectually to admit of any return to the old *laisser aller* policy. In 1894, popular opinion demanded another increase, and what is known as Lord Spencer's Programme was passed. That great scheme made provision for seven first-class battleships, four first-class cruisers, ten second-class cruisers, two third-class cruisers, and a most important item of fifty-six torpedo-boat destroyers. Of all these ships a fair proportion are already complete and the remainder are approaching completion.

Before turning to Mr Goschen's new programme of 1896, it may be well to consider what circumstances have led to the necessity for another exceptional naval effort before Lord Spencer's scheme has reached maturity. Politicians may mince words as they will, or endeavour to mask facts in the passionless phraseology of diplomacy; but the real reason for our activity is to be sought, as every one knows, in the 'messages' of Mr Cleveland and the Emperor of Germany. As England woke up in 1885, and found herself unable to face a *probable* hostile combination, so in 1896 she wakes again and finds herself unable to face with security a *possible* combination. If any one had told us a year ago that the time would come when we should have to reckon not only with the old bugbears of Russia and France, but with entirely new adversaries in America and Germany, he would have been looked upon as a visionary and alarmist. And yet, what serious-minded Englishman but would have wished a month or two ago to see a few more gallant ships at Portsmouth and Plymouth, and a few more gallant men to fight them, if the word was passed for fighting!

The command of the sea against *all* comers;

that is the text on which Mr Cleveland and the Emperor of Germany have preached sermons to us. We have taken their lessons to heart, and the first earnest of our repentance and resolve to mend our ways is the Naval Programme for 1896. Mr Goschen's scheme is a compromise as regards outlay between the optimism of the peace party, and the jingoism of alarmists.

Besides being a compromise as regards the amount of money to be spent, Mr Goschen's scheme is a compromise as regards the details of its spending. It is an open secret that the Admiralty had under their consideration two building programmes. The first advocated spending money in the way in which it would produce the greatest show in the shortest possible time; that is, in accelerating the completion of ships already under construction, and in building torpedo boats, torpedo catchers, third-class cruisers, and other small fry, all of which could be ready within twelve months. The second made battleships and first-class cruisers (needing from two to three years for construction) the *pièce de résistance*. The programme actually adopted takes a *via media* between these extremes. It provides a great deal of acceleration for ships already in construction, a fair proportion of the torpedo catcher element, and a strong backbone of battleships and big cruisers. Five battleships, four first-class cruisers, three second-class cruisers, six third-class cruisers, twenty-eight torpedo-boat destroyers; that is the addition to our fleet which Mr Goschen proposes: and the verdict of well-informed and non-extremist circles approves this addition as being carefully considered, and conceived in a large-minded spirit. What scope exists for the acceleration of ships already building, can be best appreciated by stating that under Lord Spencer's scheme there still remain to be completed eight battleships, twenty-one cruisers, and forty torpedo-boat destroyers. The work on all these ships will, no doubt, be pushed forward very rapidly, and their original dates of completion will be anticipated. The case of the great battleships *Majestic* and *Magnificent*, which have just joined the Channel Squadron many months in advance of their due time, will show to what extent the accelerating process can be carried.

For the uninitiated, a word as to the general classification of warships may not be out of place. In the English service, a first-class battleship has come to mean a vessel of the very latest design, protected by heavy side armour, and carrying the most powerful guns. Theoretically, a battleship is supposed to be able to hold her own under any circumstances, and to retire before no antagonist. Their speeds vary from fifteen to eighteen knots an hour, and the epithet first class is not applied to ships of less than ten thousand tons displacement. It is not that size *per se* is any advantage, but experience has shown that the desiderata necessary to give a ship first-rate effectiveness cannot be combined in vessels under a certain size. Cruisers are vessels with less side armour, or altogether without side armour, though they are protected by an armoured deck just below the water-line, which screens magazines and engines from shells bursting above. They have higher speeds than ironclads, varying from seventeen to twenty-two knots an hour, carry lighter guns, and rely on their offensive power to crush a weaker adversary, or on their speed to show a clean pair of heels to a too powerful foe. Cruisers are divided into first class, seven to fourteen thousand tons displacement; second class, five to seven thousand; and third class, any smaller than five thousand.

All 'madness of extremes' has been avoided in the design of Mr Goschen's ships. The size of his armour-clads, instead of being increased, has been reduced, and the new ships are to be less in displacement by some two thousand tons than the *Majestic*. Thus, what has happened in the case of the guns, has now happened in the case of the ships.

As the improvement in the manufacture of powders has allowed the size of guns to be enormously reduced without sacrifice of effective power, and the fifty-ton gun of to-day takes the place of the one hundred and ten gun of a few years ago; so increased power of boilers and other modern improvements has made it possible to reduce the displacement of the new battleships to twelve thousand nine hundred tons instead of the fourteen thousand nine hundred tons of the *Majestic*.

The guns remain the same as in the *Majestic*. The speed is slightly increased, being 18½ knots, as against the 17½ knots of the *Majestic;* and the coal-carrying capacity is not diminished. This last is a most important feature in such world-rovers as our men-of-war have to be, and the new battleships have a specially wide 'radius of action.'

For their heavy armament they carry four twelve-inch guns of the latest design. And as the various nomenclatures adopted for modern guns give rise sometimes to confusion in the lay mind, we may say that a twelve-inch gun means a breech-loading rifled weapon whose bore measures twelve inches in inside diameter, but as its weight is forty-nine tons, it is sometimes described as a forty-nine ton gun. Again, it may be said, as a general rule, that if two guns of the same calibre vary in length, the longer is more powerful, and these new twelve-inch guns have exceptional length, being forty-two times as long as their bore, that is, of over five hundred inches.

The new programme includes a great deal more than ships and guns. A special section provides for the building of new docks and harbour accommodation on various foreign stations, and a heavy outlay is appropriated to that object. It requires perhaps the eye of an expert to appreciate properly the strategic value of Mauritius or Simon's Town, and though docks at those stations are in contemplation, they are not included in the present estimate; but every one realises the importance* of Gibraltar, and the strengthening of our position there is sure to be a very popular item in Mr Goschen's

* The strategic value of Gibraltar has been greatly increased by the recent establishment of a branch naval station at Biserta, on the north-west coast of Africa. French roadsteads on both sides of the Mediterranean, at Toulon and Biserta, would render it less easy to maintain our communication with Malta.

scheme. The fortifications of Gibraltar are confessedly obsolete; but even if they were brought thoroughly up to date, it would be quite impossible for any land guns to hold the mouth of the Mediterranean. The distance from shore to shore is at least fifteen miles, a range far beyond the command of the heaviest guns. This being so, it follows that in time of war, if the straits are to be held at all, they must be held by our ships, and it is as a base for such ships that the new harbour-works and docks are being provided. At present, the accommodation at Gibraltar for men-of-war is altogether inadequate; but the proposed mole and three large docks will make the place a first-rate offensive base, as well as a harbour of refuge for mangled ships. The additional security thus afforded is cheap enough even at a cost of two and a half millions.

Turning from material to personnel. Increase of ships, as Mr Goschen is careful to point out, means increase of men to fight them, and this, in turn, means increase of schools, barracks, and hospitals, and outlay must be faced in all these directions. Four thousand nine hundred men are to be added to our naval forces, and it will probably be a surprise to many people to learn that no difficulty whatever is anticipated in obtaining that number, so far as seamen, stokers, and marines are concerned. There was a prevalent idea that naval recruiting was not so popular as it might be, and general relief has been experienced at an authoritative statement that this idea is without foundation. No doubt the recent policy of sending fine ships on recruiting cruises to our great ports, and thus bringing the glamour of the service before the eyes of our seafaring population, has materially conduced to this happy result.

There is, unfortunately, more difficulty as regards the supply of properly qualified officers; not because there is any lack of enthusiasm or dearth of splendid material, but because the admission of naval cadets has been unduly restricted in the past. A naval officer is just the reverse of the proverbial poet, he is not 'born' but 'made;' and the years which, from a naval point of view, the locust has eaten in the past are still exercising an evil influence in the present scarcity of young officers. Because fewer ships were built in all those years, there were fewer ships in commission, and fewer officers required; this led to a stagnation of promotion which it was attempted to counteract by reducing the number of cadets admitted to the service. With the present expansion of the navy, the ordinary progress of promotion has been restored, and more liberal admission established; but meanwhile, a ready-made officer is not an easy thing to find. It is indeed a cruel situation that the service should be suffering from a want of officers, when so many hopes have been upset, and so many first-rate candidates turned away by the improvident curtailment of the entrance list in the past.

Two changes in the education of officers hinted at in Mr Goschen's speech are of special interest. It is proposed to raise the limit of age in entering the service from 14½ to 15½, and to train the cadets in a school on shore instead of in the two hulks which pass under the name of the *Britannia*. Both these modifications deserve general approval. Raising the age of entry will strike a blow at the 'cramming' system, vicious enough at all ages, but most vicious with the very young; will give the boys the chance of a better general education, and start them with the traditions of a public school instead of those of a cramming-house. The objections to substituting a shore college for the hulks are little more than sentimental. Most naval officers who have been through the *Britannia* themselves, and especially those who have sons they hope to send by-and-by, will believe that the school-life will be carried on better ashore than afloat from a disciplinary, moral, and perhaps sanitary point of view. It is idle to talk of much practical experience of modern ironclads being gained in old wooden hulks which admit of billiard tables!

Every one has seen from time to time letters in the newspapers over the signatures of half-pay officers, or amateur naval faddists, in which one navy is compared with another in neatly tabulated statements, as one might strike the balance of a petty trading company. But such comparisons are a laughing-stock to the expert, for he knows perfectly well that even the roughest comparative estimate can only be made after detailed and intricate investigation, and that any attempt to put such results on paper in a popular form is a mere puerility. It is difficult even to class the principal navies in a general order of strength, though modern practice would perhaps arrange them as follows: England, France, Italy, Russia, United States, and Germany. Then there are the South American Republics, Chili, Argentina, and Brazil, of which the two first possess some very fine modern cruisers. But all three may be left out of the question, for they have a little fighting coterie among themselves, and their energies are usually absorbed in cutting one another's throats. Last, but not least, there is Japan, flushed with victory, and reinforced with the debris of the Chinese fleet. She has just sanctioned a stupendous programme of naval increase, which, when completed in four years' time, will perhaps place her third in the list of naval powers. Her sympathies are for the present entirely with England, and it is not too much to hope that she may prove some day an invaluable ally in Eastern waters.

It is even more difficult to gauge the qualities of the personnel than those of the ships. The days are long past when we sang in a free-and-easy way:

> Two jolly Frenchmen and one Portugee,
> One jolly Englishman could lick them all three.

We are ready enough now to give our possible adversaries all credit for pluck, and perhaps for technical skill, and yet, as regards practice in the use of their weapons, we still have them at an immeasurable disadvantage. This factor is commonly omitted from newspaper comparisons, but it would probably have more weight than any other in determining the issue of an actual struggle. Two duellists may each have lion hearts and each the best Damascus blades; but if one has ten times more practice in the

art of fencing than the other, it is long odds that he will win. So it is with our navy; it has a far greater knowledge of ships acquired by actual manœuvring at sea, and a far greater knowledge of guns acquired by actual firing practice than any other power. And the reason of this is precisely because such knowledge is a very expensive thing to acquire, and England is the only nation that cares to afford it. It is probable that where France (the next naval power) spends one million in sea-cruising and gun-firing, we spend five. From every gun in our navy having a calibre of ten inches and under, there are fired each quarter eight rounds of ammunition by way of practice; and from all guns heavier than the ten-inch, four rounds a quarter, irrespective of the additional rounds used in the annual 'Prize-firing.' The heavy expenditure involved in this item alone may be hinted at by observing that every full round fired from a six-inch gun costs £16; from an eight-inch gun, £30; from a twelve-inch gun, £123; and from the 16·25 inch or hundred and ten ton gun, as much as £300. And these figures are only a small part of the story, for the life of a very heavy gun is not a long one; and though a six-inch gun can fire as many as five hundred rounds, seventy or eighty full rounds are the limit of the hundred and ten ton; after firing that amount they will both require a new inner tube, a costly matter enough.

Nothing perhaps has contributed more to keep our navy 'up to the mark' than the naval manœuvres which have become an annual institution. When they were commenced in 1887, and the navy was mobilised for the first time, a lamentable deficiency was made manifest both in stores and men; there was not a ship that went away with her stores complete, the services of every available man were requisitioned, every seaman undergoing gunnery training in the *Excellent* was taken, and even so the ships were short-handed. A few years of annual mobilisation has completely altered all this; there is no question now of missing stores, and in last year's manœuvres 1200 seamen were left on the *Excellent;* 'it was not considered advisable to disturb their training.'

Let us be thankful for such improvement in the past, and look forward with a firm resolve to maintain it in the future. A generous naval expenditure is not the most costly in the end. Our policy is to make it clear to the world that we intend under all conditions and at whatever sacrifice to maintain our naval supremacy intact and indisputable, and the sooner we make that clear the better and the cheaper. If foreign powers build one new warship, let us build two, and they will soon tire. France, by abandoning the building of ironclads, is already giving signs of tiring, while the German people showed their good sense a month ago by refusing to enter the lists of naval competition, and rejecting the proposals for a great increase of their navy. It is true enough that a general reduction in naval expenditure is much to be desired, but the move in that direction must be made by other powers; we cannot afford to take the first step. And such a policy has nothing in it of brag or bellicosity. It is the only policy for a country that owns three-fourths of the ships of the world, and that imports more than three-fourths of its food. It is a policy justified by our financial state and manufacturing resources;* it is, in a word, a necessary condition of our national existence. M. F.

## THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

### CHAPTER IV.

Thus John found himself involved in a duel to the death, as it seemed, with an intelligence probably quicker than his own, and with many advantages over him, as he speedily realised.

Next day he surprised a group of young men in his own very bank, the centre of his life in Duntrum, where up to this present moment he had been so easily the chief personage. He came in in the midst of a burst of laughter, through which he heard the phrase, 'She made fine sport of him. He'll not craw so crouse again, I'm thinking.' While the sound of the laughter filled the room, John came into sight, asking quietly, 'Who is it that will not craw so crouse?' and the group melted before him, every man looking more conscious than the other.

'Oh, it was only a joke of some of the girls,' said young Maxwell, very crestfallen.

John went grimly to his desk, and made no sign, but he knew very well that he was the subject of the joke; and they knew very well that he knew. He had not thought that his antagonist was of such force; but, indeed, to conceive and carry out so unflinchingly such a bold plan showed that she could be of no small force, and he reflected upon her and on what might be in store for him very gravely as he sat at his desk in the midst of an unusual silence in the office for the rest of the morning, paying, if truth must be told, very little attention to the country business which he had been sent to study, and which he had at that moment unusual facilities for studying, as it was market-day.

There was another party that evening, to which he went quite prepared for the fate which was about to overtake him, and which did overtake him accordingly. None of the young ladies of Duntrum would dance with John. Some of the girls looked mischievous, some regretful, but only one out of the troop of pretty creatures with whom he had hitherto been so popular, could find a single dance for

* It is worth quoting as a striking instance of these resources, that when official inquiry was made a month or two ago as to the war material under manufacture in English private yards, it was found that in Lord Armstrong's great arsenal at Elswick alone, there were then employed eighteen thousand men, while thirteen ironclads and cruisers, and one thousand four hundred guns were being built.

him. That one was Marion Wamphrey, who pointed with a sparkle in her eye to one line in her programme which had been left free, and danced it majestically, treating him with a lofty civility which did a little to crush his spirit, but filled him more and more with the rage of battle. After that experience, John faced the chances of Society in Duntrum no more. He withdrew before the moment when, as in most of their little assemblies, dancing began; for in those days in Scotland, most entertainments ended in a dance; the young people being quite unfastidious and as willing to amuse themselves on a carpet as on the most beautifully waxed floors. John withdrew; and he was comforted to find that he was missed. There was no longer any fun in refusing to dance with the best partner in the room, when he was not there to be vexed by the affront, and there was soon a revolt against Marion, as would no doubt have happened in any case, and those who had lent themselves to her revenge loudly complained that she had driven their finest performer away. 'He told us all the new figures, and the French step that nobody here has learnt yet,' moaned the culprits of that night, 'led away,' they could not quite tell why, by Marion, 'and she gave him a dance herself!' they remembered. Did she want to keep him to herself? Was that her treacherous reason? So that before the winter was half over, John would have been received with open arms had he gone back: but he did not go back. He felt himself master of the situation, and determined to retain it, even at the cost of a little self-denial, which it certainly involved, for he was a young man of his period, not of this, and loved to find himself in the midst of pretty faces, and to show the new French steps, and the new figures, and to feel himself the king of the company as he had formerly done.

However, it was all the better for business that he should have had this check in the middle of his career. For it set him on giving his attention to the country business, and to the transactions of the bank with the little banking establishments in the little towns around, branches of the Duntrum Company or of others. Especially—and this the reader will understand, without perhaps crediting John with very great devotion to business, considered on its own merits—he was eager to inquire into the business with Dunscore, which had such a curious connection with the little drama to which he had been introduced, in spite of himself. And he accepted with great alacrity, about the new year, a commission to go to that place on the affairs of the bank, and to consult with the managers there concerning some changes which it was thought expedient to make. Messrs Percival in Edinburgh were delighted to think that their nephew had been chosen for this commission. It showed, as they concluded, that the boy must be showing some real business capacity, or he would not have been chosen for such an office, and also a considerable interest on his part, or he would not have devoted himself to it. So that it made a very good impression, much to his favour, at home.

John appeared too at Dunscore to much advantage, with his look of gravity and interest in the suggested changes, and secured the full attention of the manager, who, knowing his connection with the Percivals, felt great interest in him as a rising young man, devoted to business, and anxious to extend his knowledge. He gave John a great deal of information as to the working of the banking system in the country, and all the difficulties which a manager had to encounter. When the business was over, the conversation went off to lighter subjects: but, indeed, it grew naturally out of it that he should inquire about the lost letter which had been in the stolen mail-bag, and whether there had been any light thrown upon that curious theft and its motives. The manager was very ready to talk on this subject, which was the most romantic incident that had been known in the country for ages past.

'Indeed,' he said, 'since the time when one of the Cochranes dressed herself up like a highwayman, and waylaid the mails—which took place not very far from the same spot.'

'What was that story?' said John.

'Did you never hear of it? It is just such another story. It was after Argyll's rebellion in 1685, and the warrant for her father's execution was supposed to be in the bag'——

'Her father?' said John.

'Oh, ay, it was a young lass. And did it never occur to you, Mr Percival,' said the manager, 'that this might well be a woman's work? You see Grizel Cochrane's story is well known, and women are grand actors when they have a purpose to serve. They say you saw a woman shut the coach door just after your queer passenger disappeared.'

'It is quite true; but do you think a woman would have the nerve and the courage?'

'Oh, pooh! Nerve? they've nerve for anything when they've motive enough; and courage? There's no a deevil for daring like a young lass, they're worse than the lads; they never count the cost. I would just like to know if that is not your own point of view.'

'But the motive?' said John.

'Oh, deed, there was motive enough. That big letter, Mr John, conveyed enough matter to distress, maybe to ruin, two or three families. There's times when even delay will save a man's credit: but clean destruction of bills and bonds—Lord, man, it's just salvation to some poor struggling men. There was an honest farmer that had kept up a sore struggle, my own very heart was wae for him when I put his bill in the packet. It would have been a question of roup and banishment, and an honest fellow, as honest as ever ploughed field. He came here like an honourable man, and bound himself over

again for the sum, with a little delay, which we were glad to grant. Ay, and there was another, a gentleman's son, a wild fellow. I'm misdoubting he put his father's name to a bit of paper the worthy laird never saw, and a grand escape he has had. No, I don't think the bank will have very much loss, excepting just that one case.'

'And who was the man, may I ask?' said John.

'I ought not to tell after what I have just said, for it would be a libel if ever it was repeated, and there's no evidence. Well, as you are, so to speak, in the business, Mr John, and in a manner concerned with the robbery, I may strain a point for you. It was just Will Wamphrey, the son of auld Wamphrey, of Craigthorn. He's away abroad now, and maybe he will never hear of it, unless, as I strongly suspect, that it was one of his gilpies that robbed the mail.'

'His gilpies!' said John. He felt a flush of anger at the name.

'Just that,' said the manager, nodding his head. 'Plenty of them took an interest in him, if all tales are true. I have always thought it was some bold hizzy that was o'er the Border after him, and away to some seaport, while these police birkies were riding the country. Ye never can get them to turn their horses' heads the right way till the guilty person's well out of reach. Wull,' he said, getting a little more familiar in his accent as the story warmed him, 'was a wild deevil, and never out of mischief; but his father is a douce man, and we were all very sorry for him. I'm mostly glad, though it will be a loss to the bank, that yon bit of paper is out of the way. And they say that old Wamphrey had sworn an oath that if he played another pliskie, he should be cast off without a shilling, instead of being sent creditably to try his luck again, which is what has been done.'

'This, if it came true, would make it a complete romance of the road,' said John.

'That is just what it is, a woman,' said the other, 'and the best thing he could do would be to marry the lass, and take her with him out of the gait of justice. For my Lords Justiciary would take little heed, I fear, of the romantic circumstances if she were brought before them, which would be sure to happen sooner or later if she were to bide in this country. Somebody must have seen her—you did yourself, by the way, Mr John, as I have heard.'

'I saw a country woman close the door,' he said. He was glad that he had the time to prepare his answer, while the good man went on. 'A person passing, I have little doubt, who saw it swinging open. And it was a momentary glimpse that I could not trust to. It would be a hard case if suspicion was thrown upon a decent woman returning from her work in the fields, and doing what she thought was a kind action as she passed.'

'Bless me, that is true,' said the bank manager, 'but I understood you were of the opinion that it might be the very miss herself.'

'I never meant to convey that impression,' said John, with an immovable countenance. 'It was a country lass; most likely a farm-servant going back a little late from the fields.'

'Oh-h,' said the manager. He added, after a pause, 'I have maybe been rash in making up such a story. It might be no woman after all. But there's no telling,' he continued with a laugh; 'Will Wamphrey had friends in all stations, though a country lass would scarcely have had the cleverness to carry it through.'

John could scarcely help applying uncivil words to this genial person as he talked. A country lass! There were different kinds of country lasses: and the way in which this mere bank manager permitted himself to talk of one who was neither a gilpie nor a miss, nor, in short, anything that came within the range of such a critic, gave him a sensation of anger. Why should it give John, who was really the only witness against her, a sensation of anger? He could not tell. Nothing could be more absurd, and out of all agreement with the circumstances; yet he called Mr Scott several unpleasant names within himself. What did he know about it? a mere vulgar, little country-town man, a village magnate. That he should take upon himself to judge, could think himself qualified! The man was extremely charitable on the subject, and took what seemed to himself much too lenient a view; but it did not, as appeared, satisfy John, whose feelings were quite unexplainable even to himself. So far as he was aware, he wanted to find out everything about the business, but he did not choose that any one else should find out, or should prejudge or venture to form theories about it even to himself. And as he went back to Duntrum, John began to take himself to task, and to inquire into the nature of his own thoughts. Did he really, after all, believe that Marion Wamphrey was the heroine of his great adventure? Had he not seized upon the idea 'for fun,' as they all said, to give himself a reason for making a certain intimacy, a teasing acquaintance with the prettiest girl in the room, pretending to have this tremendous matter against her? He said to himself that this had really been all that was in his mind, when her own consciousness, her readiness to defy him, her anxious look, as of one who expected to be attacked, had turned his wavering, half-real recognition into certainty. He would not have permitted himself even to think of such a thing, to do more than to perplex her with a jest, but for that foreknowledge on her part, so clearly marking that she knew all, and more than all he could say. This had startled and shocked him into saying many things he had not intended, and into persecuting her with hints and suggestions, as if he were quite sure of what was merely a vague suspicion. He took himself to task now as he went home. Had he really any ground for the attack he had made upon this young lady? A momentary glimpse of a face in a dark winter night, was that enough to build such an accusation upon? And he had as good as accused her, if not of the theft, at least of having been seen in circumstances of suspicion on the night when the theft was made. He had begun lightly enough: he had been himself startled by her response of eye and attitude: and now that he had hunted out

this fresh information, which threw so living a light upon it all, he found himself forced to the conviction that it must be true. In the teeth of that conviction, he asked himself indignantly how he had dared to believe such a thing of an innocent girl, a girl whom he had met at a dance, blooming, gay, and full of confidence in all about her. Was that the person to accuse, even in your own mind, of robbing His Majesty's mails? It was preposterous; it was as false as anything could be. It might have been, as Scott said, a gilpie, one of the many loves of this Will Wamphrey bent on serving him, and not too particular about the method; but Marion! with her white dress and her pearl necklace, and the flowers in her hair. It was, of course, impossible; it was impossible! Having said this to himself, he added, with a quick-drawn breath, that now the chain of evidence was complete, that the only thing wanting had been a motive, and now here was the motive abundantly supplied.

John jumped from his post-chaise at the foot of the hill where that adventure had taken place. It was now the end of February, and this had been a hazy, gray day, full of cold, yet at the same time of that indescribable thrill which shows us that the sap is moving in the veins of the old earth, and spring coming, though perhaps her footstep has but touched the heights. He was so restless with the movement of the thoughts that were rising in his own breast, that it gave him a little relief to walk. It was almost dark, and nobody was about. He stood still for a little, and looked over the hedge at the spot where the coach had stopped. It was a high and stiff hedge, hawthorn, full of strong prickles, and closely grown; there was a shallow ditch on the other side, and beyond that a large field, a little undulating, with little knowes and hollows. How did she get through the hedge, or over it? Where did she disappear to? How was it that with all their lanterns and all their eyes no one caught so much as a shadow of her? He examined the place very closely, and found that a little below there was a gap through which it was just possible an adroit person might squeeze. But it was almost impossible, if that was the mode of her escape, to imagine that so soon she could have got under cover. Not far from the hedge there was a group of half-grown rowan trees, forming a thick clump at the bottom, though very thin and wind-blown in the upper branches. They had been quite invisible in the darkness of the night, and he did not think there had been any proper search made at the moment of the wide open stretch of the field where there was so little possibility of concealment.

He was full of the recollection of that night, and of interest in the culprit whom all his investigations seemed to force him to identify almost against his will: and his inclination to follow what must have been her steps in her retreat was strong. The ground, he knew, had been gone over again and again, but no trace had been found, and it was highly unlikely now, when two months had passed, that he should find any trace of her. But he squeezed himself through the gap, with the unpleasant result of finding himself almost up to his knees in the muddy ditch at the foot of the hedge. There had been a great deal of rain in the past week, and not only was the ditch full, but the field was an expanse of soft mud, a little bound together by the grass, but slippery and soft, so that it was hard to get a footing as he scrambled out of the ditch. This was not a pleasant beginning, but he was determined to make his way to the little cluster of the rowans, and make sure for himself whether there was any possible shelter for a fugitive there. A more miserable spot there could not be. How a woman, encumbered by petticoats and cloaks as his fellow-traveller had been, could have slid and scrambled along, unheard, toward that little island in the muddy field, if that indeed had been where she went—and it was the only covert within sight—he could not divine. And very poor was the covert, a bundle of saplings, not much more; slim stems of young trees growing upon a small mound. But the farther side of this hillock, he found, fell abruptly, a little precipice of five or six feet. He had nearly fallen over it, which impressed it on his mind; and when he slid down on the treacherous and muddy slope at one side, he found that the bank above overhung a little, so as to make a shelter quite available, a sort of shallow cave. Had she come here, in the deep darkness, that daring girl? and listened to the ineffectual stir of her pursuers, the gleams of their lanterns? He tried to realise the situation. It was now only twilight, but it was difficult to distinguish anything across the damp level of the field which spread dismal round him. What could it have been in the mirk of the night, getting towards midnight, and black as winter and desolation could make it! Had she couched here, cold, encumbered with her disguise, never knowing when a light might flash round the corner upon her? John shivered with sympathy, yet felt also something of the whirl of excitement which must have been in all her being.

As he stood against the damp wall of mossy earth, held together by the roots of the rowans, he suddenly saw a speck of white in a crevice among the twisted roots. He pulled it out, or tried to do so, but it resisted his efforts. Finally, digging with his stick, and pulling with his hands, at risk of bringing the whole mound down upon him, he disinterred from the network of rough and twisted stems a handkerchief, then something black and large, which he could not distinguish, and finally the skin of an orange. John's heart, already panting with the toil, gave a jump into his throat. The white handkerchief was folded into a sort of bandage, and had evidently been tied round the head; the large, black square was one of the huge neckcloths (so-called) of the period. These formed, no doubt, the wonderful headgear which his fellow-traveller had worn. But the orange skin overwhelmed John with an impulse to laugh and to cry together. It was one of his oranges which he had brought in in kindness for the poor old lady. She had remembered them in danger and horror, and eaten it while they were looking for her. That daring creature defying heaven and earth, wet, cold, miserable,

and—guilty. She had eaten his orange to comfort her, the poor little demon of a girl!

And was that Marion Wamphrey all white and dazzling, with the pearls on her throat, and the roses in her hair?

## WRITERS' PRIDE.

Men and women who write may be divided into two main classes; those who write for money, and those who write for fame. There is said to be a third class composed of those who put pen to paper solely for the benefit and enlightenment of their fellow-creatures, insensible alike to censure and applause, and regardless whether renown or obscurity be their portion. The good opinion of readers cannot but be grateful to writers, whatever, in the vanity of their heart, they may insinuate to the contrary: consequently the number of such moral heroes must be exceedingly small, and, as they are very apt to deceive both themselves and their readers as to the motives which impel them, they may be dismissed in these few words.

Concerning those who write for money, or, in other words, for support, there is little to be said. There are two very old sayings, *vexatio dat intellectum*, hardship improves the understanding; and *ingenii largitor venter*, hunger sharpens the wits; sayings which certainly receive some confirmation in the case of men like Oliver Goldsmith; and many instances could be quoted in which poverty seems to have exerted a favourable influence on poetry. Milton was poor and unpatronised, and so was Shakespeare; Samuel Butler, author of *Hudibras*, to whose memory a monument was erected in Westminster Abbey, is a striking example, and was cleverly epigrammatised by Mr Wesley:

> While Butler, needy wretch, was yet alive,
> No generous patron would a dinner give.
> See him, when starv'd to death, and turn'd to dust,
> Presented with a monumental bust!
> The poet's fate is here in emblem shown,
> He ask'd for *bread*, and he receiv'd *a stone*.

On the other hand, it is asserted that, in order to write well, the mind must be free from anxiety, 'nor be troubled with the care of procuring a blanket.'

Among the other and far larger class, those who write for fame, as Persius puts it:

> *Digito monstrari et dicier hic est*
> (To hear it said—there, there he goes),

many of our best authors have unblushingly ranked themselves, and they own to an intense enjoyment that never seems to cloy, at seeing their works in print:

> None but the author knows an author's cares,
> Or Fancy's fondness for the child she bears;
> Committed once into the public arms,
> The baby seems to smile with added charms.

Nor is there any cause for shame in such confession. Cicero, than whom the world has produced few better writers, felt and honestly avowed a love of fame, and recorded his opinion that the best and noblest natures are the most powerfully actuated by the prospect of glory. Southey, when well-stricken in years, wrote to his old school-fellow Charles Wynn: 'The greatest pleasure I have with a book of my own is in cutting open the leaves when it comes to me.' Dickens has told us of the keen emotion that overcame him on seeing in print his first 'effusion,' as he styled it, which he had dropped stealthily one evening at twilight, with fear and trembling, into a dark letter-box, in a dark office, up a dark court in Fleet Street; and how, when it appeared next morning, he went for half an hour into Westminster Hall, 'because my eyes were so dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear the street.' Charles Mathews the Elder describes the delight with which he gazed on the first proof of his translation of the *Princess of Cleves*, which appeared by monthly instalments in *The Lady's Magazine*, as 'boundless,' and how he fancied the eyes of Europe were upon him, and that the ladies who subscribed to that periodical would unite in calling on the editor to insist on 'C. M.' declaring himself. Poor Haydon has left a vivid record of the 'fluster of elation' with which he greeted the result of his having dropped a little composition into the letter-box of *The Examiner*. 'Never,' he writes, 'shall I forget that Sunday morning. In came the paper, wet and uncut; in went the paper-knife—cut, cut, cut. Affecting not to be interested, I turned the pages open to dry, and to my certain immortality beheld, with a delight not to be expressed, the first sentence of my letter. I put down the paper, walked about the room, looked at Macbeth (a print on the wall), made the tea, buttered the toast, put in the sugar, with that inexpressible suppressed chuckle of delight which always attends a condescending relinquishment of an anticipated rapture till one is perfectly ready. Who has not felt this? Who has not done this?'

Tom Moore thus opens a paragraph in his autobiography: 'It was in the year 1793 that for the first time I enjoyed the high honour and great glory (for such it truly was to me) of seeing verses of my own in print.' These were some lines, headed 'To Zelia,' which appeared in the *Anthologia Hibernica;* and he goes on to tell of his intense pride at finding himself classed as an 'esteemed contributor' in the first published list of subscribers to that magazine. Burton, writing to Crabbe, mentions his having written, years before, some verses in a child's annual, to accompany a print of Doddridge's mother teaching him Bible history from the Dutch tiles round the fireplace. He had quite forgotten all about these verses, as well as the print, when some one sent him a penny cotton handkerchief, on which was a print of the picture, and four of his stanzas under it. This he considered proof positive of true fame.

Douglas Jerrold, when a young compositor in Bigg's printing-office in Lombard Street, wrote a criticism on *Der Freischütz*, and dropped it into his employer's letter-box. This cost him a sleepless night, but he was recompensed by having his composition handed to him next morning to (technically) compose. His sisters tell of the boisterous delight with which he would often afterwards bound into the house with a copy of *Arliss's Magazine* in his hand, shouting, 'It's in again! It's in again!' Samuel Rogers expatiates on the 'to all agree-

able, to many intoxicating' impression produced by first seeing himself in print in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1781, and talks of 'the amorous fond delay with which young authorship lingers over an inspection of his printed handiwork.'

If then it be wrong to experience a feeling of internal satisfaction at the sight of one's printed lucubrations, there is, at all events, the consolation of sinning in good company; and though this infirmity of human nature may be lamented, the number of writers excited by a similar cause will always keep each other in countenance. Pride is a weakness very difficult to define. It takes so many forms: pride of purse; haughtiness of soul; that which 'goeth before destruction;' that which apes humility, declared by both Southey and Coleridge to be Satan's darling sin. But a writer's pride is different from any of these, and undoubtedly superior, since it offends nobody, and produces a feeling of genuine and lasting pleasure, unaffected by time or the decay of fortune. It partakes more of elatedness, or, if we may so express it, of a *finis coronat opus* sense of complacency. The worst charge, perhaps, that can be laid against it is that of self-love, which Shakespeare avows is 'not so vile a sin as self-neglecting.'

## A GOSSIP ON GARDENS.

It was a pretty sentiment of Nestor Roqueplan that 'God gave blonde hair to the women of the North to console the men for having no sun;' and it would seem to be a somewhat similarly beneficent dispensation of Providence that Britain, which is denied the lavish luxuriance of nature enjoyed by the favoured nations of the South, should produce the best gardens and gardeners in the world. The British gardener has to fight against a wayward, depressing, and uncertain climate. He has to bring all the resources of horticultural science to his aid to enable him to contend successfully against the cold winds and unkindly skies, the damp fogs and dreary rainfall, which succeed one another in such rapid and variable alternation, that at no season of the year can he be sure of 'seasonable weather' for two consecutive days. But the very difficulties in his way have quickened his energy, and inspired him with a stubborn determination to overcome them. And he is encouraged by the high repute which his vocation enjoys.

There are few countries in the world in which the pleasures of the garden are more needed, and none in which they are more keenly appreciated, than in our own. And probably from the time the Romans first introduced gardening into Britain, its popularity was assured. One of the many reasons we have to be grateful to the old monks of the dark ages is that they assiduously cultivated the art of gardening, and spread the taste for this kindly art.

In one of his most delightful essays, Lord Bacon discourses 'Of Gardens,' and opens with this high eulogy of his subject: 'God Almighty first planted a garden, and indeed, it is the purest of human pleasure. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which buildings and palaces are but gross handiworks; and a man shall ever see that when ages grow to Civility and Elegancy, men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely, as if gardening were the greater perfection.'

And Abraham Cowley in his epistle to John Evelyn says: 'I never had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness as that one which I have had always, that I might be master at last of a small house and a large garden.' Milton, Pope, and Thomson were all enthusiastic lovers of gardens. Indeed, Byron used to say that he had a pride in thinking that our national taste, as it is conceived to be shown in what is called an English garden, had grown up less under the influence of our landscape-painters than under that of our descriptive poets, more especially Milton and Pope. Let us glance then for a moment at the history of the British garden, and the various phases through which it has passed before reaching its present stage.

In the essay on gardens to which we have already referred, Bacon gives us a picture of the *beau ideal* of a garden in his day. The principal and most noteworthy feature of the English garden then was the aim to make it perennial, a garden for all the months of the year, with something to please the eye in winter, spring, summer, and autumn—a source of perpetual refreshment and delight, from one end of the year to the other. And the great philosopher gives a list of all the plants and flowers suitable for each month, from January to December—a list which even your modern scientific Scotch gardener might do well to study.

A square garden, encompassed on all sides with a stately arched hedge, covering thirty acres of ground, divided into three parts; 'a green in the entrance, a heath or desert in the going-forth, and the maine garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides,' that was Bacon's ideal. All elaborate trickery and device he despised, but he liked order, and system, and elegance. Above all, he made much of *the perfume of flowers*, a point on which, to our thinking, far too little stress is laid in the gardens of the present day. 'And because,' says he, '*the breath of flowers* is far sweeter in the air (where it cometh and goeth like the warbling of musick) than in the hand; therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants that doe best perfume the air.' And then he goes on to enumerate those sweet-smelling old English flowers, which, alas! modern fashion too often banishes to make room for the gaudy glare of 'bedding out.' So enamoured was Bacon of the perfume of flowers, that he was ready to go to any extravagance to secure it. He gravely recommended opening a turf or two in the garden alleys, and pouring therein a *bottle of claret* 'to re-create the sense of smelling, being no less grateful than beneficial!' On the whole, then, we gather that a garden in the Tudor style must have been most thoroughly what the old writers term 'a pleasaunce,' a place in which a man might take his pleasure, full of all that was bright in colour and sweet in perfume.

This was the old English garden which had its day from the reign of Henry VII. to nearly the close of Elizabeth's. It was during this

period that most of our common garden flowers were introduced from abroad. The oldest of them appears to be the lily, which was brought from Italy in 1460. Provence, Flanders, Italy, and the Netherlands seem to have simultaneously sent us our choice garden roses in 1522. From the Alps came the ranunculus, and from Italy the mignonette in 1528, rosemary from the south of Europe in 1534, the jasmine from Circassia about 1548. The year 1567 saw the introduction of four time-honoured favourites, the auricula from Switzerland, the pink from Italy, the gillyflower and carnation from Flanders. Spenser, by the way, in the *Shepheardе's Calendar* (1579), classes the carnation, which he calls 'coronation,' with the purple columbine and the gillyflower as lovers' flowers. Now, the carnation is generally supposed to have derived its name from the *carnation* or *flesh* colour of the original species. But the word used by Spenser suggests that 'carnation' is merely an abbreviation of 'coronation' in allusion to the crown-like appearance of the flower, and its specific name, *Betonica coronaria*. The Philological Society's *New English Dictionary* does not decide which of the derivations is the only true one, though one must have originated in a mistake. Anyhow, the shorter form was common in Shakespeare's time, and we have it on Dame Quickly's authority that Sir John Falstaff 'could never abide carnation; 'twas a colour he never liked.' Lavender was imported from the south of Europe not later than 1568, and the laburnum from Hungary about 1576; while Sir Walter Raleigh is credited with having brought the snowdrop back with him from his short-lived colony of Roanoke, an island off North Carolina, in 1584.

But the old English style, towards the end of Elizabeth's reign, was superseded by the Italian. The Italians loved embellishment, and liked a mixture of architecture in their gardens. Statues, temples, alcoves, porticos, were combined with terraces, balustrades, flights of steps, alleys, broad paved walks, fountains, beds of flowering shrubs, thick walls of box and fern, secluded bowers, and grottos buried in the dense shade of over-arching trees. There are still examples of the Italian garden to be found up and down England. But in Charles II.'s time, this style, in its turn, was put out of fashion by the French, a style which may be tersely described as the Italian reduced to a system of mathematical precision. Everything was confined to rigidly geometrical forms —squares, straight lines, rhomboids, parallelograms—everything was measured out with the compass, and docked into uniformity with the shears. The gardens of Versailles still give some idea of the stiff ugliness which was the product of this style.

But the Dutch, with characteristic ingenuity, contrived to graft an even more hideous style on the outlines of the Italian. Nature was more sternly suppressed than ever. The rectangle was the Dutch *beau ideal* of shape, and the line of beauty was of rigid straightness. Fish-ponds took the place of fountains, and canals of terraces: the yew-trees were cut into the shapes of peacocks or monkeys, the box-trees into the figures of men or elephants. Of course, when William of Orange came over, the Dutch fashion rose into the ascendant, and English gardens were laid out in strict imitation of the angular regularity of the flower-beds of Haarlem and the Hague. Traces of the Dutch style may still be seen at Hampton Court; and Sir William Temple has, in his *Essay on Gardening*, left us a minute and vivid picture of a model garden of this type, that of the Countess of Bedford at Moor Park, which he said was 'the perfectest figure of a garden, and the sweetest place' he had ever seen at home or abroad.

Thus, on the originally magnificent Italian style had been grafted the severe formality of the French, and the grotesque meanness of the Dutch. Artificiality had now been carried to its extreme, it could go no further, and then came the inevitable reaction.

It would be difficult to assign a precise date to this reaction; but we can trace the first symptoms of it in Addison's time. In his essay on the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, he notes how much less entertaining to the fancy, and how much less charming to the eye, are the neatness and elegance of English gardens than the artificial rudeness of the Italians with their mixture of garden and forest. And in a subsequent letter to the *Spectator*, he describes a homely, old-fashioned English garden of the style which prevailed before foreign tastes had become acclimatised here. 'A garden,' he tells us, 'altogether after the Pindaric manner, and run into the beautiful wildness of nature, without affecting the nicer elegance of art.'

It was, however, about the middle of the last century that this reaction in favour of nature reached its climax. But the Nature whom it then became fashionable to worship was a mere ideal goddess, evolved out of the emotional sentimentality of certain poets and philosophers. The first rule of the new school was in everything to go exactly contrary to their predecessors. Elaborate design had been the great object and main feature of the French and Dutch styles: elaborate absence of design was, therefore, adopted as the first principle of the new style. The most excruciating minuteness was observed in copying the careless profusion and rude grandeur of nature. Poor Sir William Temple was bitterly ridiculed for his panegyric of the model garden of Moor Park. 'Caractacus' Mason in his dreary poem, *The English Garden*, Horace Walpole in his elegant *Essay on Gardening*, satirised unmercifully that faultless specimen of the prosaic Dutch style.

Hugh Miller has called William Shenstone the 'Prince of landscape-gardeners.' He became more celebrated for his gardening than his poetry, and carried out his whims and taste in gardening at the Leasowes, near Halesowen, Worcestershire. There was a mania for the picturesque, and Sir Uvedale Price and 'Capability' Brown had it all their own way for a time as the inaugurators of landscape-gardening. They prided themselves on being much more natural than Nature herself. There was no landscape, they held, which was not capable of being improved under their manipulation. A group of trees added here, an elaborately artificial 'natural' rock there, an accurately constructed ancient

ruin in one place, a cunningly devised impromptu waterfall in another, a vista here, a bowery retreat there—there was no end to the 'improvements' effected by the new landscape-gardeners. They inaugurated an age of shams and surprises, such as Thomas Love Peacock has so happily satirised in *Melincourt*. A tawdry, paltry, cockney imitation of nature became the rage. Horace Walpole made Strawberry Hill a perfect type of the new style, and he and those like him plumed themselves on their love of nature, while they were really patronising a grosser and more affected form of artificiality than their predecessors, who were the professed worshippers of art.

The new picturesque school made the 'designless beauty' of nature their model, and as an example of their fidelity to that model, we may take William Kent, the designer of Kensington Gardens, who the more effectually to conceal every vestige of a plan had some *dead trees* planted to give a natural appearance to the whole!

This mock-natural system became known as the 'English style,' though it is a moot-point whether it would not be more correct to term it the Chinese style; for the supposition is that the idea was derived from the Celestial Empire—the 'Kingdom of Flowers,' as the Chinese poets call it.

The Chinese were believed to have possessed great skill in landscape-gardening from a very early period, though, if we are to judge from the illustrations on the famous 'willow pattern' plates, there is some excuse for doubting the extent of that skill. It is true that a very ancient Chinese writer, Lieu-Tscheu, has some extremely sensible remarks on the pleasures of a garden, in the course of which he says: 'The art of laying out gardens consists, therefore, in contriving cheerfulness of prospect, luxuriance of growth, shade, retirement and repose, so that the rural aspect may produce an illusion. . . . Symmetry is wearisome, and a garden, where everything betrays constraint and art, becomes tedious and distasteful.' But it was the letter rather than the spirit of Lieu-Tscheu's advice that his countrymen followed when they elected to patronise the 'natural' and the 'picturesque,' and they soon reached a stage of cockneyfied imitation of nature which Horace Walpole himself could not have surpassed.

In 1843, the Royal Horticultural Society sent out the eminent Scottish botanist, Robert Fortune, to visit these famous gardens of China—the land to which we owe the peony, the chrysanthemum, the azalea, and the camellia. He was enchanted by the magnificent azalea-clad mountains of Che-Kiang, one blaze of gorgeous bloom from foot to summit, but he saw little of the renowned landscape-gardens, though enough to show him that much that was fashionable in English gardening was merely a relapse into Chinese barbarism. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the hideous system of 'bedding out,' which has in recent years been so popular in this country, is simply a plagiarism from the Chinese. Those detestable cockney riband gardens, with their bands of red, yellow, and blue—a blaze of gorgeous but incongruous and inharmonious colour—are a slavish imitation of Chinese taste—the taste to which we owe such artistic masterpieces as the 'willow pattern' and the illuminated tea-chest!

The truth is, that we are letting the 'scientific gardener' tyrannise over us now as previous generations allowed in turn the 'picturesque,' 'the mock-natural,' and the 'pseudo-artistic' gardeners to tyrannise over them. The costly exotics of the hothouse, which take prizes and bring kudos, are too often cultivated at the expense of the good old homely, hardy, British flowers, which in beauty and perfume yield to none. We are not unmindful of Cowper's catholic sentiment:

> Who loves a garden loves a greenhouse too.

But we would have the greenhouse play a much more subordinate part than it does. The glory of a garden is not, to our thinking, in its glass-houses but in its outdoor beds — in its smooth-shaven lawns, and trim terraces, and shady paths, bordered with sweet-smelling flowers, not striped with scentless gauds—in the refreshing fragrance and colour with which it gratifies the senses both of sight and smell. In fine, to come back to the point with which we started, if a garden is to fulfil its true purpose it should be not a show-place but a 'pleasaunce.'

## TO THE BLACKBIRD.

Bird with the saffron bill,
Like close-furled crocus bud in early spring,
Thou makest all the bleak and dreary wold
Melodiously to ring.

Thy sanctuary gleams like burnished gold;
The thin larch copse that fronts the waning sun,
This is the haven that thy soul has won;
Its charms are manifold.

Warm on its banks the shortening sunbeams lie,
Its trembling spires are kindled into flames;
And see the pulsing planet that proclaims
The night fast drawing nigh.

There, where the shadows yet more closely cling,
Those fluent notes of thine are swift outrolled,
And the tired shepherd, leaning o'er his fold,
Lingers to hear thee sing.

The rill that babbles on its tortuous way,
Steals noiselessly along thy calm retreat,
And Night draws nearer with reluctant feet,
Fearing to hush thy lay.

The amber light fades out along the West,
And thou art silent; like a half-spent bolt
With dipping flight thou skir'st the quickening holt,
To seek thy new-built nest.

There thy fond mate awaits thee; there ere long,
With head close-tucked beneath thy ebon wing,
Thou 'lt hide thy pipe of gold till dawn shall bring
The round world back to song.

Arthur Wright.

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## WASTE.

We have most of us heard the rhyme—

> Dearly beloved brethren, it really is a sin,
> When you peel potatoes, to throw away the skin;
> For the skins feed the pigs, and the pigs feed you,
> Dearly beloved brethren, is not this quite true?

Though as a poetical effort this is hardly in the first rank, it teaches a more or less useful moral—namely, that everything has a use, if that use can only be found, and therefore nothing ought to be wasted, however trifling it may seem. But then, again, there are certain kinds of waste which are absolutely unavoidable—and this is particularly the case with that from the national coinage.

With reference to this, a somewhat curious experiment was made some time ago on London mud. An American scientist took samples of mud from various streets in the Metropolis, with a view to finding out how they differed in composition, and the analyses gave most interesting results. Mud taken from the busiest parts of the city showed in its composition quite an appreciable amount of gold and silver, besides copper, tin, iron, and other metals, with a fair proportion of fibrous animal matter, but very little vegetable fibre. In mud from the poor districts, however, where there was very little traffic, vehicular or otherwise, the most delicate tests failed to reveal even traces of gold, and showed but very minute quantities of silver. Indeed, metal of any sort was very scarce, with the exception of iron and copper; whilst the quantity of animal matter was a quarter of that contained in City mud. Curiously enough, however, the vegetable matter was present in quadrupled proportions.

Results such as these are liable to set one thinking. All this gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, &c., must of necessity be waste, and it comes from horse-shoes, tyres of carts, brass fittings, &c., which wear out on the streets. But horses are not shod with precious metals—neither do gold nor silver enter into the composition of carts and carriages. They can, therefore, only come from two sources—the wearing out of jewellery, and of the national coinage. Jewellery, however, does not wear much—a ring or a watch chain will not lose a grain in weight with five years' constant use—so that we may eliminate jewellery, and take it that it is the wearing out of the gold and silver currencies which makes true the saying that the streets of London city are paved with gold. If this be so, it is not unreasonable to suppose that gold and silver are spread in minute quantities all over the surface of this country, and so it might be interesting to know how much precious metal is worn from the currency daily, and spread over the land in an impalpable dust.

Statistics from the Royal Mint show that the average cost of renewing the silver coinage averages £31,000. This represents about six tons of silver, which are spread over the United Kingdom yearly. In other words, the daily unavoidable waste from the silver coinage is nearly £86 sterling.

Gold is not so much used as silver, but its waste in this way is sufficiently lamentable. The Mint issues, on an average, 4,645,521 sovereigns, and twice that number of half-sovereigns, yearly. The weight lost by fair wear and tear in the first is ·0396 grains per annum, and in the second ·0551 grains. Should any one care to work out this sum, he will find that this wear, if it could be collected and coined, would give sufficient gold to make sixteen sovereigns every day! Is it wonderful, therefore, that mud, taken from a part of London which has for centuries been the resort of moneyed men of business, should contain a certain quantity of the precious metals?

Yet the waste from the currency is quite insignificant when compared with that which takes place every day in eatables and drinkables. Take bread, for example. Roughly speaking, there are sixty million pounds of bread baked in Great Britain daily, and of this, at a very low computation, half an ounce per pound is

thrown away in crumbs, leavings, &c. Reduce this, and it will be seen that there are wasted every day one and three-quarter million pounds of bread, or enough to make nearly half a million quartern loaves, the value of which would be close upon ten thousand pounds.

Still greater, proportionally, is the waste in condiments. Mustard is wasted to the extent of fifty per cent.—that amount being generally left upon the edge of the consumer's plate, to be removed by the dish-washer, whilst that used for mustard plasters, though it could be, is never used more than once. To obtain absolutely correct figures respecting this relish is, of course, an impossibility, but the value of its diurnal waste is considerably over eighty pounds—taking it at a very moderate computation.

Vinegar, again, is thrown away in quantity—chiefly in the shape of pickle liquor. Thousands of gallons of this condiment are used every day in pickling, but not one person in a thousand ever uses this. It is thrown down the sink when all the solid matter has been extracted from the jar; whilst if it were kept and used, as it could be in nine cases out of ten, as vinegar, upon which it is an improvement, a matter of five hundred pounds or more might be saved daily.

Somewhat smaller is the sum which represents the sugar wasted by being left in the bottoms of teacups, and in sugar-basins as dust. Still, eighty pounds per diem is by no means a sum to be despised.

Salt is good—we have high authority for so saying—but were it as expensive as bread, and wasted to the same extent as that commodity, big fortunes would be wasted every day. As it is, the value of its diurnal waste is in the neighbourhood of a hundred pounds, for it is left on the edge of the plate, and otherwise wasted to even a greater extent than mustard.

A pair of utilities, if the expression may be allowed, which give excellent opportunities for waste, as everybody who keeps a housemaid knows to his cost, are coals and gas. England's output of the former is enormous, somewhere about 190 million tons annually, and the value of this is approximately 142 million pounds. At a low computation, half of this coal is used for firing purposes, and at least twenty per cent. of it is wasted in dust and cinders. It is, in all conscience, bad enough to watch the heaving overboard of tons of perfectly burnable cinders from an ocean liner, but this waste is more or less excusable, because speed is the great thing in these cases. But the housemaid who every morning throws into the dust-bin from five to ten pounds of good, solid, burnable coke, has no such excuse—it is sheer laziness, and carelessness of property not her own—and were the mistress to insist upon the cinder-sifter being used, she would find her coal-bill for the year reduced by at least twenty-five per cent., perhaps by more.

There are three distinct methods of wasting gas. The first and most usual is by turning on the jet without having a readily lighted match to apply to it. This wastes perhaps only a few cubic inches of gas; but these cubic inches multiplied by the several millions or hundreds of millions of gas jets which are nightly ignited in this way, swell the amount of waste enormously for Great Britain. The second method is by having the gas turned on so fully that it flares. The idea is that a better light is thus obtained, but this is a mistake. If the jet be turned down until there is a clear and steady flame, there will be much more light, and considerably less gas burned. The third method of wasting gas is through a burner being alight when there is absolutely no necessity for it, and this, with the other methods, brings the nightly waste of gas in the United Kingdom up to about £500, four hundred and fifty of which might be saved.

Were potatoes peeled in a scientific manner—that is, scraped, they would afford at least five per cent. more nourishment than they do when peeled by the method which obtains with the modern cook, especially when it is taken into consideration that the most nourishing part of this tuber lies next the skin. The total consumption of potatoes for Great Britain reaches about 2000 pounds worth daily—five per cent. is wasted—that is, if the peelings mentioned above be thrown to the pigs, they would consume a hundred pounds worth of human nourishment every day.

A witty member of Parliament once said that the honest British workman had three characteristics which might be called the three 'B's,' these being 'beer, blasphemy, and baccy,' and these three B's afford two instructive examples of waste.

According to statistics, 138 million pounds are annually spent in drink in Great Britain. Say half of this is consumed in the country, and that is putting it low. Now everybody knows that when a glass of beer is drunk in one of those highly convenient establishments which are so largely patronised by the *élite* of the East End on bank holidays, and at other times, there is always a little, maybe only a few drops, or perhaps an inch of liquor left in the glass. This, with froth, drippings, and spillings, amounts to half a pint in the gallon for beer, and about an eighth of that for spirits. That is, over five per cent. of beer is wasted, and about six-eighths of one per cent. of spirits—the average being about three per cent. The whole sum, therefore, when worked out, shows that in the various 'wanities' consumed daily, there is a waste amounting in value to close on £6500.

Blasphemy not being a marketable commodity, it is impossible to put a monetary value upon the amount of it created daily, so we must pass to the third B—'baccy.' A French firm of cigarette paper manufacturers sends into England daily an average of two hundred gross books of a particular brand of cigarette paper, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that these are consumed—to say nothing of twenty or thirty other brands of papers, and made cigarettes. Now about a third of a cigarette is usually thrown away as 'butt.' We know that sixty papers go to a book, and about thirty self-made cigarettes go to the ounce, so that the amount of tobacco wasted daily in these luxuries can be approximated. About a thousand gross is the quantity of papers imported daily and smoked, and there are thrown away from these ninety-six thousand ounces of tobacco—equal in value to close upon

sixteen hundred pounds. Nor is this all, by any means, for cigar stumps and 'plugs' from pipes are not taken into consideration at all, nor the dust left at the bottom of the pouch, and which nine cigarette smokers out of ten will throw away. Add on all this, and the figure for the waste of tobacco comes to a million pounds yearly! perhaps more. This is vouched for by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who, in his recent Budget speech, said that no less a sum than a million sterling was thrown into the gutter every year in the shape of unused cigar and cigarette ends. These figures may appear incredible, but it must be taken into consideration that the duty on tobacco is on the dry leaf as a rule, and that the prepared materials contain nearly thirty per cent. of water. It must also be remembered that smoking has now become so common amongst all classes, that one can almost paraphrase Horace's words, and say, 'Learned and unlearned, old and young, they all smoke tobacco.'

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XX.—WHAT IS ON HIS MIND?

NEVER before, I am quite sure, was transformation more rapid than that which changed the Hon. Member for Shadwell, in less than six months, from a man out of the world to a man in the world. In April he came to my chambers and introduced himself: before the end of the season he was in the House, in a West-End Club, in Society. He had shown—well, signs of promise: he knew a good many people: he was listened to in the House: he wrote a paper in the Vacation about some branches of the Labour Question to the *Contemporary Review:* he also read a paper on some statistics before a learned society: he attended in August a Congress of working-men, and told them truths. I believe that he distributed prizes at a Sunday-school in his borough. In one way or another, the papers were continually talking about him. Now the first step in the noble art of getting on, is to keep your name well before the public: everybody understands that: you must make people talk about you: and since people's memories are most miserably short, you must do something else, very soon, to make them talk about you again. The effect of this forced familiarity is, that when the promotion comes, nobody is in the least astonished. I think, for my own part, that he was artfully and secretly managed all this time: I have my suspicions as to the person who pulled the strings. As for himself, he was incapable of *réclame!* The people who pulled the strings, and made him dance, and made the world talk about him, sat in the background or in the underground. Nobody knows what an enormous political cellarage there is!

This was his life: it changed him completely in six months. He was always a man of presence. He was now in appearance a gentleman of sixteen quarterings, at least: the aristocracy of Castile could produce no scion of nobler figure. Any one, however, may have the appearance of a gentleman. Robert had acquired, in addition, something of the manner of one who has always lived with gentlefolk, so that their manners have become his own by a kind of instinct. I suppose he acquired these manners easily because he had so little to unlearn. A man who has lived alone among books can hardly have incurable habits. I do not say that he talked as a man of his age belonging to public school life, college life, or the army, would talk. No outsider can possibly acquire that manner of speech.

'Your cousin, George,' said Frances, 'reminds me of a certain courteous gentleman of Virginia whom I met some years ago. There was an old-world courtesy about him; he was a gentleman, but not of our stamp; he was conscious of his rank and manners; he thought very highly of both; and I should say that he lived among people very much unlike him. Robert reminds me of him. Nobody would deny that he is a man of fine, of rather studied manners; nobody would deny that he is a gentleman, yet not one of us. He is to spend a fortnight with me at Beau Séjour'—this was her country-house—'in September. He grows apace, George.'

'He is a lucky man, Frances. You have taken him up, and advanced him.'

'He is more than lucky. Anybody may be lucky. He is strong.'

When the House rose, about the third week of August, and all the world went out of town, he came home to the house and the dockyard. I looked to see him fall back upon the old life, work in the yard all day, and sit in his study all the evening. He did nothing of the kind; he moved about restlessly, he came to the yard and looked at the work in progress but without interest; he received the ordinary business communications without interest: he had still a share in the house, but he behaved as if he no longer cared even to hear what was done. I suppose he had grown out of the work. Strange. Just as I was growing into it, feeling the sense of struggle and competition which gives its living interest to every form of trade.

One day he was sitting in the yard, looking out upon the river. The men had gone; it was past five o'clock. The day was cloudy, and a driving rain fell upon the river, which looked gray, and stormy, and threatening.

'This is a horrible place to live in,' he said abruptly. 'It is more horrible than it used to be.'

'Come, you lived in it yourself for a long time.'

'But I always knew that it was a horrible place; one couldn't help knowing that. I always intended to get away. Man! if I had known only a tenth part of the pleasures of that other life, I should have been devoured with the rage and fierceness of discontent. I say it is a horrible place—cribbed, cabined, and confined. With whom can you talk? With the Captain. And Isabel. George, how can you do it? How could you bring yourself to do it? You who know the other life. I don't understand it. You that knew that incompar-

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able woman. Why, now that I do know it, rather than leave it, I would go out and rob upon the highway.'

'You like that other life so much! Strange!'

'Why is it strange? It is the only life worth leading. You taught me to like it when you taught me what it meant. I should otherwise have been outside everything all my life.'

'I am not the only one who taught you, Robert.'

'No! there is Lady Frances. Well, I owe it you that I have learned what a woman may be. I owe it to you. How could I know before to what heights a woman could rise? Good heavens! How could I know?'

'Very little, truly. You remember, however, that you never gave yourself the trouble to inquire into the subject.'

'I had no chance. There is a woman! Clever, accomplished, full of resource, of gracious manners. Good heavens! George—and you could go away, leave her, and come down here.'

'Beautiful too, if you ever think about beauty,' I added calmly.

'I never do, when I am in her society.' He meant well, though the compliment was doubtful. He meant, I suppose, that the charm of her conversation was so great that he could think of nothing else.

'Some men think her extremely beautiful; I do myself. You may remember also that she is well born, and rich.'

'I would rather not remember those points,' he said shortly. 'I would rather not remember that there are any barriers between us.'

'Are good birth and fortune barriers? Not always. However, there is one barrier of your own making, Robert. She is sitting in the house over the way at this minute.'

He took up a handful of chips and began to throw them into the river one by one, with gloomy countenance. 'A barrier of your own making, Robert. I suppose you can unmake it if you like.'

'My word is passed.'

'You belong to society now, you much promoted person. When you marry, your wife must belong to society as well, or you will have to go out of it. Do you think that Isabel is ready to take her place in the world of society as well as—say—Lady Frances?'

Robert, to those who knew him, betrayed any strong emotion by the quick change in his face. It was disgust, plain disgust, which crossed his face when I put this question.

'Isabel,' I went on, relentlessly, 'is a girl with many graces.'

'I have never seen any,' he said.

'Of great beauty; of great delicacy of mind; sweet and gentle.'

'So is a doll.'

'You have never even tried to discover the soul of the girl whom you have promised to marry. I know her a great deal better than you.' That, at least, was quite true, yet not exactly as he thought. 'The point is, whether she has the training and the knowledge required by a great lady in society. And I am quite certain, Robert, that she has not.'

'My word is passed. But'—— He threw all the rest of the chips into the stream and got up. 'I am not going to marry yet awhile. Not for a very long while yet.'

'Well, but consider—is it right?'

'Does she want to marry somebody else, then? Let her speak to me if she does. And how can I talk of marrying yet?' he added irritably. 'Nobody knows better than you what my resources are, and I haven't got my foot upon the lowest round of the ladder yet.'

'Let Isabel go then.'

'I have passed my word.'

I said no more. It is always a pity to say too much. We went over the way and had tea.

The day after this conversation, he addressed his constituents, not defending or excusing his conduct in ceasing to be an Independent member, but giving them his reasons in a lordly and condescending manner, which I believe pleased these honest fellows much better than if he had fawned upon them. Who would not wish to be represented by a man who had opinions of his own rather than by one who pretended to accept the imaginary opinions of the mob? 'You fellows haven't got any opinions,' said Robert, standing on the platform. 'I have. You send me to represent my own opinions, which you know, and not yours, which you don't know. Opinions? How can fifty men be said to have an opinion? Well: you all hold certain opinions that belong to simple law and order. You know that politicians are necessary; you think that rich men get too rich; you sometimes think that there ought to be work and wages for everybody; some of you allow yourselves to think what is foolishness, that wages ought to be always going up. What is the good of such an opinion as that?' And so on, telling them very plainly that he thought nothing at all of their intellects. And they liked it.

After a week, during which we saw very little indeed of him, he went away again, with scant leave-taking. He carried away with him all his possessions—his books, his papers, and all; so that it was manifest that he meant to return no more. In fact he came again once and only once, as you shall hear.

'Has he said anything, Isabel?' I asked anxiously.

'Not a single word. I was horribly afraid that he would. Not one word.'

'It is wonderful,' I said, looking upon this sweet and lovely maiden. 'Well, Isabel, the day of redemption draweth nigh. Yet but a little while, and I shall knock the fetters from your feet, and you shall be free to fly—to soar—to scale the very heavens in the joy of your freedom.'

So we were left alone again, having the quiet house, so quiet when all the workmen had gone home, all to ourselves, with the Captain to take care of us. It was not an unhappy time, despite that betrothal which I fain would snap asunder; partly because we were together, and partly because I was certain that the promise must be broken as soon as Robert understood himself a little better. The evenings grew too short for more than a sail on the river; then too short for that: we spent them at home by ourselves. Isabel discovered that I could sing; or she played to me with a soft and sympathetic

touch, which made one dream things unutterable. On Saturday afternoons we went to picture-galleries, and to theatres and concerts—always somewhere. On Sunday morning, if it was fine, we went to St Paul's, or Westminster, or the Temple, where the voices are sweet and pure, and the singing is regulated. When it was wet, we went to St John's, our own parish church, and sat under the tablets of the Burnikels. I never really enjoyed family pride at the West End; here, on the spot, one felt every inch a Burnikel. We were like Paul and Virginia; and Paul was a most enviable person. I had brought my lathe from Piccadilly and set it up in the study, and Isabel would sit reading while I made the splinters fly. Or we read together; I read aloud while she worked; or she read aloud while I took a pipe. Or, best of all, she sat opposite me while I had that pipe and talked—talked of things pure, and sweet, and heavenly, insomuch that the heart of one who heard glowed within; at such time I loved to turn the lamp low so that the sweet face of my mistress might be lit and coloured by the red fire in the grate, or the lamp in the street.

It was for his sake, in order to advise him, that Frances continued to live in town till the end of August, and when she went down to her country-house, he went too as one of the party.

'Robert,' she wrote, 'is staying here. He does not go out with the men shooting. I suppose that he cannot shoot. He works in the library: he has brought some books of his own here: he is writing a little series of three letters for the *Times* on one of his own subjects. He has read them to me first: I find them admirably expressed and models of good sense. He grows every day, George: his head will one day touch the skies. He still lacks the one grace that will complete his oratory if he arrives at it—the grace of lightness. He can be light and humorous on occasion, but his general tone is serious. It is a seriousness which sits well upon a young man, because in this age of badinage and cynicism, no one is serious, except Robert himself, who looks as serious as a Dean. There is also something on his mind. I do not suppose it is the want of money, because you told me something about his affairs: and I believe that he has a few hundreds. It is not disappointment, because no young man has ever got on so well in so short a time since the days of Pitt. I think he will be Pitt the Third. In that case, you will see him in the Cabinet in four or five years at the outside. It is not that he feels himself out of his element in this country-house, which is, I suppose, rather a finer house than the one you have at Wapping. Nothing dazzles him: neither wealth, nor troops of servants, nor titles, nor women in grand frocks, nor diamonds. What then is the matter with him? If he were another kind of man he would long since have got himself sent away by making love to me. As you know, George, I am always sending them away for this very sufficient cause. But this man does not make love. What is on his mind? You who know him may be able to advise upon this subject. The symptoms are a tendency to the gathering of a sudden cloud upon the face; a disposition of the mind to wander away, out of sight, so to speak; a sudden looking forth of the eyes into space. He is thinking of something disagreeable. It cannot be his past, because he is no more ashamed of having been a boat-builder than you are of becoming one: though what is honest self-respect in one case, is disgraceful abandonment of caste in the other. What can it be? I suspect—nay, I am sure—that there is some woman in the case. Has he early in youth made a fool of himself with an unworthy woman? Has he trammelled himself? Is he, perchance, a married man, and married to Awfulness and Terribleness? Oh! the having to marry such women! I am very much concerned upon this point, George. Let me know about it, if you can. Don't try to screen him if he wants any screening. I think so much of him, I tell you beforehand, that I would forgive him if I could. Only there are some things which must not be forgiven.

'I am not going to stay here after October, when I shall return to town, and to dear delightful politics, and to you, my dear George, if you can tear yourself from your abominable chips and come to see me. Have you developed more callosities on your hands?—F.'

What was on Robert's mind? Well, I think I could tell her. But should I? Would it be best to tell her?

(*To be continued.*)

## CARPETS OF CORK AND OIL.

At first sight, cork and linseed-oil seem most unlikely materials for making carpets, yet no less than twelve million yards of linoleum, consisting almost entirely of these substances, are produced every year. At a recent meeting of the Society of Chemical Industry, a most interesting paper on the manufacture of linoleum was read by Mr Walter F. Reid, F.C.S. The industry is almost entirely British, and has only been in existence for about thirty years. The first step towards linoleum was the 'cere-cloth,' made of linen or canvas, coated with wax, used principally as a wrapping for dead bodies. This practice is very ancient, and was employed extensively by the Egyptians in preserving their dead. Even to this day, oil cloth is called *wachstuch* in Germany, and *toile cerée* in France. Although there is considerable dispute as to when oil was first employed in painting, there is no doubt that it was used in this country as early as the reign of Henry III., for the account-rolls in the archives mention painter's oil, which at the end of the thirteenth century was worth a shilling a gallon. Certainly it was employed all over Europe towards the end of the fourteenth century. In his paper, Mr Reid quoted, from the account of a foreigner travelling in England in the fifteenth century, who described the way artists went to work in those days. The canvas was laid upon the floor, and the colours were applied to it in that position. The

traveller takes special note of the fact that the English painters were in the habit of *keeping their feet clean*. Mr Reid suggests that to this habit of keeping our feet clean, the invention of linoleum may be due. The first use of cloth treated with linseed-oil was for wall coverings and for windows, for in 1636 a patent was granted for 'painting with oyle cullors upon woollen cloath, kerseys, and stuffes, being pper for hanging, and alsoe with the said cullors upon silk for windowes.' The next step was the invention of kamptulicon, which consisted essentially of powdered cork, embedded in india-rubber. This prepared the way for linoleum, which was invented about 1860 by Mr F. Walton. The industry has grown enormously since then, and the material is becoming very popular.

Considering that linseed-oil serves the same purpose in oil-painting and in making linoleum, and that cork has always been plentiful enough, it seems strange that linoleum was not thought of before 1860. This is the way with all our great inventions; they appear so very obvious when once they have been worked out. The idea may, and does occur to many people, but it is the mechanical and chemical skill that renders the utilisation of the idea possible. Although linseed is the actual oil employed, any other drying oil would serve the same purpose. A 'drying' oil possesses the remarkable property of being converted by the oxygen of the air into a stringy, elastic substance, somewhat resembling india-rubber. When employed for painting, the oil, on 'drying,' forms a cement which protects the colours from the air, and forms a water and air proof covering for the wood or canvas on which it is painted. Many oils possess drying properties in a greater or less degree; the principal ones in addition to linseed are poppy-seed, cotton-seed, hemp-seed, and nut oils. The addition of 'driers,' composed of compounds of lead, not only makes the oil dry more quickly, but renders the process more complete in the end. The linseed-oil to be used for the manufacture of linoleum is first allowed to settle, and is then boiled with the addition of driers. The next step is very curious to witness. The oil is pumped to the top of a building and allowed to flow down slowly over pieces of light cotton cloth about twenty-five feet long, suspended vertically from iron bars. The building is heated to blood temperature, and the layers of oil take about twenty-four hours to dry. As soon as one layer is dry, another film of oil is run over it, and this goes on for six or eight weeks until the thickness of dried oil amounts to half an inch. The 'skins' are then cut down and ground between rollers. Sometimes the oil is dried in bulk. The raw oil is run into a cylinder provided with rotating arms, which beat the oil into spray, so that the drying only takes twenty-four hours, instead of several months; but the product is not considered so satisfactory as that dried naturally. The next step is to mix the ground oil with resin and kauri gum, that curious fossil resin that is found in New Zealand.

All this time machines have been hard at work pulverising the cork. Of all the difficult substances to cut, cork is one of the worst. It is so elastic that pressing on it with a heavy knife has no effect, whilst it takes the edge off the hardest steel almost immediately. Knives used in cutting cork require to be sharpened after every two or three cuts. The cork-breaker in most general use consists of a number of very strong circular saws, rotating close to steel bars, the ends of which are toothed in an opposite direction to the saws. Before reaching the breaker, the cork is passed over a deep sieve which is made to move rapidly backwards and forwards. The dust and dirt fall through the meshes, whilst the cork passes over the top; stones, pieces of metal, &c., remaining on the sieve itself. The cork is principally the waste from the factories where bottle-corks are made. Most of the cork now comes from Algeria, where there are large forests of the cork oak, and the exports from Spain and Portugal have diminished considerably. The ground cork leaves the breaker in fine powder, and is very dangerous to handle. The material is so light that it easily becomes suspended in the air, producing a highly explosive mixture. It would be safer to take a naked light into a powder-magazine than into the building where the cork is ground. All lights are carefully guarded, but in spite of every precaution, explosions are sometimes started by sparks from the machinery. Unfortunately, no means have yet been found for removing the dark patches from the cork. Everybody must have noticed these dark streaks, which consist almost entirely of tannin. They rot comparatively quickly, whilst the rest of the cork is quite sound; and if some means could be found for eliminating this dark portion, the linoleum would wear much longer.

The powdered cork is now mixed with the oil and resin cement. After a preliminary rough mixing, the compound is passed into a gigantic sausage-machine, where the materials are incorporated thoroughly. The raw linoleum, as it issues from the spout, bears a close resemblance to German sausages, and for this reason the machine goes by the name of the 'German.' The lumps of linoleum as they leave the 'German' are passed through rollers, which convert the material into sheets. These are scraped off the rollers, and the substance is then rolled on to a backing of jute canvas. Instead of canvas, wire-gauze is sometimes used, and this material embedded in india-rubber is being employed for making linoleum stair-carpets.

The linoleum made by rolling the material on to the canvas in this simple way is, of course, quite plain, and of the well-known reddish-brown colour. For producing the elaborate patterns that we see displayed in the furniture shops, very ingenious machinery has been invented. The simplest and most obvious way to obtain a pattern on the linoleum is to paint a design on the finished material in oil-colours,

but the objection to this is that the pattern soon wears through. The next method, also fairly obvious, is to run different coloured linoleums on to the backing, side by side, so that as they are carried along by the canvas, a striped material is produced. The effect, however, is not particularly pleasing, and the public taste demands something more artistic than stripes.

One way to produce variegated patterns going right through the linoleum is to use stencils. The canvas, faced with ordinary linoleum, travels along a horizontal table, and metal stencil-plates of the same width as the fabric are lowered upon the canvas. The spaces in each plate correspond to the colour that is to occupy that particular portion, and the granulated, coloured linoleum is deposited on the plate, and brushed through the openings. The plate travels a short distance with the fabric, and then returns to its starting-point, ready to be lowered again, the patches of granulated linoleum being consolidated by hot rollers. Another way for producing a mosaic pattern is to spread the linoleum on a table, and to bring down upon it a grid, the divisions of which correspond to the outline of the pattern. Dies are then pressed on the divisions which are to retain that particular colour, and when the grid is lifted, only those that have been compressed remain in full. The operation is then repeated with linoleum of another colour, and so on until all the divisions of the grid are occupied. The tesseræ or little tile-like pieces are then discharged from the grid by plungers, and consolidated by pressure. Where outlines are required between the tesseræ, a stencil is used to cover up the little tiles, and granulated linoleum is brushed into the spaces between them. Yet another method is employed by Mr Walton, in which cylinders covered with knives, arranged according to the pattern, cut pieces out of a sheet of linoleum; these pieces being afterwards consolidated together.

Inlaid linoleums, as they are called, although possessing many advantages, have serious drawbacks as well. They contain so much pigment that they are not so elastic as the ordinary variety, and the compositions of the different coloured portions is so varied that they wear unevenly. Besides that, the pieces that are consolidated after being cut out from a sheet, do not form such a homogeneous mass as the granulated linoleum. Many pleasing and interesting examples of inlaid linoleum, however, were exhibited at the Society of Chemical Industry. All linoleum becomes brittle after a time. This is due not to any change in the cork, but to further oxidation of the cement. It is probable that improvements will be introduced before very long which will obviate this difficulty. The use of the stencil for producing a design going right through the linoleum seems likely to be the most fruitful in artistic results. As the Japanese have shown us, most beautiful and varied results can be produced in this manner. Plain linoleum is by no means inartistic, but has the drawback of showing marks very readily. If iron is placed on wet linoleum it leaves a black mark. This is more noticeable in the brown than in the red variety, and is produced by the tannin in the cork combining with the iron to form ink. As regards the advantages of linoleum, it is very clean, damp and draught proof, durable, and comparatively inexpensive.

## THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

### CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

When John returned to his rooms, carrying his strange spoils with him, he found on his table an invitation. For the last week or two, his invitations had been few. This one had been delivered, his landlady told him, by a man and horse from Wamphrey, which was some miles off to the south of Duntrum. This was so startling in the midst of his present thoughts, that his spoils fell from his hands in the excitement of the moment. To Wamphrey! Mr Wamphrey was an invalid, the brother was absent. There had been no festivities there since his arrival in Duntrum, and that such an invitation should come now when he was about, he thought, to disclose the family skeleton, and brand its most beloved member with guilt, startled him as if there was something preternatural in it. He threw himself down in his easy-chair and tried to think, but his head went round and round.

The objects which he had carried in his hands fell on the table, and unrolled themselves as inanimate things sometimes do, as if there was life in them. They had been tightly done up, and fluttered out of the roll as they fell; the white handkerchief, folded like a bandage which had been tied together at the ends, and retained even something of the roundness of the head on which it had been bound, fell quite open, revealing its use. The larger black one had also been tied, two of the ends together. She had got rid of them on the first possible moment, trusting no doubt to the thick Spanish lace of her veil, with its large silken flowers, to disguise her sufficiently; but where did she go from that little shelter in the field—how had she escaped eventually, in the dark midnight, over the slippery, wet ground—so dark you could not see your hand held up before you, so wet and soft, your foot sinking into the clay?

John sat by his fire, and asked himself why he had been so hot in this discovery, and what he had wanted to do. Did he want to convict her, to bring her to shame, a girl who had done him no harm, who (he said to himself) had, after all, done nobody any harm; except perhaps the bank, which was impersonal and could not suffer much. It was true that it would not do to establish a precedent, and rob his Majesty's mails, when they happened to contain something disagreeable to you. But then, there were very few people in the world who would have the nerve and the strength to do that; and indeed, when you came to think, it was as much the carelessness of the guard putting such a temptation in the way, as the boldness of the culprit which was to blame. If he had not left them within everybody's reach, she would not have attempted to get them. The guilt was with the guard. Then, if he himself had kept awake and

not gone to sleep like a great baby, she would not have done it. Did he wish he had not gone to sleep? Did he wish the guard had not been so careless? Did he wish that the family should have been disgraced, and the prodigal ruined? John caught himself up with a start. What did it matter who was ruined? No one not with the purest motives, not with the most tender meaning, had a right to take the law in his or her hands. She had made herself amenable to the law—and not only so, but the position was untenable from any point of fact; it was a crime, it struck at the roots of every security. She was a thief! a thief! and of the most dangerous kind.

Suppose it had come into her head that somebody's diamonds would make a nice little portion for her brother, the prodigal whom his own family was sending away to the ends of the earth? Would that motive have saved her from the law which has to deal with a criminal and not with the crime, certainly not with the circumstances that account for the crime? He replied to himself indignantly, that there was no analogy in that case to this. To steal diamonds is common theft, to steal a mail-bag —well! That is a worse crime: and yet he could not endure to have it said even by himself. If Grizel Cochrane, who stopped her father's death-warrant so as to give him time to escape, was the heroine of the district, how was Marion Wamphrey to be called a thief? He went on reasoning with himself, wandering through the wilds of casuistry, examining, accusing, vanquishing himself over and over, and then beginning again.

Nevertheless, when he went to Wamphrey, ten days after, there were war and battle in John's eyes. He was given, as it happened, a very cordial welcome. Mr Wamphrey, the invalid, was down-stairs, seated in an easy-chair in his library, where he could take a quiet share in the amusement of the large party; and it turned out, as it so often turns out, especially in Scotland, that he had known John's father in their respective youths, which was a thing John himself had not done, having been an orphan as long as he could remember. And the elder son had come home from his travels, the object of which John was secretly aware of; but chiefly there was Marion, in the delightful position of daughter of the house, supreme everywhere—disposing of everybody, a princess at the head of her dominions. She was quite gracious to John, treating him with a sort of amused *empressment*, a smile of triumph on her face, as if to show him how little she feared him. Her manner drove John back into a conviction of the falsehood of all his sophistries, and that this bright creature was nothing more or less than the robber of his Majesty's mails, and had to be brought to justice. He was not even moved as he had been before by the thought of those little white shoes stumbling over the muddy field. This had subdued him utterly when she was not there. He could not even remember that orange skin which had appealed to him as the subtlest argument. Her smile of triumph seemed to turn his head—but the wrong way.

She had kept a dance conspicuously for him. She was evidently intent on proving that she did not fear him. She herself proposed, after it was over, to lead him to the farthest corner of the conservatory, to show him a rare flower of which the gardener was proud: but it was there in this position of favour that John was so hard-hearted as to fire his first gun.

'I have something of yours, Miss Wamphrey, which I must take the first opportunity of returning to you,' he said.

'Something of mine? How can that be, Mr Percival? I am sure I never gave you anything of mine.'

'Or rather there are two things: a white handkerchief marked with your name, and a black handkerchief, both of which you wore round your head on a certain occasion when we first met.'

'Mr Percival,' she said, with a change of colour, 'do you think it is good taste to assail me whenever you happen to be alone with me, with this ridiculous delusion of yours?'

'They are still precisely as they were when you must have pulled them off: you know where I found them—thrust in among the roots of the rowan-trees in that little hollow under the brae. There was another thing,' said John, 'the skin of an orange.' . . .

When he said there was another thing, her eyes blazed up in sudden anxiety—then they were dimmed with as sudden a shadow of relief. She had feared something else: therefore there must be something else to find there. And then her colour came back, and she laughed out, 'The skin of an orange!' Oh, she understood perfectly what he meant! That was always what led him on. She understood every allusion. 'That was a very innocent thing,' she said; 'I would like to know how you associate me with that.'

'It gave me a kind of pleasure to see it,' said John; 'I thought to myself I was some good to her after all.'

She paused, too, for a moment, casting down her eyes, and then she said: 'I cannot really stand any longer listening to your nonsense about pocket-handkerchiefs and orange skins. I hope you yourself know what you mean. I hope you have not—lost your head altogether. I don't want to be rude and leave you—but this is more than I shall ever give you the chance of saying to me again. Mr Percival, the next dance has begun.'

'Is that all you have to say?' asked John.

'Every word—and too much!' she said.

I don't know what he had expected, or indeed what he meant at all by assailing her so bluntly, but he certainly did not make anything by it; she assumed her air of relieved triumph, but held him at arm's length all the rest of the evening; and he did not dance at all, but stood in a doorway and followed her with his eyes—always seeming to see that triumphant head, flower-crowned, issuing from the bandages, and the white shoes stumbling over the muddy grass.

'What are you glowering at?' said Maxwell, taking him by the arm. 'Mind, I warned you —no interference with me.'

'I interfere! You had better think twice before you take any step,' John said.

Then it was Maxwell's turn to glower at him.

'I hope you are not taking leave of your senses,' he said.

These two drove home together, very silent, Maxwell in great wrath at such an extraordinary warning, John consumed with a desire to betray to him the secret of Marion. He could scarcely open his lips for fear it should burst forth. A dozen times at least he had framed the words. She is not what you think. There is something I could tell. I could put her in jail if I pleased. This last came most frequently of all. I could put her—in jail. He said it actually under his breath. He repeated it over a dozen times. He could not understand why his companion did not hear him. He seemed to himself to have another motive in speaking from that which anybody would imagine. It was not to expose Marion but to test Maxwell. He thought if the fellow knew as much as he knew, he would give her up at once: and with all his soul, he wanted to put this other man to the test. I don't know how it was that the secret was kept, nor did John know. He thought it was chiefly the noise of the post-chaise.

Next day, John was very restless and excited, unable to keep quiet or to go on with his work. He had taken his hat two or three times to go out, but then reflected that to go during the day would be to call forth suspicion, and perhaps give some other person of a detective cast of mind a clue to the mystery. He was not at all himself of the detective mind, and, indeed, the thing was not known, and certainly not prized in those days. A thief-catcher it would have been called, and 'Set a thief to catch a thief' was the suggestion which everybody thought of in that connection. But he went out in the afternoon, walking sedately over the high-standing hill, and reaching the foot just as the evening began to darken. He made his way again with the same shuffling and sliding over the muddy field, and reaching the little declivity behind the rowan-trees, began his investigation. The roots were so tangled and twisted, so loosely filled up with earth and stones, that but for the clayey consistence of the soil, and the damp that penetrated through and through, he would have feared to bring the entire mound about his ears. It took him a long time, and the evening grew darker and darker, and he had almost ceased to hope for any further revelation, when suddenly the stick with which he was digging, struck upon something which gave forth a metallic sound. With a sort of fury he rushed at it again, and struggling with a shower of falling stones, and the stem of one young tree which fell upon his arm, jamming it against the side, he at last managed to extract a large article, partly metallic, which was deeply lodged among the roots of the trees. He could scarcely make out its shape in the darkness, but half by sight and half by feeling it with his hands, made sure, with a sensation which brought the blood rushing to his heart, that it was the mail-bag. He had scarcely quieted down after this discovery, when looking up from his extraordinary treasure-trove he was aware of another figure coming towards him, so near already that he could make out it was a woman, and guess what woman it was. He started back into the shadow of the outlying edge, where he was absolutely invisible, and stood there, a spectator of the eagerness with which she advanced to the spot which he had found such difficulty in discovering, where these things had been hid. She had not even a stick, but tore at the roots and earth with her hands, plunging her arm in up to the elbow into the hole which John had made. It was now almost entirely dark, and probably she thought this was the reason she found nothing, for suddenly, before he knew what was being done, she had begun to work with one of the elaborate methods of the time for striking a light. John stood breathless, invisible, yet so near to her that he felt her panting breath, while holding his own, quite unprepared for what was to come next, not knowing what to do. He held the thing for which she was searching, he held her secret, her freedom almost, her life in his hands. Her fingers trembled, it took her a long time to strike that light—it seemed incredible to him that she was not aware at least that there was some one by.

Then suddenly the little flame awoke, and to him for a moment the whole strange little scene became visible. The light leaped up upon her face, pale with anxiety and alarm, and upon the background of the rugged bank, her gloves muddy and stained with the damp earth, a quiver in her person—though even then she was not aware of him for a moment, being so deeply absorbed in her search. Then she lit a piece of candle which she had taken from her pocket and held it to the crevice; but John was no longer able to restrain himself. He touched her sleeve softly with his hand. With a great start and subdued cry, kept down at that dreadful moment by a fear still greater than her fright, she let fall the light. She had not divined who he was—or she was of sufficient power to pretend so. She said hurriedly: 'I was looking for something I had lost: perhaps you'll help me—I'll—I'll pay you.' Her voice went out as her light had done, dropping in the dark, but leaving an impression of trembling and quivering in the air. Her terror was very real: she thought she had disturbed a tramp or beggar taking refuge in this solitary place.

'This is it, no doubt,' said John, putting the bag into her hand: this time the cry of terror was not to be repressed—and yet there was a relief in the sound: of the two, her enemy, who was a gentleman, was safer to meet in a lonely place in the dark than a tramp. 'It is you!' she cried—'you!' her teeth chattering with the fright and the cold.

'Who should it be,' said John, 'but I, Miss Wamphrey? I saw by your look there was something more here, and I came to find it. Did you expect anything else?'

She was not able to reply. He felt that she made a strong effort to regain her composure, but could not, being beyond speech. The entire darkness seemed to palpitate with her trembling. It seemed to him as if he, too, quivered with it, standing by her side. He had put the bag into her hands, but it fell out of them upon the damp ground at their feet. He put out his

hand, and gathered both of hers, which did not seem to have any strength to resist, into his hold.

'Compose yourself,' he said, 'compose yourself! It was better that I should find it than another. For God's sake, be calm! I will do you no harm.'

She had not the strength to draw her hands from his now: she was thankful for the supporting of his grip. 'I—I know what it means,' she said, gasping painfully, 'I—know what it means: I am prepared—to pay the penalty. I know that I am in your hands'——

'I think you will find them safe hands,' said John. He drew her arm through his. 'Come,' he said, 'take courage. I don't think you have ever quailed before.'

'Mr Percival,' she said, recovering her utterance a little, 'why are you my enemy? I am not your enemy—nor any one's. It did no one any harm'——

'Except the law and the bank'—— he said.

'The bank—was it for the bank?' Her tone changed: her fears came back: she drew herself away. 'If that is so'——

'No,' he said, 'it was not for the bank? It was for you. I think two can keep a secret better than one, Miss Marion. And you ate my orange, you know.'

'It saved my life, I think,' she said, with a sudden low burst of hysterical laughter; and then recovering, she put her hands imploringly upon his arm. 'What are you going to do with me? Oh, have mercy upon me! What are you going to do with me?' she said.

'If you will let me, I should like to marry you, Marion,' he said.

A few days after, it happened that John was entertaining young Maxwell and a few more in his rooms, as it appeared that he was returning sooner than he had intended to Edinburgh. There was some talk among them of the great adventure which had accompanied his arrival, and they fell into discussion on the subject, what the motives of the guilty person could be, and whether it was really a woman, and what had become of her. 'It would be droll if you ever recognised that woman you saw, Percival,' said one of the young men. John acknowledged that it would be droll, though probably she had nothing to do with it: and he asked the advice of his assembled friends as to what, in such a singular case, a man should do, and various suggestions were made, which did not perhaps throw much light on the subject. They were by no means at one as to whether they would denounce her or not, always supposing it was a woman. 'Not if she is bonnie,' one said, and on the whole this was the general judgment. 'If she turns out to be old and ugly, with her head bound up, and all the rest of it, give her up—like a shot' (though, by the way, they did not say like a shot—the slang of their day was different). 'But if she is bonnie, nothing of the kind.' John went on to suggest other difficulties. What if she should be met with in Society? What if some fellow you knew was going to marry her? This made them all ponder. 'What should you do, Maxwell, if such a thing were told you of a woman you were in love with?' 'I can't contemplate the possibility,' said Maxwell with a laugh. 'By George! but it would be a ticklish position, though,' said one of the others. 'Awfully hard upon Percival, still more hard on the other fellow.' 'I would never mind if I were fond of her,' said one. 'I should mind awfully,' said another. (Be it here observed that the use of the word *awful* is not slang, but the Scottish language.) 'You might mind, or you might not mind,' said Maxwell oracularly, 'but none of us would make a woman who had done such a thing our wife.' He had not the least idea that he delivered his friend's heart from a great weight when he said these words. 'So then I am no traitor even to him,' John said to himself.

It was felt at Percival's Bank in Edinburgh, that though to marry so young might be foolish, there was not a word to be said against Miss Wamphrey of Wamphrey, and that it was a piece of good fortune that the young ass should have fallen on his feet, and made such a good connection. Marion had the opportunity, of which she availed herself quite pleasantly, of refusing Maxwell shortly after, and in spring her marriage took place. There was some story of their having fallen in love with each other over the eating of an orange, people said: and very soon after his marriage, John Percival had the satisfaction of remitting a sum of money from his brother-in-law, Will Wamphrey, in New Zealand, to the bank manager at Dunscore.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE construction of the first mountain railway in Britain, that from Llanberis to the summit of Snowdon, is an engineering feat which should not pass without notice, although its opening was marked by a deplorable accident, which will, we fear, for a time interfere with its popularity. The length of the line is nearly five miles, with three equidistant passing places, besides the two terminal stations. The system adopted is a modification of the Abt system, and the railway is modelled upon the Swiss mountain lines, and is almost a counterpart of the Rothhorn railway. The permanent way is all of steel, both rails and sleepers, the gauge being only 31½ inches. The route followed is that of the familiar footpath from Llanberis, but diversions are made in places for the convenience of the engineers, as well as with the object of improving the view. The lamentable accident which marred the opening of this interesting line would not have resulted in any fatality had all the passengers kept their heads, and it at least has demonstrated that the brake-power is sufficient to provide for all contingencies. There is no reason why the Snowdon railway should not prove as flourishing a concern as its prototypes in Switzerland.

The marking of foreign meat so that the consumer shall not pay for the frozen article at the same rate as for home-grown mutton and beef seems to be fraught with difficulties,

and the arguments for and against the measure are so varied that those not in the trade cannot easily follow them. What seems to us one of the best solutions of the matter is embodied in a suggestion offered by a correspondent of the *Times*, which is as follows: 'No carcass of any sheep or lamb imported into the United Kingdom in a frozen state, or as fresh meat, or slaughtered at the Foreign Animals Lairages, and no carcass of any cattle imported under similar conditions shall pass into the open meat markets with the trotters, head, hoofs, or any portion of the skin or hide attached thereto.' Such an enactment would not be difficult of enforcement, and it would enable the consumer to see at a glance what he was buying. At present, the sale of foreign meat for British is notorious, and it is a fraud upon the home grower as well as upon the retail buyer.

Inventive talent is not always hereditary, but it seems to be so in the case of the Bessemers. Anthony Bessemer, for some time connected with the English Mint, was author of many useful inventions. His youngest son, Sir Henry Bessemer, who still survives at a ripe old age, discovered the direct and cheap method for making steel from crude iron, which bears his name, and which has been followed by the Siemens open-hearth process; both have proved amongst the most widely beneficial inventions of this century. Steel has been so cheapened that it is used for many purposes for which iron was previously used, such as steel rails, girders for bridges, and carriage tyres. A process which occupied nearly ten days is accomplished in a very brief period, while the price of steel has been reduced from about £50 to £5 or £6 per ton, and the world's annual production of Bessemer steel amounts to between eighty and ninety millions sterling.

A grandson of Sir Henry's, Mr A. G. Bessemer of 27 Killieser Avenue, Streatham Hill, London, has patented a very ingenious method for rescuing persons from dwelling-houses when on fire, and has published an account of his combined fire-alarm and life-saving apparatus. In spite of fire-brigades and fire-escapes there are an alarming number of preventable deaths by fire every year, the larger proportion of which might be avoided were some such simple system as that of Bessemer's adopted. The method is based upon the idea of allowing persons in a tenement, hemmed in by fire, a means of escape, through a direct passage, by a door of communication into the house adjoining. A fire-proof structure is embedded in the wall, which is only to be opened in case of fire. The opening is fifteen inches above the level of the floor, is three feet three inches in height, by one foot three inches wide. Into this opening is inserted the iron frame or box, containing an arrangement of steel plates, combined with a fire-resisting and bad conductor of heat, such as asbestos. There are double steel doors on each side, and each householder can open his own door only, but no one person can open both doors. This cannot be done without co-operation of persons on opposite sides of the wall. But this is provided against by the ringing of an alarm loud enough to awaken the whole tenement. In houses so provided, dwellers may sleep securely, as, if an exit is cut off by stair or roof, there still remains this door-way through the wall.

'The digestion of an ostrich' is proverbial, but we do not remember having ever before seen such a remarkable proof of the appositeness of the reference as is furnished by a certain inventory drawn up by a New York taxidermist, into whose hands came the carcass of one of these birds for dissection. The ostrich belonged to Barnum & Bailey's menagerie, and had formed part of the Exhibition in the Central Park. In its stomach were found the following articles: The bottoms of two beer bottles; a wooden clothes-peg; a mouth-harmonica, five inches long and two wide; the ferule of an umbrella, with four inches of stick attached to it; a metal skate key; a door key, five inches in length; a woman's hair-comb; two pieces of coal; a silk handkerchief; three stones; together with a mass of cabbage, grass, and dirt which served to fill up the gaps. Strange to say, this strange assortment of food had nothing whatever to do with the death of the bird. It died of another kind of consumption—tuberculosis.

Colonel F. Spratt recently read a paper before the Camera Club, London, on 'Elephant-hunting in the Nepaul Terrai,' illustrating his remarks by photographs which were taken with a hand-camera from the back of an elephant. Colonel Spratt is one of very few Europeans who have had an opportunity of joining in this magnificent and dangerous form of sport. The enterprise is organised for the amusement of the Maharajah, and takes place only once in about four years, else the forest would be denuded of the big game. A small army, consisting of about five thousand men, and perhaps three hundred elephants, and a few horses, take part in the hunt, and they carry tents and provisions just as if a campaign against a powerful enemy were in progress. When the pad marks of an elephant are found, he is steadily tracked down, and as soon as he is found, a trained fighter of his own species is urged against him. As a rule, he steadily retreats upon sight of his pursuers, and their object is to press him so as to tire him out. He then stands at bay, and the tug-of-war commences. The opposing animals butt at one another with the heads down, and should one show his flank, he is quickly brought to earth. When finally conquered, the wild elephant is pressed by his pursuers towards water, of which he is so much in need after his exertions that his hind-legs can be shackled as he drinks. He is then kept attached by ropes to other elephants until he gradually gets accustomed to bondage, and in a few months he is completely under control. The sport is a bloodless one, and the elephants when captured are most kindly treated.

Much has lately been heard about the electric furnace, and the wonderful new products which it is placing at the service of mankind, but very few have had an opportunity of seeing the apparatus in action. Much interest was therefore excited when Professor Dewar showed the furnace at work at the Royal Institution in his opening lecture upon the Advances of Modern Chemistry. The furnace consists of the familiar carbon rods as used in the electric arc light—only they are surrounded with fireclay, and

the upper one dips into the crucible in which substances under fusion are placed. Perhaps the most interesting thing shown was the production of calcium carbide. The furnace being fully aglow, small charges of lime and carbon were fed into the crucible, and after a time the product—calcium carbide—was exhibited. This dull, black mass, when dropped in water, gives off acetylene gas, which burns, as already noted in our columns, with a luminosity eight times that of the best coal-gas.

The Secretary of the Electric Construction Company points out in a letter to the *Times* how our manufacturing industry, as well as the farming interest in this country, is suffering from the legal obstructions which exist to the development of transport by electric traction and horseless vehicles. If our engineers had free scope for their inventive faculties, instead of being bound by the provisions of the Locomotive Acts, we should now be carrying a volume of traffic on our highways by mechanical means, at a cheaper rate, and with far less wear and tear than with horses. We took the lead in the development of railways, but now that a new order of things is coming about, we are letting foreigners step in to secure a monopoly. Germany and America are providing plant not only for South Africa, but for England and Ireland. The advantages of this new form of traction are many. The vehicles occupy a smaller area than carriages with horses; with rubber tyres the wear of the roads is reduced to a minimum; there is no noise, smoke, ashes, or droppings, and they are more effectively controlled than ordinary horse carriages. The limitations at present placed on the development of what promises to be a lucrative industry, call for immediate legislation.

Mushroom cultivation in France is a very important industry, no fewer than sixty wholesale firms in Paris alone devoting themselves exclusively to the sale of this delicious vegetable production. In the latest issue of the United States Consular reports, are four from Naples, Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Paris, dealing with the entire industry, the first-named report giving the most details. In the Department of the Seine there are said to be more than 3000 caves, principally exhausted stone quarries, connected with the upper earth by rope-ladders, in which mushrooms are grown. In these caves live about 300 people, who attend to the cultivation, and rarely see daylight. The conditions for successful culture seem to be a cool and even temperature, absence of light, or at least of sunshine, a current of air in one direction—preferably from north to south—and change of soil when a bed is exhausted, that is, after about three months' yield. If these and other precautions be adopted, a continuous supply of mushrooms can be confidently reckoned upon throughout the year.

In a recent lecture upon 'Water-power and its Application,' Professor Capper of King's College pointed out that at the present time the greater part of our industrial activity was dependent upon coal for its motive-power. The supply of this fuel—which owed its origin to the power of the sun in past ages—was by no means unlimited, and the exhaustion of our coalfields not quite so remote as some might think. A very valuable substitute for coal was water, the stored-up energy of which we also owed to the power of the sun, for by the action of the sun the evaporated moisture from the earth and seas rose in the atmosphere, and was afterwards condensed as rain, which was continually flowing from the hills into the lower lands. If the force of the rivers thus fed could only be utilised, the whole of the motive-power required for our industries would be provided. There were three ways in which water-power could be made available for use. First, the weight of water might be made to turn a wheel in the familiar water-mill fashion; secondly, by means of the hydraulic ram, or piston; thirdly, by using a vertical tube, from the bottom of which the compressed fluid could be urged in a jet against the vanes of a paddle-wheel. It was this last device which was adopted at Niagara, and if the whole of the force generated by that mighty waterfall could be made available, about 10 million horse-power would be at disposal—sufficient to drive 500 Atlantic liners continually at the rate of 20 knots per hour.

It was stated at the annual meeting of the members of the National Sea-fisheries Protection Association, that during 1894 the amount of fish landed in the United Kingdom was larger than in any previous year, the money value of the fish being nearly seven millions sterling. But the increase was not derived from the home fisheries, but from the increasing proportion of the fish-supply from around Iceland. The bill introduced last year for putting a stop to the destruction of immature flat-fish unfortunately did not pass, but a similar bill would be introduced by the Government which would deal with the subject. Belgium and Denmark had already legislated in this direction, and we should certainly not be behind in a matter which was of international importance.

The great importance of the Röntgen method of obtaining photographs of the inner structures of the body has been evidenced by several examples which have recently been brought under our notice. In one case a little child in crawling about the room was heard to occasionally scream without any apparent cause. Examination revealed a slight swelling in the leg, and a doctor suggested that there might be a needle there. The child's leg was placed under a Crookes tube, and on a photographic plate, with the result that a needle was plainly shown, and promptly removed. In another case, disease of one of the bones of the forearm was indicated, but the extent of the mischief was not known until revealed by one of these strange Röntgen pictures. It was then found that while one bone was entire, the other was perforated in several places. The doctors, indeed, were able to find out as much about the case as if the diseased bone had been laid bare. These cases were shown to us at Faraday House, London, where a complete X-ray plant has been established for the benefit of doctors and their patients.

Any one who wishes to study English History in a most entertaining way is recommended to take the first opportunity of visiting the newly opened National Portrait Gallery at Charing Cross, London. Here can be seen the counter-

feit presentments of all who have made history for the last few centuries, including great soldiers and sailors, statesmen, painters, doctors, besides many whose lives have not been of so creditable a kind. In addition to the pictures there is a collection of effigies—mostly of kings and queens—which have been copied by the electrotype process from statues and busts which are for the most part dispersed among our cathedrals and abbeys. The effigy room is really one of the most interesting features of the new gallery, and an inspection of it would alone repay the trouble of a visit to it.

Yet another use has been found for the ubiquitous Photographic Camera by Mr Mallock, who has found it a most useful agent in determining whether the lines of a building are vertical, or whether they have from any cause ceased to be so. It is true that such a question can be solved in other ways; but such methods are tedious, and involve both trouble and expense. Mr Mallock's plan is simple in the extreme. He places his camera on a horizontal board, and in front of the lens he arranges a small tank of glycerine and water, which forms an artificial horizon. By this means, the building, whose verticality has to be tested, is photographed together with its reflection in the tank, as in a looking-glass, and every deviation from the perpendicular can afterwards be detected on the negative produced by means of a micrometer scale; a true vertical being obtained for comparison by a stretched silk fibre across the plate. Mr Mallock recently lectured upon this new application of photography, and showed various examples. In one picture, taken at Westminster, it appeared that the clock-tower was slightly out of line, while the much older abbey, and St Margaret's Church, were as true as when they left the builder's hands.

When Professor Graham Bell showed, nearly twenty years ago, that actual speech could be carried from one distant point to another by means of a communicating wire, he aroused the wonder of the civilised world; but for a long time our postal authorities regarded this invention as a mere toy, and treated it with lofty disdain. When, however, a company put his system into practice, the Post-office saw that it threatened their revenue, and obtained a judgment from the courts declaring that the telephone was a telegraph, and that those using it infringed the Government monopoly. Since that time, the telephone has been worked under Government license. A new order of things will now prevail, for the Government have bought the telephone trunk-lines—that is, the wires which connect one town with another—and the result of this arrangement will be, that presently the public will have many benefits in the way of quick communication placed at their disposal. Each post-office will have its call office, connected with the existing exchanges, so that correspondents may communicate with one another for a small fee. A subscriber to the exchange will have the additional advantage of summoning from the nearest post-office a boy to carry express letters or parcels, or he can speak a message to the office, which will then be transmitted as an ordinary telegram. The amount of business already transacted in our large towns by telephone is enormous, and will be greatly extended when the new system comes into play.

## A MIDNIGHT ATTACK.

By the Author of *The Rising of the Brass Men.*

BEHIND the Colonies and Protectorates of Great Britain and France, which extend in a broken line along the West African coast, from the mouth of the Gambia to the Niger, lies a wild and little known region of swamp and forest, where but few white men have ever set their foot, inhabited by many Negro races, differing widely in physique and language from one another. For the last three years, strange stories have been brought down to the seaboard about the doings of an Arab chief, called Samory. The latter, at the head of a large following of desperate men, outcasts from many tribes, Mandingoes, Jalufs, Sofas, Senegalis, and deserters from both British and French native troops, has made his name a terror throughout this 'Hinterland,' sacking villages, and carrying away the inhabitants into the far Soudan.

During 1893 he raided the eastern portion of Senegal, and the French lost a number of white officers in the hard fighting necessary to drive him out. More than once, too, they were badly beaten, for their assailants were armed with high-class rifles, smuggled through from the coast, in spite of certain clauses in the treaty of Brussels.

If the reports of native traders from the interior are to be credited, Samory has been busy during the last twelve months, and has fought many battles with inland chiefs far to the north. Exactly where he may be at present is not known, even to the European Frontier officers, who are by no means anxious for his reappearance.

However that may be, in the latter part of 1893 this Arab leader induced the Sofas, a warlike tribe, dwelling in a debatable land between the small British colony of Sierra Leone, and the French territory of Senegal, to take up arms against the Europeans; and quite unknown to each other, a British and a French expedition marched from different points to attack him.

One afternoon, at the end of December in that year, a small British force, comprising detachments of black Mohammedan Haussas of the Frontier Constabulary, and Negroes of the West India Regiment from Sierra Leone, stumbled through the dense forests of the Conno country. The day had been intensely hot, for this is the dry season in West Africa. From every foul lagoon and sluggish river, which lay shimmering in the fierce sunlight, sickening exhalations rose into the tainted air; while as the long, hot hours wore away, and evening approached, a white steam-like mist covered the surface of the damp, hot earth.

The tired troops dragged themselves painfully along, with a company of Krooboy bearers ahead, slashing a pathway for them through almost impenetrable thickets, beneath the wide-spreading arms of acacias, baobabs, and lofty

cottonwoods; or floundered amid the mangrove roots, in peril of disappearing altogether in the slime, as they forded the numerous forest creeks. At sunset they reached a small clear space, surrounding a deserted village, and there, at the word of command, the worn-out men were glad to pile their arms, and prepare to camp.

A rough breastwork of brushwood was soon arranged in a hollow square, and throwing themselves down on the moist earth, amid the crimson shoots of trailing plants, and flowers of many hues, the soldiers spread their simple meal; the tall Haussas in their crimson fez and dark rifle uniform separating themselves from the men of the West India Regiment, for the latter profess a debased form of Christianity mixed with black practices, and the true Mussulman will not, if he can help it, eat with the infidel.

By-and-by the light grew fainter and fainter amid the trees, and then died out altogether. The moon swung slowly westward and the stars shone down out of a sky of deep indigo with an intense clearness, for in the tropics the eye realises the immensity of distance between each of these twinkling points of fire, which stand out so sharply, one behind another, in a kind of stereoscopic focussing through an endless perspective of space.

The colonel's tent shone through the damp bushes like a big Chinese lantern. Inside, the light of a swinging hurricane lamp fell on the thin yellow faces of the white officers, seated round a strip of palm netting, on which were spread sundry tins of provisions, and the inevitable whisky and Sauerbruner. The mark of 'the coast' was on them all; the wasted figure and listless air which unmistakably stamps most European dwellers in the feverish West African littoral.

An hour or two was passed in spiritless chat, for a long march through a tropical forest sickens both mind and body. Then, posting sentinels, and leaving one white officer on guard, the rest rolled themselves in their blankets, and went securely to sleep, for according to native reports, Samory and his raiders were still far distant.

The young West India lieutenant on guard leaned against the great buttress-shaped roots of a cottonwood, and as he mopped the perspiration from his brow, and fought the blood-thirsty mosquitoes with both hands, said wicked things about the fate that led him into 'this disthressful country.' He was an Irishman, and when he abused things in general, as Frontier officers occasionally do, the powerful eloquence of the Celtic tongue relieved his feelings best. From time to time he looked out into the darkness, but there was little to be seen; the shadow of the trees closed round the camp like a wall, and no sound other than the usual night voices of the African forest broke the stillness. From a hidden creek came the floundering and splashing of an alligator; at times the branches of the cottonwoods rattled, as a monkey swung himself from bough to bough; or the rustling of grasses marked the passage of a huge snake.

The white man at last found the spell of the forest, which at times will cause a panic even among the natives, though no one knows why, creeping over him. His hands trembled as he settled the chin-strap of his pith helmet. 'Pah! how this night-watching gets on one's nerves,' he said; 'it shows what the climate will bring a man to. Even the "drip, drip" of the water there is enough to drive me mad—— Hallo!' He sprang back, with a hand on his revolver butt, as a dark figure rose up out of the bushes beside him.

'Sergeant Amun Sah,' said a tall Haussa, saluting; 'think there be Sofa man in the bush; monkey frightened live for go away, leopard live for go away too.'

The lieutenant listened, while the veins tightened across his forehead, and something seemed to click beneath his right ear: and sure enough a rustling amid the trees announced the passage of a troop of monkeys, while the long howl of a leopard drifted down the night breeze.

A few moments later, all doubt vanished, for a snapping of twigs and swishing of leaves told that a large body of men were advancing through the forest.

At the report of the lieutenant's revolver, the camp awoke, and for a few moments, while the bugles rang out the alarm, there was a scene of wild confusion. Men still half asleep stumbled over one another towards the stockade; officers ran here and there with sharp words of command, while the Haussa sergeants effectually aroused any laggards with the rifle butt. If the soldier was a West Indian, the hint was even more vigorous. Then out of chaos came forth order. Lines of men knelt beneath the brushwood screen, supporting their rifle barrels on the branches against the downward drag of the bayonet, while the colonel moved coolly up and down, revolver in hand, and saw that all was ready.

Just in time, for an outburst of howls and yells rose on the night air; a crackling blaze of rifle fire ran round the bush, and while the bullets sang overhead, or ripped through the leafy screen, a swarm of dark figures dashed across the open space towards the camp.

'Fire volleys by half-comp'nies,' shouted the colonel, as his heart bounded and the blood surged through his body.

'No. 1 Haussas—fire;' the voice of the Constabulary captain sounded clear and distinct, and a blaze of light burst from one side of the stockade, while the crashing report of a volley rang out through the darkness. Before the sound had died away, a West India lieutenant, farther off in the gloom, re-echoed the command, 'A Comp'ny—fire!' and a sheet of flame blew along the two ends of the square.

Before the almost simultaneous discharge, the front of the attacking force melted away. Men lay writhing amid the wet leaves, or crawled on hands and knees through the bush; but the Mussulman, with visions of black-eyed houris and the tree of Sedrat before his eyes, has little fear of death, so with loud yells the foe spread out, and at full speed made for the breastwork.

'Independent firing—commence!' roared the colonel, and after captain and lieutenants repeated the order, the Haussas, who, used to Frontier

warfare from childhood, think themselves marksmen, took snapshots at the flitting figures, but did little harm beyond clipping clusters of leaves from overhanging cottonwoods. Meantime the West Indias, who are accustomed to drill in battalions, and fancy they are quite equal to white infantry, after a desultory shot or two, stood silent with bayonets at guard. Next moment the assailants swept at the defence, only to be met by a glistening wall of steel, and for a short space both sides were locked in a deadly struggle, the officers working their revolvers until the barrels were hot, while the troops fired as fast as they could thrust in the cartridges. Nothing human could face the murderous rifle blast, and in a few seconds the foe broke away and fled to the bush.

For a while, the smoke hung heavily over the camp on the damp air, then slowly melted away, and as the colonel recovered his breath he felt his wrist burned by the back spitting of his heated revolver.

'That was sharp work, lieutenant!' he said to the young officer of the West Indias. 'We shall have breathing time now, and then they will come back. How have your men come out of it?'

'At least two dead, sir, and more wounded; but the Haussas got it worse than we did,' was the answer, as the colonel passed along the line.

An hour went by, minute following minute, slowly—very slowly, as the shadows of the cottonwoods crept across the clearing, for the moon was sinking behind the Western forests. The shimmering silver patches on the grass narrowed and shortened, but still much of the camp lay bright and clear in the light. Here and there a wounded Haussa moaned faintly as he struggled to repress a cry that would have been unworthy of a believer in the Prophet, while the West Indian, who possesses neither the resignation of the Christian, nor the heathen's contempt of death, groaned over his hurts, or hurled horrible curses at the heads of the invisible foe.

'Silence, men!' said their lieutenant sternly, while the Constabulary captain smiled as he remarked: 'Those fellows of yours are good to fight, but they have not the stamina of mine. The moonlight's going; still if these brutes come back, they could pick us off man by man, if they were only able to hit anything; as it is, we shall get it hot; the woods are full of them.' Then he grasped the shoulder of his friend, and thrust him forward into the shadow, as a line of flame burst out of the bush, and a flight of bullets passed over the heads of the crouching men.

Without waiting for the word, No. 1 Company of the West Indias fired a volley, but as the smoke wreaths blew in the men's faces, a mocking yell from the forest told that it had done no harm, while with a rattle the troops turned over the Sniders to shake out the empty shells.

'Independent firing—commence!' the officers shouted, and the men, crouching beneath the frail defence of the breastwork, fired at the flash of their assailants' pieces, with probably little result, for the forest was dark, while the line of branches which defended the British front was clear and distinct, and the blue barrels glinted in the moonlight. From behind every cottonwood root and wide baobab trunk bright gleams shot out. Every now and then a soldier dropped his rifle with a clatter, and collapsed, a moaning heap, amid the wet undergrowth, until the men's hearts grew sick as they realised how they were at their opponents' mercy, and they longed for the dawn, when they should meet their skulking foe face to face.

It was one thing, the West Indias thought, to stand back to back, and face any odds in the open; but to see a comrade by one's side loosen his grasp on his weapon and roll over, tearing at the leaves, or lie still, and cough away his life's-blood, and be able to do nothing but be still and bear it, was a very different matter. So the men fidgeted and muttered until the colonel realised that if this kind of thing went on much longer, they would be beyond all control.

While the officers, with smoke-grimed faces, and dried-up throats, walked up and down the line, exposing themselves recklessly to the desultory firing to encourage their men, there was a stirring in the forest, and presently, in grim silence and spread well out, the foe rushed towards the camp.

'Steady, men—steady—wait a little!' roared the colonel, as with overstrained nerves a few of the soldiers pulled their triggers, and the bullets tore up the grass harmlessly a few yards ahead.

'A Company, fire—ready No. 2!' shouted the lieutenants, but the men were now past all control. They had their comrades' blood to avenge, and shouted and yelled as they thrust cartridge after cartridge into the chamber as fast as they could turn the Sniders over. The fever of the fight was on them, for now they felt their time had come after the weary waiting.

'Meet them with the bayonet!'—the colonel hardly knew his own voice, it sounded so hoarse and cracked—then he gasped, 'Good heavens! what was that?' for above the rattle of the riflery the words 'Courage, mes braves!' rang out sharp and clear through the smoke.

Dropping his smoking revolver, he sprang among his men, shouting 'Cease fire!' but the hammering of the Sniders drowned his voice, and the acrid smoke choked him, and he stood in silent horror and watched the fight. It did not last long. The swarm of savages had not nerve to rush upon the unbroken line of flashing bayonets—they turned and fled from the impregnable breastwork. Then came the turn of the defenders, and with hoarse shouts the West Indias leapt over the brushwood, and with dripping bayonets drove the foe through the forest.

The colonel sat down with his back to a tree, a horrible fear in his heart, and longed for the dawn as he had never longed for anything in his life. Fortunately, there was not long to wait, for the suspense was deadly. The shadowy palm fronds sharpened into shape; a soft gray light, growing rapidly clearer, filtered through the overhanging branches, and a broad crimson streak appeared over the forest; then morning came suddenly, as it always does in the tropics. The colonel looked round; the enemy had gone, leaving only dead and wounded, but his first care was to see after his own men.

Three white officers and a sergeant-major of the West Indias had fallen at their posts, with faces towards the foe. Six privates were killed, and a score badly wounded, and the colonel groaned, as with dry lips and contracted brow he recognised the pity of it, and the uselessness of this waste of life; for there was worse to come.

The bright sun-rays fell on the scene of the fight, and the gloomy forest-clearing became at once a place of warmth and light; but the space in front of the square was dotted every here and there with a rigid, motionless figure, and the surrounding bushes were full of wounded men. For a few moments the officer hardly dared go forward and examine the slain, and when at last he slipped over the breast-work, and stood over the quiet dead, the sight was what he expected—they were not Sofas.

Many were naked savages, auxiliaries only, but ten of the chief assailants lay there with distorted features, clad in the uniform of the French Senegalis. The colonel wondered who would be called to account for this night's work; but the crowning horror of the whole affair was reached when four Haussas carried in a white officer, and laid him on the dewy grass, coughing up gulps of blood.

He smiled as an Englishman raised his head, and he saw the pitying faces bent over him, for the defenders had already solved the riddle; then gasped, 'Hélas, mes amis!' and swooned away.

A few drops of spirit were poured down his throat, and then after a while the eyes reopened and he murmured the story, how, deceived by a native chief Koronah, he supposed the British force to be Sofas, and did not find out the mistake until too late.

'There—there, that will do, don't fret yourself; it's a ghastly thing, but it can't be helped—take another drink and go to sleep,' said the surgeon. The Frenchman swallowed a mouthful of the liquor, then his speech wandered, and his eyes grew hazy. 'Poor fellow,' said an English officer, 'it's a gone case, but we must do what we can for him; take him to the tent, sergeant.'

It would have been an instructive lesson to the coloured editors of the Sierra Leone journals, who are fond of declaiming against 'the dissolute soldiery,' to have seen an Englishman seated by the side of his late foe, moistening the black parched lips from time to time, and wiping the perspiration from the hot forehead. The commanding officer came round occasionally, and the last time the younger man raised his hand for silence, 'Hush, he's coming to,' he said. The white lids opened, and a faint smile shone in the tired eyes as the wounded officer raised his head; he stretched out a cold hand, which felt like ice when the Englishman took it.

'Adieu, mes amis—je vous souhaite un meilleur sort,' he gasped, then broke off and choked; a stream of dark blood stained his white uniform, and he sank back, dead.

This mistake, caused intentionally by the treachery of Koronah, who was duly hanged for it afterwards, cost the lives of four officers, who could be but badly spared, besides numerous privates and auxiliaries, and forms one of the dark pages in our West African history. Yet although the details seldom reach the ears of Englishmen at home, the deeds of our Frontier officers, amid the dreary swamps and forests of the debatable land, where our colonies abut on the wilderness beyond, are such that the nation has cause to be proud of them.

By hidden ambush, facing savage foes, or stepping calmly, man after man, into a dead comrade's place, so that the disease-stricken station may not be left for a single day, district commissioner and soldier daily lay down their lives. When we hear of eleven officers dying, one after another, at the same post in nine months, and yet none hesitated to go; and of three men holding 800 savages at bay through a long night, it is not hard to realise that the West African legion of honour is a long one, and that the supremacy of Great Britain in that fever-haunted littoral is dearly bought with British blood.

## WAITING.

Golden Summer and glowing wood
And shining leaves o'erhead,
Mazes of verdure and blossom
And fair green moss to tread.

Who should be gayer than I?—but no,
I wait and my heart is sore,
Listen and wait for a bird to sing
That sang in the wood before.

What though the rich air quiver,
The waters sparkle along,
What though the cushat is cooing,
I am waiting for that one song.

Waiting and listening and longing,
Summer is shining in vain,
Waiting and listening and longing
For the song of that bird again.

But I know that if one bright presence
Adown the pathway drew near,
That bird on the instant were singing,
The whole of my world were here.

T. P. Johnston.

The July issue of *Chambers's Journal* will contain the opening chapters of a New Novel, entitled

A LOCAL VIEW.

By P. L. M'DERMOTT,

Author of *The Last King of Yewle*, &c.

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# A LOCAL VIEW.

By P. L. M'DERMOTT,

Author of 'A Boycotted Baby;' 'The Last King of Yewle,' &c.

## CHAPTER I.—THE VICAR.

Crownley was a new suburb which might be said to have grown up around the church of St John the Evangelist. This is the reverse of the usual order of things; but when the church was built, fifteen years ago, in the fields outside the considerable town of Croham, it was chiefly intended for the interests of a neighbouring working population in the outskirts of the town. The owner of the estate on which the church was erected granted an excellent and spacious site, also contributing liberally towards the cost of construction of church and vicarage and school. The liberality was amply repaid when the speculative builder came into the fields; and the result was that within fifteen years Crownley became an important and prosperous parish.

The vicar, the Rev. Frank Dalton, was a chief factor in the creation of the parish. A bachelor and a man of means, he freely devoted his private resources to his church and its ministrations during the early years of the parochial existence. His proprietary interest in the church and its belongings was not less than the feeling of affection with which he was regarded by his flock. These were neither, as a rule, very well off nor within reach of want, and the average house valuation of the parish might be stated at between forty and fifty pounds a year. Crownley was a comfortable suburb, and neighbourly and social relations were generally very harmonious. Between eight and nine every morning the adult male population of Crownley departed, newspaper in hand, by train to London, and by seven in the evening they were all back again. During the day their wives and families were understood to be looked after by the vicar and the doctor.

Full of loving-kindness for all persons, the good bachelor-vicar sometimes distrusted the steadfastness of his own charity in regard to just one man in his parish. This man was Mr Seth Farmley, a solicitor, a man who had spent many years in deep waters, and had reaped much from the ruin of others. Business that is lawful must be classed as legitimate, though there is a wide moral difference at times between the two things. Mr Seth Farmley kept within the law; but during a connection of many years with joint-stock companies, building-societies, and like enterprises, depending on the confidence of investors, he had done many things not wholly consistent with the principles of the Ten Commandments. It is in the nature of such a business that while Mr Seth Farmley always had command of plenty of money, he would have found it hard to determine, at any given time, how much he was actually worth—great gains in speculative enterprises being commonly balanced by great risks, and sometimes great losses.

The vicar was afraid of this man, because he knew him to be dangerous and unscrupulous—not afraid in the sense of personal fear (for Mr Farmley could not touch him), but with that instinctive shrinking with which a very bad man inspires a very good one. There was another reason for Mr Dalton's feeling. His presence in the parish as vicar had been a surprise to Farmley when the latter bought a house in Crownley. Seth Farmley had believed Mr Frank Dalton to be a missionary in India or China.

We must pass briefly over the early relations between the two men. The Rev. Frank Dalton had had a younger brother, to whom he had been bound by strong ties of affection, and the two brothers had lost their hearts to the same maiden. The younger never knew that he was the other's rival, and, so finely did the elder conceal it, the girl herself hardly more than suspected the fact. In time the couple were married, and the elder brother went abroad as a missionary. In five years the young husband died, broken-hearted by financial ruin, leaving wife and child unprovided for. Then Frank Dalton flew back to England, and reverently took on himself the charge of the young widow and orphan. The ruin and death of the younger brother—a hard-working, earnest, and high-hearted man—had been caused by the failure of a bank, in the affairs of which Mr Farmley had been prominently concerned. Some were punished, many suffered and were ruined, but the supple lawyer escaped to follow his profession elsewhere.

To enable him to provide a home for his brother's widow and child, Frank Dalton accepted the charge of the embryo parish. But good deeds have their reward, sometimes even in this world. A wifeless and childless business man between whom and death the missionary had interposed himself in Calcutta, and over whom, whilst in India, Dalton's gentle character had exercised unbounded sway, sank into depression when he left, and from depression into the habits from which he had been withdrawn. In six months the unhappy man was dead; and he testified his gratitude to Frank Dalton by bequeathing to him all that he possessed. The possession of thirty thousand pounds was to Frank Dalton's mind too small a matter to make any change in himself. But it enabled him to improve the circumstances of the widow and her little girl; and from that time to the present they had lived in a pretty and commodious house on the south side of a hill at the further end of the parish from the church and vicarage.

By a sinister fate, the evil influence that had ruined the father had almost, fifteen years later, blighted the life of the daughter. Seth Farmley had a son of twenty-three, whose feminine face looked more like eighteen—a petted and pampered offshoot of a bad stem, the gentleness of whose manners, the sweetness of whose voice and aspect imposed even upon those whom he repelled by his want of physical manliness. If men despised him or laughed at him, many women did otherwise, and few women could wholly resist the pleasant and insinuating deference of his attentions to them. But when the Rev. Frank Dalton heard for the first time that this young man was throwing the glamour of his fascinations over the innocent eyes of his niece, Mary Dalton, he was almost stunned. Discreetly, without revealing his alarm, the vicar sounded the girl's mother concerning the relations of the two, and found much cause to fear that the danger was real. The poignancy of the discovery was made more keen by the suspicion that Seth Farmley encouraged his son to press his suit on the girl for the sake of her uncle's money, which all the world believed would be hers.

What the vicar might have done, or attempted to do, in these trying circumstances, there is no need to inquire. An event altogether unexpected, and as sudden as unexpected, put an end to his anxieties. Mr Freddie Farmley packed off to South Africa in pursuit, as he professed, of gold claims. Hundreds were doing this, and the fever caught him also. No one in Crownley was particularly sorry for his departure, though he was missed for a while in many places. For a week or two Seth Farmley (who had no other offspring, and was a widower) looked depressed and vexed; but he was too busy a man to have spare time for domestic troubles, and too practical to regard his son's escapade from a sentimental point of view.

'Young blood will have its way,' he declared philosophically. 'Two or three years sowing wild oats will send Master Freddie home again sadder and wiser than he went!'

The vicar uttered many a silent prayer of thankfulness for the deliverance, but he held his tongue. Pretty Mary Dalton never suspected the fear that had lately shaken her uncle's life; probably, in her innocence, she was unconscious of the cause of his fear. But he was kinder to her than ever now, and in the course of two months took her to more concerts in London, and gave her more presents (including a substantial increase in her pocket-money allowance) than ever before. Nor had he ever wanted her so often at the vicarage, or indulged her in so much liberty in putting things in order in his study and elsewhere. Old Mrs Atkins and her daughter (who constituted the 'establishment') had never found their master so patient and tolerant in respect of the changing of window-curtains and the dusting of carpets.

It was not only the removal of Freddie Farmley that made the vicar happy. A hope that had lain near his heart for two years past was now in prospect of being realised. Mary was just past her twentieth birthday. He had intended her to be older still before allowing her to marry; but the danger she had just escaped made him change his mind. The sooner she was now safe, the better. In his own mind, as has been hinted, the vicar had already marked the man who seemed most after his heart for the position of Mary's husband.

This man was a young Scotch doctor, who had settled in Crownley three years back, and whose winning personality and devotion to the duties of his profession had already acquired for him a practice not limited to the parish in which he resided. Mr Dalton never needed a doctor himself, but, as an educated bachelor in a suburb whose society was not intellectual, he soon grew to be more than partial to the companionship of the doctor in the spare hours of the evening. The contact of Dr Maitland's fresh northern zeal for research revived the academic interests of the vicar, and the personal character of the young man inspired his warm nature with a feeling akin to affection. The dream of uniting his pretty niece to this young man soon took hold of his imagination, and had young Farmley not come in the way, there was probably no obstacle to the easy and natural

realisation of his dream. Maitland was a frequent visitor at Mrs Dalton's house, for that lady was not strong, and his presence was always as welcome there as at the parsonage. It could hardly have happened that a man of his age and taste should resist the attraction of Mary Dalton's charms, nor did it happen. But she was very young, and Maitland put a wise restraint upon the interest excited by her youth and innocence. The time would come, and he could wait. It has been seen how nearly his reticence had been fatal to his hopes.

The same feeling of reverence for her youth dominated him still, the more so as the danger was past, and he had no knowledge of the altered views of the vicar. The frequency of her presence at the vicarage also threw her more than ever into his society. He was still the same as before—that rare and fine character of man to whom maidens instinctively give their confidence without fear. Such lovers are often cut out by less worthy rivals possessing more art or more boldness; but now at least there was no danger of that nature on the horizon.

Not for six months after the departure of young Farmley—an event, by the way, the effect of which upon Mary Dalton not even her mother had been able to gauge—did anything occur to vary the agreeable monotony of affairs. Then the vicar heard something which startled and disturbed him; but he kept the matter in his own breast. A good part of his money was invested in the shares of a leading London bank, with the manager of which he was on terms of friendship. One day they were lunching together in town, when the banker suddenly observed:

'By the way, have you any interest in the Popular Bank? I ask, because a good many clergymen are depositors as well as shareholders.'

'No,' said the vicar; 'I avoid such concerns on principle.'

He avoided the Popular Bank for a stronger reason which he did not mention. Seth Farmley was its solicitor.

'I am glad of that; these things are risky, and I know you want to keep your capital intact for your niece and her mother.'

'That is so,' was the reply. After a minute's hesitation, perceiving the banker disposed to say no more on the subject, he added:

'I know the discretion that is incumbent on men like you in such matters. But if you could tell me in confidence, I have a personal reason for desiring to know whether anything is wrong with the institution you have mentioned. What you may say, of course, will not pass from me in any way.'

'Well, without saying in words that anything is actually wrong, matters begin to look suspicious. Experts note signs that are unintelligible to the uninitiated. There is too much personal influence in the concern, for one thing.'

'I understand,' said the vicar, smiling, 'there is a parishioner of mine, for example.'

'Just so. You have heard of that affair of his son's?'

'No?' His interest was genuine now.

Mr Frederick Farmley had been a cashier in the bank, and had been detected in a serious irregularity. It was necessary he should disappear, and the matter was hushed up, his father arranging the deficit. This was what Mr Dalton now learned.

'An incident like that is a bad symptom,' said the banker, with emphasis.

The vicar was very thoughtful for a time. The danger had, then, been worse than he had imagined it. The discovery made him serious.

'At all events,' he remarked, 'his country can spare the young man. He is not likely to come back.'

'Birds of that feather always come back. Depend upon it,' said the banker gravely, 'he will be back before long.'

That was all; but it was enough to decide the vicar's resolution that Mary should be placed in safety as soon as possible. If necessary, he would take some way of hastening matters himself. He did so as soon as he returned home, by speaking to Mary's mother, asking her to try, by some indirect womanly means, to sound Mary's feelings in regard to Dr Maitland. Intruding upon the sanctuary of a maiden's heart was a business that awed the bachelor-vicar so profoundly that the thought of it almost took his breath away. But he had faith that the mother would know the right way to accomplish the task, and he awaited the result with anxiety.

A few gentle words from the mother that evening awoke the girl's consciousness with a visible flutter. It was plain enough she had not, until this moment, thought of Maitland as a lover, and, from what has been already said, it will be evident that for this he was himself mainly responsible. But, on the other hand, the nature of the maiden's own sentiments towards the man was not so easy to read.

'Of course, Mary,' her mother softly said, 'we have observed it before now—your uncle and I—though he may have tried to conceal it from you. He has been full of delicacy and—and tenderness for your youth.'

But the girl said not a word, hanging her blushing face in silence. Under the eyes of the considerate mother, she was too excited to think or speak, and she would know better to-morrow. So Mrs Dalton kissed her daughter and sent her to bed.

## THE STORY OF THE SALMON.

By Dr Andrew Wilson.

There can be very little doubt, I think, that if a general consensus of opinion were ascertained regarding the title of any one member of the finny tribe to be regarded as 'King of the Fishes,' that designation would fall to the lot of the salmon. Whether we regard the fish from a naturalist's or from a sportsman's point of view, or even from an artistic standpoint, it is seen to be a model of its kind. Its outlines are full of grace, and that the 'line of beauty's curved,' is a saying which may find fit and apt illustration in the salmon's shapely form. Its

beautiful steel blue tint above, and its silvery sheen below, render its colouration attractive enough even to the casual observer; while I presume, regarded after a gastronomic fashion, *Salmo salar* will hold its own with any of the denizens of the deep. I have heard enthusiasts praise the Loch Fyne herring as a titbit not to be excelled in the way of fish, flesh, or fowl; but out of the range of very common things, the salmon will always hold its own as a fish 'fit for a king, either for sport or eating.'

It was Sir John Lubbock, if I mistake not, who once upon a time remarked upon the ignorance which prevailed amongst us concerning the history of most of the common living things by which we are surrounded. I take it that this remark is very true, when applied to the case of animals and plants at large. Hence when a big salmon attracts our attention on the fishmonger's slab, few of us concern ourselves with the history of the beautiful fish, or care to inquire into the story of the days of its youth. Yet the salmon has a history of its own, and that by no means a common one. Time was, when that very biography formed the subject of hotly contested questions in courts of law. 'Are Parr the young of Salmon?' was an inquiry, for example, which for long remained a *questio vexata* both with naturalists and with gentlemen of the long robe. Even now, certain phases of salmon-life are by no means so clearly determined as we might wish or expect, but on the whole we have materials at hand for completing a very fair account of the fish from its birth till it ends its days on the marble slab.

The salmon's kith and kin form a tolerably numerous assemblage. As a family, we find included in the salmon group, not only the various 'trouts,' but also the char, the smelt, the graylings, and other related fishes. The special group or branch of the family—naturalists call it a *genus*—which recognises the salmon as its head, includes in itself a goodly number of species ranging from the salmon to the river trout, the sea trout, the Irish Gillaroo, the Lochleven trout, and the Great Lake trout of North America. Nor are naturalists at all agreed regarding the distinct nature of some of the members of the salmon group. For they display an awkward habit of differing in size and colour and markings at odd times and seasons, and under the influence of varying surroundings, while certain distinct species may breed together, and produce in turn offspring which are fertile, this last being naturally a point that almost settles the sameness and identity of the species concerned.

The story of the salmon begins in the river, and this is true whether we have regard to the parent's duty in laying her eggs, or to the first appearance of the young on the stage of existence. I may here note that a very large amount of light has been thrown on the salmon's history by the practice of 'salmon culture,' that is, the artificial breeding of the fish for the purpose of stocking rivers. The imitation of nature's ways and processes—in other words, experimentation—here, as in so many other aspects of scientific work, brings to light many new facts and resolves many difficulties of the investigator. Let us see, then, what observation and experiment together teach us about the fish.

In the autumn time, and onwards to the beginning of the next year, the mother-salmon ascends the rivers to deposit her eggs, and thus to secure the continuance of her race. In connection with this periodical visit or visits to the river must be mentioned a very curious fact. The idea is entertained very strongly by some authorities that a salmon invariably returns to its native river or that in which it was bred. It has even been asserted by fishermen that, when several rivers enter the sea in one stream (as at Bonar Bridge, for example), the salmon bred in each river will pass back into their own water and will avoid the strange streams. The late Frank Buckland, a strong believer in this instinct of the fish, regarded the sense of smell as that which led it to its native river. Perhaps the truth is that for the most part salmon do return to their own rivers, but that the practice and habit are not necessarily invariable. We know the fishes certainly swim great distances along coast-lines where they are captured in stake and bag nets, and it may well be the case that now and then a fish will turn into a river that is near, in preference to seeking its own and distant water.

Arrived in her river, the mother-salmon begins to scoop out a kind of trench in the gravel of the stream. This she effects by ploughing into the gravel with her body. This trench is to be the nursery of her young. The eggs are laid in the furrow and are duly fertilised by the male salmon. Then the trench is filled in by the efforts of both parents, the eggs are covered with gravel, and the mound thus formed is called, in fisher's language, a 'redd.' How many eggs a mother-salmon will deposit is, of course, a difficult question to determine, but a stock calculation maintains that she produces about 900 eggs for every pound she weighs. Each egg in its diameter measures about a quarter of an inch, and it is estimated that 25,000 eggs go to a gallon.

Left thus in its gravel nursery, the egg undergoes the mysterious process of development. Into this process it is impossible for me to enter in this paper; suffice it to say that in Dame Nature's own ordered way, the living matter of the egg is in due season formed and fashioned into the likeness of a little fish. The hatching, like other incidents of salmon-life, varies in duration. A little over ninety days is assumed to be a fair period when the temperature is even—say about 40 or 41 degrees Fahrenheit. In the spring the baby-salmon appears. It is not like a salmon in the least, and is called an 'alevin.' We see a big sac or bag attached to the infant fish. This is the yolk-sac, which is destined to nourish it in its early days, and to provide babe's meat for it,

until it is able to forage for itself. In about six weeks' time a crisis occurs in its history. It is then in length little over an inch, but it grows rapidly enough, and when it has passed beyond its babyhood, it assumes a banded appearance, through the development of dark bars on its sides. It has now become the 'parr,' and it was this stage of salmon biography which, as I have remarked, formed the subject of strong controversy in bygone days.

It is no uncommon thing for the young of animals to exhibit marked differences in colour from their parents. We see this fact exemplified even among the quadrupeds. In many cases the young are striped, while the adults exhibit no such markings. Many of the salmon family illustrate the same peculiarity. Growth is very rapid in the young salmon after it has assumed the dress of the 'parr.' In about sixteen weeks, it will have increased to double its original bulk, a length of eight inches being given as the usual limit of parr size. The parr stays in the river. It has no affection for the sea. Indeed, kept in sea-water it will die. But at the end of the second year, a more gorgeous costume is developed. Attaining to the days of its full-fledged youth, the parr is fitted out for fresh pastures by the growth of scales of bright appearance. It loses its parr-markings when it is two years old. Clad in its bright armour it becomes the 'smolt,' and passes for the first time to the sea.

While the changes I have described take place at the end of the second year of the parr's life, it must be borne in mind that certain parrs may exhibit a precocity in that they go to the sea at the end of their first year. Others delay till the third year; but here we see the impossibility of attaining mathematical certainty when we are dealing with the affairs of the children of life. Variation is not only a characteristic of life everywhere, but is also a powerful factor in inducing that wondrous variety of form which marks the living world.

Down to the sea then, in the early part of the year, not sooner than March and not later than June, go the smolts. Change of abode works wonders in their history. They pass to the ocean as miniature salmon, a few inches long. In a few months they return to the river as 'Grilse,' each of which may weigh from 3 to 5 lb., or may even attain a weight of 8 or 9 lb., according to the length of the sojourn in the sea. The grilse is practically a salmon. It can produce eggs, and is therefore to be regarded as a perfect fish; although one must keep in view the fact that even the male parr itself may exhibit a forwardness in development, and be capable of fertilising salmon eggs in this admittedly immature stage.

All that is now required for the grilse to become a salmon, is a return to the sea in the autumn or spring, when, after further growth, it appears in its rivers in all the glory of its adult life. The grilse, of course, breeds in the rivers as does the salmon, and it may be well to note that after the spawning is over, the fish is called a 'kelt.'

Estimates are given by various writers of the remarkable changes which occur in the fishes after their visits to the sea. Thus in 1859, it is recorded that the Duke of Athol marked three salmon captured on their way to the ocean. They weighed respectively 10 lb., 11½ lb., and 12½ lb. Each fish was marked by having a copper wire placed round its tail. Six months afterwards, they were caught on their return to the river. They then weighed 17 lb., 18 lb., and 19 lb. respectively. 'A change to the sea' evidently benefits many living beings in addition to the human subject. Another observation records that a grilse, after spawning, was found to weigh 2 lb. This fish was marked on March 31. On August 2d of the same year it was recaptured, when it was found to weigh 8 lb., as a salmon.

The sizes to which salmon may attain are often almost beyond belief. Mr Young, quoting from Buckland, gives a list of big fish, which he tells us are usually found in the large rivers. A Tay salmon weighed 70 lb., and measured in length 4 feet 3 inches. A Rhine salmon ran its Scottish neighbour very close with a weight of 69 lb., and a length of 4 feet 8 inches. These were, no doubt, exceptionally large fish, but a forty-pound salmon is by no means a rarity.

Those who are fortunate enough to be able to indulge in salmon-fishing as a sport, cannot complain of unexciting times when the fish are taking, and when the mastery of rod and reel comes into play to secure the active and lithe prey. But in a milder fashion, salmon-catching in the sea has its own charms, and to accompany the fishers while they clear their nets of the spoil is as interesting an excursion as can be imagined. In my mind's eye, I have before me a scene on the shores of the Firth of Forth, not very far from the famous Bridge itself. A background of firs places the silvery beach in striking contrast, and the salmon-fishers' cottages stand close by the water's edge. The long line of stakes runs out to sea over the sandy flat. Here and there the wall of stakes and net is interrupted by the huge pockets into which the salmon pass easily enough, but from which escape is almost impossible. The tide recedes, and in their flat-bottomed coble, the fishermen paddle out to their labours. Coming to a pocket, the fisherman, clad in big sea-boots, enters the enclosure. He is armed with a catch-net on a pole. He travels cautiously around the pocket, sweeping to and fro in the water with his net. Now there is a splash in the water, and we see the back of a big fish disappear after it has risen for a moment to the surface, disturbed by the inquisitive human.

Another trial, and success crowns the quiet, practical intent of the fisher. The salmon is landed in the net and is duly captured. Transferred to the coble without, the fish, full of life, leaping and struggling, is thrown into the boat. A smart, sharp blow with a wooden staff mercifully kills the salmon, leaving only reflex heavings and convulsions, meaning nothing more than the fag-ends of vitality, to indicate that life still lingers without consciousness and without pain.

More captures, and then the coble, laden with its valuable cargo, heads in for the shore. The baskets are waiting for the spoil, and packed amid the fronds of the bracken,

the silvery fishes in a few hours will arrive in the busy haunts of men. No fairer gleanings, surely, can ever come to us from the great harvest of the sea.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By Sir Walter Besant.

### CHAPTER XXI.—LADY FRANCES.

It was about the middle of October that Frances came up from the country. Considering that her uniform practice was to remain there until the middle of January every year, it was reasonable to suppose that there was some urgent cause why she returned so soon.

Perhaps she would tell me. It was her general custom to tell me everything. For instance, when her marriage, at the age of eighteen, with an elderly Secretary of State, was under consideration, we talked it over together, weighing the arguments for and against it, dispassionately, which we could very well do, because Frances was not in love with the elderly statesman, though she greatly admired him, and we were not in love with each other.

I called upon her on Sunday morning, a time when I should be certain to find her quite alone. She received me in her breakfast-room. I observed that her face showed certain signs of trouble, or, at least, uneasiness of some kind. It was in her eyes, chiefly, eyes remarkable for their serenity, that the trouble was shown. There was a dark line under them, and her forehead, the forehead remarkable for its sunshine, looked clouded.

'You are not well, Frances?'

'I am always well, George. Sit down and tell me all about yourself.'

'I have got nothing to tell you about myself. But I will tell you, if you please, about Isabel.'

I proceeded to tell her, at length, a great deal about Isabel. Of course, Frances would not believe that a girl could be refined and graceful and well mannered, who was living at Wapping, the daughter of a skipper.

'You tell me to believe all this of such a girl, George. It is absurd. Where would the girl find these graces? Believe me, a refined and well-bred girl is a most artificial product. It takes the greatest watchfulness and the most careful companionship to create refinement in a girl—a refined and well-bred girl is not in the least a creature of nature, nor, I should suppose, of Wapping.'

'I cannot tell you where she found her refinement, Frances. I suppose, where she found her sweet face, and her soft voice, and her tender eyes.'

'George, you are a lover. Oh! It must be beautiful to be a man if only for the man's power of imagination. I fear your angel would be to me a Common Object.'

'No, Frances. Have I not known you all my life? This privilege is an education. Do you think that after going through such a school of manners I could be capable of falling in love with a Common Object?'

'It is prettily said, George. I half believe you on the strength of that pretty little speech. Since she appears to you all these things, I can only hope she is really all these things. You must take me to see her. Only, you know, men who fall in love do sometimes permit themselves the most crazy fancies. It makes them happy, poor dears; and I suppose it does no harm to the woman. I daresay she doesn't even understand what the man thinks about her. Well, and you are engaged, and you are going to be married; when?'

'Here comes the trouble. We are not engaged, and we cannot become engaged.'

'Why not?'

'On account of Robert.'

'Oh!' She blushed quickly. 'Then there is a woman, after all. What about Robert?'

'Four or five years ago, when she came with her father to live with him, and to keep his accounts, he told her that some time or other he should want a wife, and that he should marry her. There was to be no wooing, he said; and there has been no love-making ever since. He has never addressed a word of love-making to her.'

'Well? And why can't the girl let him go? She must feel that she is a clog upon him.' Frances spoke more harshly than was customary with her.

'Robert says that he has passed his word. Isabel says that she owes everything to Robert, and that she is bound by common gratitude to wait for him until he releases her. She will obey him in all things. If he says "marry me," she will marry him. If he says "wait," she will wait. If he says "go," she will go.'

'Gratitude of this kind, George, is touching, but it may be embarrassing. What does Robert say?'

'Robert says that he has passed his word. But he also says that it will be long years before he can think of marrying her. I have tried to make him understand that it is cruel to keep a girl on like this.'

'Does he love her? Oh! I cannot think he does. I have watched him while he was thinking of her; I knew it was a woman; and I knew he had got into some kind of scrape with a woman. Men who are in love do not glare and glower when they think of the object of their affections.'

'Does he love her?' I repeated, rising and looking out of the window. 'Nobody can answer that question, Frances, better than you.'

It was a bold thing to say. But one must sometimes say bold things. I remained at the window, looking out upon the Park, but I saw nothing.

Frances made no reply.

I came back and resumed my seat.

'What do you want to do, George?'

'I want Robert to release her.'

'Tell him so, then.'

'I know what he would say. I have told him already. He says that his word is given. Isabel has assured him that she will wait for him. Isabel has always been so gentle, even meek with him, that he would understand

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with difficulty that she would, in fact, rather not.'

'Well, what do you propose then?'

'I would try to work upon his ambitions. There is no doubt that poor Isabel, who has no social ambitions, would be a clog upon him. Seeing what kind of man he is, and the future that lies before him, would it be provident for him to hamper himself with a wife who can never belong to your world?'

'It would be madness.'

'Well, Frances, you have taken a very kind interest in him from the first.'

'For your sake, George, you know that.'

'It was for my sake at the outset; now, I hope and believe, you continue your interest in him for his own sake.'

She coloured. Thus doth guilt betray itself. Had she taken no such personal interest in the man, there would have been no cause for the mantling soft suffusion. It really was very pretty. Whatever softened Frances's regal beauty improved the attraction of it.'

'After all,' she said, 'the girl must be an incomparable nymph to have conquered two such men. However, Robert cannot afford to marry a girl of humble rank for a very long time to come. When he stands quite firmly, and has secured his position—but even then it would be madness.'

'If he were to marry the right kind of woman it would be different. He should have in a wife, first, good connections, then, social position, then, some measure of wealth.'

Frances inclined her head. 'Those are all things that would help a rising man.'

'Since he is a young man, and has eyes in his head, beauty would be a great additional advantage.'

'I suppose it would.'

'Well, Frances, do you know that woman?'

She answered one question with another. 'Where should one look to find such a woman?'

'To be sure, Robert is a man without family. He can't get over that. One may give him the manners of a gentleman, but nothing can make him a gentleman by birth.'

'If,' said Lady Frances, 'your cousin is a gentleman by manners and by instinct, what matters his birth? People may say, behind his back, that he has been in some kind of trade. That won't hurt him a bit. The fact that he has been a boat-builder of Wapping will never prevent his rising in the House. He is bound to rise. He will probably become in a very few years a Cabinet Minister. I suppose there is hardly any woman in the country who would not think herself fortunate in marrying a man sure to become in a few years a Cabinet Minister.'

'Meantime, he is only a candidate for this distinction; and nobody, except yourself, Frances, and one or two others, knows that he is likely to get what he wants. Therefore, again I ask, do you know of any woman—such as we desire for him—who would take him?'

'How am I to know?' she replied sharply. 'I do not look about the town in search of wives for my friends.'

'But you know everybody. Do you know of any woman who possesses all these requirements?'

'You are very strange to-day, George. Your love affairs make you importunate.'

'You shall be as haughty as you please in five minutes, Frances.' I took her hand. 'My dear Frances, you have always been so sisterly with me; and now I am in this terrible trouble, and in order to get out of it, I must speak plainly—very plainly.'

'Well, George,' she threw herself back in her chair, and folded her hands. 'You may speak as plainly, yes, as plainly as you desire.'

'Thank you. Well, then, do you remember a certain memorable day—a most disastrous day—when I came to tell you that my misguided parent had played ducks and drakes with the whole of my respectable fortune? I was very low in spirits that day.'

'Yes, I remember it well.'

'We had a good deal of talk about ways and means. I disgusted you by the absence of any healthy ambition.'

'You always have disgusted me that way,' she said. 'What has all this to do with your cousin?'

'I am working round to him. You will see the connection in a moment. Well, then you fired up and became indignant, and looked splendid. I like to see you when you are indignant. You then uttered words—burning words. You said that all the time you had been watching another George Burnikel growing up besides me. You said that he was ever so much taller, handsomer, more ambitious, more industrious, more resolute, more everything. You said, also, that you had always hoped that in the fullness of time the smaller figure would be absorbed in the greater figure, and there would then be a George Burnikel worth looking at. Do you remember saying this?'

'Yes, I remember; at least, I remember thinking in that way.'

'And I have often thought, Frances, that if I could have become that bigger animal—the ambitious and the resolute—perhaps—I don't know—but perhaps you might have consented. Well, I could not ask, because I quite understand that the thing was impossible. You have always been too great for me, Frances. I must be contented with Isabel, who has no ambition, poor child, and asks for nothing but love, which is pretty well all I have to give her.'

'I do not know what might have happened if things had been different.'

'I was even tempted, being so very small a creature, to assume that ambition, and to go about tricked with the feathers that please you. Being a humble, barn-door fowl, I thought of pretending to be an eagle.'

'I am very glad you did not, George, because I might have believed you.'

'Oh! You would have found me out very soon. However, that nobler creature, that superior George, that imaginary person whom you figured—he does exist; he is, in fact, my cousin. Look at him, Frances, he is exactly like me, only bigger all over, body and brain. He is as ambitious as Lucifer—which is exactly what you want; also, he is nearly as proud as my Lord Lucifer—which ought to please you;

he is masterful through and through—which pleases you; he makes everything and everybody subservient to his ambition; he has learned an immense quantity of things, to serve his own ambition; he is eloquent; he is handsome; he has manners, though he will never acquire the conventional manner—why, that is in itself a distinction.'

'George, you were never so eloquent about yourself.'

'One cannot be. And then, which is something, he is a true man; when he says a thing he means it; he has no past to cover up, like so many men. He will never have anything to conceal in the future. And he will command the whole world, except one person—that person, Frances, is yourself. You are the only person who can rule him. For he worships you, as yet afar off, with no thought of worshipping nearer.'

'What do you mean, George? What authority or grounds have you for saying this? What has Rob—your cousin—said to you?'

'I mean exactly what I say. He has said nothing. But I have eyes in my head.'

'The man has never spoken one word that I could interpret—in such a sense.'

'He never will, unless you bid him speak, and until he is released from his word. Then you will find him eloquent enough.'

'Well, but even supposing that you were right, it would not be in my power to release him. Why cannot he release himself?'

'No; but if a word of hope is authorised—in case.'

She bent her head. Then she looked up, and laughed.

'George,' she said, 'you must indeed be desperately in love to undertake the rôle of matchmaker.'

'That word of hope?' I took her hand, as if I had been her lover indeed, instead of only a go-between. 'What will you say that I may repeat to him? How shall I let him understand that your interest in him is personal?'

'George, you shame me. How can I send a message of hope to a man who is engaged to another woman? The thing is ridiculous. Go away, and make him release that girl.'

'Yet I may say—what may I say?' I insisted.

'Say whatever you please, George. Go. You are a meddlesome creature. I hope your Isabel will prove inconstant. There are Stairs at Wapping—Old Stairs—I believe—and sailors convenient for inconstant maids.'

'You are interested in him. Confess, Frances,' I persisted.

She covered her face with her hands. 'Oh, George,' she murmured, 'I have always been interested in him from the very first.' She sprang to her feet. 'Tell him, George, if you wish, that I like a man to be strong and brave. Yes, I like a man to be capable of sweeping the curs out of his way, as that cousin of yours cleared the stage of those curs at Shadwell.'

'And this great gulf of family. How can it be bridged over?'

'He must build the bridge if he wishes to cross over.'

'My Lady Greatheart,' I said, and kissed her fingers. 'There is the poem, you know—the lines run like this—

> In robe and crown, the Queen stept down
> To meet and greet him on his way.

The metre is a little dickey in the next lines, but the sense makes up that defect. The sense is quite beautiful.

'It is no wonder,' said the House of Commons, 'he is so very much stronger than the whole of the Rest of the House of Commons put together.'

## OUR HEDGES.

By S. Baring-Gould.

In certain parts of the Alpine chains, there are portions delivered over to the chamois as their own, in which no gun may be fired, where the beautiful creatures may be sure of rest and security, in which they may nurture their young, and to which, when hard pressed, they may flee, as to Cities of Refuge. In Tyrol such an asylum is called a Gämsenfreiheit.

Of late years it has become necessary for law in Switzerland to extend its protection to the Edelweiss. This peculiar and beautiful flower is much in request, both by lovers who present it to their sweethearts, and also for the formation of little mementoes for travellers.

The Edelweiss does not require an altitude so great that it is near the snow, nor a precipitous rock to crown; the poor plant has been driven higher and ever higher, and to inaccessible points as the only places where it can live unmolested. At Rosenheim, on the Bavarian plateau, at the roots of the mountains are fields of Edelweiss, where the plant is cultivated to satisfy the insatiable visitor who insists on going home from his holiday with a tuft in his hat, and on sending dried specimens to all his friends.

Well! what must England have been before it was cultivated in nearly every part? Verily, it must have been a land of flowers. Now the flowers are banished—that is to say, the vast majority of kinds, by the plough and harrow. Only those are left which can withstand both, and such as take refuge in our hedges. The hedgerow is, in fact, to our English flowers, what the Gämsenfreiheit is to the Tyrolian chamois, its city of refuge, its asylum from utter eradication.

No one who has travelled much in France and in Germany, especially in the former, can have failed to lament the absence of hedges. Properties being divided and divided up to mere strips, hedges are inadmissible, impossible; and a peg in the ground distinguishes one man's estate from that of another. It has been made a law in Germany that no property may be further reduced beyond that breadth in which a plough can be turned.

In plains and rolling lands, the eye looks to the horizon without anything to rest on, over infinite ranges of strips of cabbage and colza, and potatoes, and beetroot, of barley and lentils, of wheat and sainfoin. There is not a hedge

anywhere—no harbour for such plants as have not the stubbornness to live on in spite of plough, and pick, and spade, and hoe. Flowers there are—for flowers are obstinate and persist in coming—grape hyacinths, star of Bethlehem, lungwort, scarlet anemones, tulips, blue-bottles, cornflowers, salvia, and so on—because they dive out of reach of the spade and share, or because they do not object to having their tubers cut up—they rather like it. They multiply from every portion. But this is not the case with all flowers. Some have too refined a nature, are too gentle, modest, reserved, to endure rough treatment. They ask only to be let alone. They will die if incessantly worried—and for such there is no other place of refuge available except the hedgerow.

I was the other day on the battlefield of Poitiers. The chroniclers tell of the banks of hedges and vineyard walls that then stood and afforded shelter for the English archers. Not one remains. Every hedge has been levelled, every mound spread, and with them have gone all those flowers that once made the battlefield like a garden.

Our old English hedges are the Poor Man's conservatory, are the playground of his children. How starred they are in spring with primroses! How they flush with red robin! How they mantle with bluebell! How they wave with foxglove! Talking of the latter, I was driving one day in Cornwall, when my coachman pointed to a range of foxgloves, and said: 'Look there, sir! They are just like girls.'

'What do you mean?' I asked.

'Did you never notice,' said he, 'that the foxglove always turns its flowers towards the road—it never looks into the hedge?'

'Naturally, no flower exists that does not look to the light.'

''Tisn't that,' said the driver. ''Tis they know they've got pretty faces, and wants to show them.'

Then, again, the ferns and the mosses! What a wealth of beauty in them! What a variety! Not to be discovered in the field; only in their own quarter, reserved for them—the hedgerow.

Our hedges are probably as ancient as our civilisation. We know of a few only that have been erected within the memory of man; the majority have existed from the period when our land was first put into cultivation. And it is remarkable that in the north of Germany, in Westphalia, the Saxon region whence came our Teutonic ancestors, there the hedge with which we are familiar in England is to be met with as well, as an institution of the country, or a feature of the landscape.

Look at the size of some hedges—their width at the base, the height to which they rise, the traces they bear of venerable antiquity! This is not perhaps the case in all parts of England, but it is so in the West.

An agent of an Earl, with large estates, told me that when first he took the agency five-and-twenty years ago, he waged war on the hedges, he had them swept away and replaced by low divisions with quickset over which any child might jump. But after long experience he had learned that our ancestors were not such fools as we suppose, in this matter. He learned that not only were the high hedges a protection to the cattle from wind and rain, but that they furnished a very necessary store of dry food for them at a time when their pastures are sodden. See bullocks in wet weather, how they scramble up the hedges, how they ravenously devour the dry grass in them. That is because the hedges supply them with something that they cannot get elsewhere.

In the West of England a hedge top is usually finished off with slates that project, and this is to prevent rabbits, even sheep from overleaping them. In Cornwall, on the hedge top is a footpath beside a large deep cleft in the land, that converts itself into a torrent in wet weather. It is a common sight to see women, and children on their way to school, pencilled against the sky walking on the hedge tops. So when certain hedges have thus been converted into footways, then a rail is often put across them to prevent horsemen from using them in like manner.

Anent sheep jumping hedges, I may venture here to tell a tale of a certain old rogue who went by the name of Tup-Harry. This is how he got his nickname. Harry was a small farmer, and he had a neighbour with better means, and a better farm than his own. One very dry season, Harry had come to the end of his grass for a flock of sheep he possessed. His neighbour had, however, got a fine field of mangel-wurzel. Harry looked over the hedge—a hedge furnished with outstanding slates—and greatly longed for these mangels for his sheep; but he did not relish running the risk of being caught taking them. So he went in the evening into his field, that was bare of grass, put his head against the hedge, bent his back and called 'Tup! Tup! Tup!' whereupon up ran his old ram, jumped on his back, went on to the hedge and over into the mangel field, and all the flock in Indian file scampered after him over the back of Harry. Very early in the morning the rogue went into the devastated mangel field, put his head against the hedge, bent his back, called 'Tup! Tup! Tup!' and up came the ram, ran over his back on to the hedge and returned to the barren quarter again, followed in Indian file by all the flock. That was done several times and no signs appeared anywhere of the hedge being broken through, or of a padlocked gate having been opened. At last the farmer, who was robbed, hid himself one night, and saw the whole proceeding. Tup-Harry did not try that trick on again.

I have mentioned the West as the part of England in which the hedge reaches the highest perfection. The lanes there are often sunk between deep hedges—sawn deep in the rock by the traffic of generations through long centuries, and the trees overarch them, forming of these lanes beautiful green tunnels.

Some sixty years ago, charming lines were written by the late Rev. John Marriott, at one time Vicar of Broadclyst, on a Devonshire lane, so graceful and so beautiful that none will begrudge their insertion here.

In a Devonshire lane, as I trotted along
T' other day, much in want of a subject for song,
Thinks I to myself, I have hit on a strain,
Sure Marriage is just like a Devonshire lane.

In the first place, 'tis long, and when once you are in it,
It holds you as fast as a cage does a linnet;
For howe'er rough and dirty the road may be found,
Drive forward you must, there is no turning round.

But though 'tis so long, it is not very wide,
For two are the most that together may ride;
And e'en then 'tis a chance but they get in a pother,
And jostle and cross, and run foul of each other.

Oft Poverty greets them with mendicant looks,
And Care pushes by them, o'erladen with crooks;
And Strife's grazing wheels try between them to pass,
And Stubbornness blocks up the way on her ass.

Then the banks are so high, to the left hand and right,
That they shut out the beauties around them from sight;
And hence you'll allow 'tis an inference plain,
That marriage is just like a Devonshire lane.

But thinks I, too, these banks, within which we are pent
With bud, blossom, and berry, are richly besprent;
And the conjugal fence, which forbids us to roam,
Looks lovely, when deck'd with the comforts of home.

In the rock's gloomy crevice the bright holly grows,
The ivy waves fresh o'er the withering rose;
And the evergreen love of a virtuous wife,
Soothes the roughness of care—cheers the winter of life.

Then long be the journey, and narrow the way,
I'll rejoice that I've seldom a turnpike to pay;
And whate'er others say, be the last to complain,
Though marriage be just like a Devonshire lane.

## A FOOL'S WAGER.

By John Mackie.
Author of *The Devil's Playground*, &c.

### CHAPTER I.

If the adventure I am about to relate is open to the charge of sensationalism, it has at least the merit of truth, even to a matter of detail. For I confess to the identity of the individual who so nearly fell a victim to his own foolhardiness.

It was a hot summer's day in '85, and my partner and I were saying good-bye to two or three of 'the boys' on the wharf at Normanton, Queensland, just before starting out with a cutter, freighted with general stores for the Van Alphen River in the northern territory of South Australia. Our intention was to establish a depot there, where the drovers in charge of the great travelling mobs of cattle could replenish their supplies. There could be little doubt about its being a somewhat adventurous and risky enterprise, for the country we intended settling in was infested by wild, hostile blacks, and no one, so far as was known, had ever ascended the river before.

'I'll bet you a level fiver, the niggers kill you inside six months,' said Tom Cashman to me cheerily, his sporting instincts aroused as he speculated on the contingencies. Being an 'old timer' in the Gulf, these instincts were the only ones he had left.

Now I was no gambler with fortune, but seeing that this was a matter reflecting upon a man's ability to look after himself, my pride overcame scruples and common-sense alike.

'Done with you,' I exclaimed testily, at the same time reminding Tom of the three years I had spent in the Never-Never country, during which the Minghin dialect had been as my mother-tongue.

'That's just it, Jack,' interrupted another Job's comforter at this point—he was an old friend of mine, and considered he had a perfect right to make himself disagreeable. 'You see you'll get mooning about the ranges and the mangrove swamps in order to interview those niggers in the interests of science, or some such stuff as that, and of course, as they're always on the outlook to extend their gastronomical knowledge'——

'I say, about that bet, you know,' broke in the Hard-headed One, 'what about the stakes?—if you get killed, how are you to ante-up? Hadn't you better make some sort of arrangement?'

The Hard-headed One, whose proper name was MacNab, was one of the most painfully practical men imaginable. He was—I regret to state—a Scotsman, like myself, and Tom Cashman's partner, which last-named fact doubtless accounted for his uncalled-for interference in the matter.

However, the affair was satisfactorily arranged, and shortly afterwards we dropped down the tortuous Norman River with the tide.

### CHAPTER II.

We reached the mouth of the Van Alphen without mishap, bumped over the bar, and sailed up the river with a favourable breeze in a somewhat reckless fashion; for at certain places where the banks were high, the wild blacks ran alongside, and we were almost within spear-throw. But soon they dropped behind, and at last where the water ceased to be brackish some thirty miles from the mouth, and just below Leichardt's crossing, we anchored and prepared to discharge our cargo.

In a few days my horses had come overland, the cutter left, and I remained behind with two white men, a Cingalese, a Spanish black from the Philippine Islands, and my black boy 'Jerry,' who was reputed one of the most dangerous semi-civilised boys in the Gulf. Two years previously he had belonged to the black police, but having got into some trouble had left them. As no squatter would have anything to do with him—a bad name like bad news travels far and fast—and he dared not join any of the neighbouring tribes for fear of being hunted down, and shot by the police—he was in an awkward position when I dropped across him. Being short of a hand at the time, and having been attracted by a certain air of intelligence and fearlessness in his manner, I took him into my service, and promised faithfully that no one—not even the police—should molest him with impunity so long as he behaved himself. I kept my promise, and how Jerry kept his will be shown later on.

We built a store and dwelling-house just above the crossing on the Port Darwin track,

about a mile from a long range of wooded hills, and then the wild blacks began to trouble us. They killed two swagsmen at a place called Scrubby Creek; then, in broad daylight, they speared four of my best horses, cut them up, and carried off the flesh before the other horses stampeding into the camp warned us that something was wrong.

There were no police within hundreds of miles; it was necessary that we should act for ourselves. Some travellers coming along just then, I left a couple of them, whom I had known before, in charge of the buildings, and started out with a party of six men, all told, to come to an understanding with the savages. We knew that the black man's citadel lay somewhere between the salt-pans and the sea, protected by a labyrinthine network of salt-water creeks and strips of mangroves. There were some strange stories told regarding it, for some wild-horse hunters and fugitives from the law who had tried to force their way in, had never come back again.

We crossed the river and struck north-east, passing through some pine scrubs, and when we camped at night had made some thirty miles. Early next day we left the forest country and came to the salt-pans. These were simply long, treeless, grassy plains with great clay-pans here and there, which were covered occasionally at high-water by the overflow of the salt-water creeks. These pans were now dry, and thickly crusted with snow-white salt. Beyond them again rose the great sea-bank, which resembled a series of wooded sand-dunes. As we crossed the breezy open, we saw two large mobs of wild horses feeding, and numerous tracks of wild blacks in the softer clay-pans. About a mile from the high sea-bank we were stopped by a salt-water creek, the banks of which were thickly fringed with mangroves. We followed it for several miles in a westerly direction, but it presented an uncompromising, impenetrable barrier to our further progress.

About mid-day, however, we came to a hardly noticeable passage cut through the mangroves; it was so narrow and tortuous that only one person could enter it at a time. We left our horses in a secluded spot in charge of the Spanish black, and resolved to explore it. There could be little doubt but that it was one of the entrances into the black man's citadel.

For nearly a hundred yards we followed one another between those dense walls of rank vegetation; then we came to the salt-water creek. Here we found a blackfellows' fishery which resembled a maze; it had been constructed by driving large stakes into the ground, and binding them together by supple boughs. Luckily the tide was running out, and we got safely across. Another struggle through a narrow passage cut in the mangroves, then, all at once, somewhat to our surprise, we stepped out into what resembled a magnificent walled-in garden. The soil was a dry sandy loam, on which grew shapely wide-spreading shade trees, from the larger species of Eucalypti and Moreton-bay ash to dusky giant fig-trees, and stately feathery palms. There were purple, white, and blood-red creepers festooning the trees everywhere. There were delicate wild grape-vines wreathing column-like stems, and beautiful green bushes loaded with luscious purple currants, the like of which I have never seen save in that black man's paradise, the signs of whose occupancy were all around.

Wonderingly we passed through it, and on to the great sea-dyke, which must have been at least a hundred feet high. To our astonishment we found that running along the top of it was a hollow, which must have been about four hundred feet in breadth, with a long pool of fresh water at the bottom. And along its shady, sandy banks were innumerable little fires, blackfellows' ovens with steam issuing from the cracks in the sand with which they were covered, piles of nets, stacks of spears, and dozens of dilly-bags and calabashes; in short, all the paraphernalia of a savage's camp, but on such a scale as I had not dreamt existed in Australia. *Splash!* went some dusky figures into the water at our approach; and the women and children who had been left in the camp, while doubtless the men were away on a foraging expedition, were allowed to make off through the reeds and bushes again. Examining the belongings of that camp, and inspecting the contents of the ovens, was one of the most interesting occupations in which I ever engaged.

And what a view was ours from the top of that seemingly interminable sea-wall! On one side lay the illimitable expanse of shimmering blue sea, with its regal stretch of yellow sand, while on the other side was the unbroken sweep of the salt-pans showing gray, green, and dazzling-white as the intense sunlight shone upon it. Beyond them again was the low line of the everlasting bush; it was of a sad-toned glaucous green, and in the misty distance looked for all the world like another but a darker sea; the low, wooded range of hills in the purpling distance resembled a dark, ragged-edged wave creeping up on the far horizon line.

As it was now nearly two in the afternoon, we sat down in an open space to discuss the situation and some dinner we had brought with us to save time—which was so very nearly being the last dinner I had on earth.

### CHAPTER III.

Quickly disposing of my beef and damper, and leaving my companions to enjoy their smoke, I shouldered my rifle and strolled down to that glorious beach where the long waves came curling in and broke with a thunderous roar, leaving behind them a fringe of seething snow-white foam. What a salt-sea smack there was in that invigorating breeze which cooled my cheek—what an atmosphere of vitality after the languorous surroundings of the sad-voiced bush! I felt as if possessed of a new and fresher lease of life, and started to walk in a westerly direction.

I must have been indulging in day-dreams, forgetting all about the dangerous nature of the locality to have wandered so far from my comrades, for my usual culpable foolhardiness could hardly have been answerable for such an insane action. As it was, I continued walking,

looking dreamily out to sea, when suddenly I was brought to an unexpected halt and to my senses in a decidedly unpleasant fashion.

I found myself on a spit of sand between the sea and a salt-water arm, which latter, though probably not more than a hundred yards in width, seemed of considerable depth. But the opposite shore, and the high steep bank behind it, were literally black with naked savages. What struck me as strange was that not one of them had a weapon of any kind in his hand; but as I stared at them, first with bewilderment and then with dismay, they began jabbering together excitedly in a way that put me in mind of a pack of hounds in full cry. As the salt-water arm took a sudden turn to the left, some of them were therefore abreast of me.

There was little wonder that I was taken aback, seeing how I had walked right into the lion's mouth. There being a number of bark canoes moored close to the opposite shore, it would have been easy for the savages to have got into them, spread out, and surrounded me. What chance had one man against at least two hundred of them? I stole a hurried glance in the direction of my camp, but there was nobody in sight. My first rational thought was whether or not it would be possible for me to 'stand off' these blacks until my comrades, wondering why I had stayed away so long, followed up my tracks, and came to the rescue. Oh, how I blamed myself on realising the danger I had blundered into! For these savages were not only cannibals of the worst description, but I was the man who in particular had trespassed upon these hunting-grounds that had been theirs for ages, and of whom, therefore, they would naturally be anxious to rid themselves. They probably recognised me, having seen me before on the deck of the cutter when ascending the river; as also doubtless many times since then, when I was riding about in the neighbourhood of the ranges, and they themselves were unseen.

As I stood staring stupidly at them, they suddenly ceased talking—not one as yet had made a move—and I could plainly see that some one was addressing them. Luckily at that moment I overcame my first impulse, which was to turn and make back as quickly as possible in the direction I had come: such an action would only have precipitated their evil designs, for bad I knew they must be. In another second, true to the often whimsical turn of a man's thoughts in moments of greatest peril, I remembered the foolish bet made with Tom Cashman. The careless smile with which the happy-go-lucky Tom had honoured me at the time, rose up before me, maddening me with a sneering semblance of superior wisdom, and as for the cold-blooded proposal of my countryman, that the stakes should be deposited with some one 'in case of accidents,' it seemed to ring in my ears like some infernal prophecy. What a fool people would say I had been when they heard of the nature of my death! Not that sympathy could do me any good after I was dead, but to think that contempt was to take the place of it was a galling thought. In another second I was possessed with a fit of genuine anger. The blacks had not killed me yet, and people were not going to call me a fool if I could help it! Then I suppose it was only a natural transition to be scowling at the savages as fearlessly as if there were a couple of Gatling guns supporting me, instead of only being possessed with the silly old spirit of foolhardiness. But my folly was not to end here.

The tall, gray-headed old savage who had been haranguing the blacks, and who was evidently their king or chief, came down to the water's edge, and putting his hands to his mouth called out to me. I suppose it must have surprised these savages considerably when I answered him in their own language, albeit it was not their dialect, the Yucula, which I used, but the Minghin. Still, it was not a difficult matter for either party to make the other understand. The chief wanted to know what I wanted there, and I answered, in order to gain time, that I wanted to speak to him. Then to my surprise he shouted and signed to the effect that if I placed my rifle on the ground some thirty yards or so in the rear of me, he would come across with his wife and talk.

Despite what I knew of the cunning and treachery of these savages, this was a proposal which had a particular attraction for me; keen student as I was of all things anthropological, the opportunity of interviewing a cannibal potentate was not to be neglected. The apprehension that only a few minutes before had possessed me gave place to a feeling of aroused curiosity and expectancy. I walked back as the king had directed, and placed my rifle on the ground some thirty paces from the spot where he would land. I also intimated that if I detected a weapon of any kind in the canoe when they came over, I would pick up my 'devil-devil' and kill every one of them. The superstition with which they regarded my rifle was doubtless what saved me, for in the scuffle that afterwards took place, they never once put a finger on it.

Over came the canoe—there was a paddler in front and one in rear, while with the gray-headed king or chief was a personage who I suppose must have been made queen on account of her enormous size and ugliness. She was the tallest savage I had ever seen in my life. I vouch for the truth of it; her arms were so long that her hands actually hung down to her knees like an ape. She regarded me with what was doubtless meant to be a friendly smile, but the only effect of which was to make me feel decidedly uncomfortable—the savage has a gift, which to a certain degree the civilised man has lost, and that is to read one's innermost thoughts on the human countenance.

At first I took good care to keep the king and his ape-like spouse a good arm's-length in front of me. I told the former, as well as I could, that if he would not interfere with the whites or their cattle and horses, I should take very good care that the white man should not molest his people, or trespass more than was absolutely necessary upon his hunting-grounds. What a farce that cunning old savage with the inscrutable face must have thought the whole affair! Then I became so engrossed in trying to understand the strange questions of

the old potentate, and in asking others in return, that I hardly noticed the savages who had begun to swim the salt-water arm, and were silently grouping themselves round their chief.

Then suddenly the fresh folly I had been guilty of came home to me, and I realised that I was now more at their mercy than ever. Tom Cashman had understood me better than I had known myself. Where were my comrades? If they could only come in sight it might have some effect upon the blacks. But the time had passed for waiting on chance—it was necessary that I should act, and that right quickly. I took a step backwards towards my rifle, pointing towards the opposite shore as if the interview were at an end, at the same time saying I would rejoin my men who were hard by, and fetch them some presents. How I managed to appear at my ease when I said this is a mystery to me now.

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How that human ape, the chief's wife, contrived to steal in upon me is beyond my comprehension. I only know that before I could draw my revolver, a pair of powerful arms had pinioned mine to my sides, I was caught up like a feather-weight, and dashed violently, face downwards, on the ground.

There were a dozen sinewy hands on various parts of my body pressing me down. I struggled in an agony of desperation. In another minute the weight on my head and back would crush the life out of me. How my soul sickened and rebelled against such a fate! The very thought of my ineffable folly and ignoble death during those terrible moments was driving me mad, and I made a wild struggle to free myself. I remember raising myself on to my hands and knees, and failing to reach my revolver pouch. I caught a glimpse of two savages carrying up a couple of large stones out of the canoes, and knew these were to knock me on the head with, seeing they had as yet no other means of killing me. I believe I was lapsing into unconsciousness when I heard something that brought me to myself again. It was the sharp ring of a rifle close at hand. The blacks ceased to press down upon me. I wrenched my arms free, and found that by some unaccountable means, somebody had placed a rifle in my hands. The stock rested on the ground, and the barrel pointed over my right shoulder. I took chances, pressed down the trigger, and then—— It was a horrible thing that happened, but it saved me. In another second I was on my feet, and the savages had dived into the salt-water arm like so many cormorants. And there stood my black boy Jerry, with two hideous objects lying prone upon their faces between us.

Jerry, who entertained less faith in my discretion than probably he did in some of my other qualities, had thought fit to follow me up along the top of the bank, and was just in the nick of time to rush down to the beach, like the plucky blackfellow he was, pick up my rifle, fight his way through the blacks, and place it in my hands. No one need tell me that there are no heroes amongst the Australian blacks, for Jerry was an aboriginal and a hero. It is not unlikely that some squatter may read this article and tell him of it. If so, good luck go with you, Jerry, old boy. There's a very soft spot in at least one white man's heart for you.

As it was, Jerry was the first blackfellow who ever called me a fool, and did not hesitate to rate me soundly for my folly. I knew how richly I deserved it all, and did not contradict him.

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Two years afterwards, when on the Croydon gold-fields, I met Tom Cashman's partner, MacNab.

'Mac, old man,' I said, 'I did wrong in betting on such a thing as my life that time at Normanton, you know.'

'You're quite right,' said the pawky Mac, with a face as long as a fiddle; 'money made by betting must carry a curse with it. But, by the way, I've got a fiver to give you back—those stakes, of course.'

'And you'll be good enough to add another fiver to that, and right now—*just for fear of accidents*, old chap,' I remarked politely.

Jerry had a new saddle and a suit of clothes out of those stakes, but I have never betted since, nor ever shall again.

## STEEPLE-JACKS.

In Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the other great centres of the factory system in the north of England, there is naturally constant work for steeple-jacks, and a number of men ply that hazardous trade on the high chimneys which cover some of those districts like a forest. The smoke-shafts of Lancashire are among the highest in this or in any other country; and as they have to be kept in a state of perfect security, the men who have made a specialty of this sort of contracting must not only be well skilled, but full of judgment and resource. They have, as a rule, a certain force of character which distinguishes them from other workmen; and when they are prudent they do well. One of them who lives at Rochdale combines with his chimney-climbing the business of music-hall proprietor, and conducts a circus of varieties in the town. Until a year or two ago, he used to live in a caravan and move about from one job to another in that way—chiefly because he did not care to sleep in damp beds. Then he built himself another van, like a miniature Pullman car, and for a long time lived in that; but he has now given up the nomad life, and dwells in a conventional stone house. He still jumps into cold water every morning of the year, and spends twenty minutes with the clubs and the punching ball; he never tastes alcohol, and he never smoked in his life. 'The Lancashire Steeple-Jack,' as he calls himself, has his rivals, however, though his smiling face and lithe frame are familiar all over that county, and in others besides. Manchester has several: there are some in

Liverpool, and each of the mill centres has one or two men who can 'ladder' a chimney, and sit astride the vane on a church spire. They often give employment to others, who work for wages varying from one shilling to eighteenpence an hour; and though they all say that the trade is safe enough, not by any means so hazardous as it looks, yet they have many adventures to tell of.

Each man has his own special tricks—his fancies in laddering, his own form of apparatus. He will tell you that his plan is a lot safer than another man's, because of some deviation from accepted form. But to the uninitiated eye all forms look equally dangerous. A man sitting in a cradle, suspended by a rope attached to an iron pin driven between the bricks of a chimney, while he picks out the mortar sixty feet above the earth preparatory to 'pointing,' causes a shudder which is not diminished when he explains that it would not be safe if he had not a special knot of his own to hitch on his ropes with. In methods of laddering, however, the differences are most marked. One takes an iron spike a few inches long, and drives it into the chimney at the foot so that it holds firmly. Then he lashes the end of an eighteen-foot ladder to it with a rope, climbs up the ladder, which wriggles about in a nerve-shaking fashion, and, sitting on the top of it, lashes the upper end to another spike. So he proceeds to the top, alternately driving in spikes, or hold-fasts, lashing the ladder close to the chimney, and climbing to the next stage—always on the outside of the ladder. Another method which the writer has seen practised by a Liverpool climber differs materially from this. The ladders are twelve feet long, and on each one there are four iron joints which project at right angles; iron sockets are driven into the chimney, and when these are firm, the projecting arms of the ladders fit into them, and the section is made secure. The climber mounts to the top of the first ladder, drives in the sockets for the next, and adjusts it; and so in time reaches the top of the chimney. But the arms and sockets are so long that the ladders are always more than two feet away from the brickwork, and the steeple-jack goes up on the inner side of the ladder, between it and the chimney. In this way he has a certain protection, and it is also contended that this form of laddering is the firmest and strongest known. That is a much more important point, for it is a fact that accidents rarely happen to steeple-jacks through failure of nerve or giddiness; the more frequent cause is the intemperate habit of the workman or the failure of the tackle. A fatal accident at Runcorn, for instance, was shown to be entirely due to the weak and improper tackle. It is unfortunate that steeple-jacks are not always a steady class; they earn large sums even as day-workmen, and as contractors generally do well; but they are not always careful to keep their heads so clear as they should be.

The Liverpool climber just mentioned laddered the Vauxhall chimney in that city in six hours by his method, and it is 310 feet high; but a still higher chimney is that of the Runcorn Alkali Company at Weston on the Mersey, which reaches an elevation of 330 feet. This has been climbed in the same manner, as well as by the other methods; but the old fashion of flying a kite over such a chimney, attaching a line, and hauling the man up in a cradle, has vanished entirely. The highest chimney in England is supposed to be that at Barlow and Dobson's mill at Bolton; it is 368 feet high, and is built of 800,000 bricks, and 122 tons of stone. It is excelled by at least two in Scotland; the St Rollox chimney in Glasgow is 445 feet, and the Townsend chimney in the same city is said to be 468 feet high. But the steeple-jacks make no more of climbing such chimneys than one a third of their height, though the vibration is more serious at times. All chimneys vibrate, especially in a gale—it is a condition of their safety—but the oscillation at the top is a serious matter for any one at work there during a high wind, and in such conditions, the job is postponed to a calmer season. Lancashire also boasts one of the crookedest chimneys in the country—a shaft at Brook Mill, Heywood—which is nearly 200 feet high, but is more than 6 feet out of plumb. It has been belted with iron bands, and is considered secure. There is only one way of saving such a chimney from collapse if the bend increases; that is, to cut a slice out of the masonry on the other side, so that it may sink on that side and bring itself straight. But that method, though efficacious at times, often weakens the structure. The only other alternative is to pull down and build afresh, and there are two ways of doing that. One is to pull the chimney down, stone by stone, beginning at the top; a tedious method, and a terribly risky one, if the structure be tottering to its fall. The other method the writer has often seen practised in Lancashire and Yorkshire. At a mill a few miles outside Manchester, for instance, a dangerous chimney had to be 'felled' not long ago, and the contractor started to cut away the brickwork at the base, on five out of its eight sides. Once, thinking it was about to settle on him, he and his men hurried away, but the fall did not take place, and they returned to work. The gaps were propped up with timber, and the structure supported in this way till the proper time. Then the wood was soaked with paraffin and daubed with resin, and ignited. The flames and smoke poured up the chimney with a great roar, and the daring man lingered at the foot for a quarter of an hour, feeding the flame at one point so that the wood might collapse there first, and the chimney take that direction in its fall. At length the balks gave way, the chimney tottered, then leaned over in a circular fashion, and finally collapsed in the middle, and fell in a heap. The climber told the writer that he distinctly preferred to bring a chimney down in that way; for once while taking down a shaft in a North Lancashire district, he heard it groan and creak, and had only time to slip down the rope and rush away, when it fell.

The biggest chimney ever 'felled,' was brought to earth last St Valentine's day in Manchester. It had belonged to a paper-mill which had been disused for four years, and the site was

needed for other purposes. The chimney was 275 feet high, and was extremely thick and substantial, being no less than 92 feet in circumference at the base. One million bricks were used in the chimney itself, besides 100,000 in the foundations; and the weight of the shaft was estimated at 4000 tons. Several rows of houses lay some 60 or 70 yards to the rear of the chimney, and on one side the old mill buildings still stood. But in front there was a wide space of waste-land on which the steeple-jack determined to bring the stack down. He cut away the brickwork at the base on rather more than five of the eight sides, and left a gap nearly 60 feet long and 5 feet high. As the bricks were cut out, pieces of stout timber were put in to take their place, and the shaft which had leaned two feet the other way was brought by these means into a perfectly upright position, and the whole of the weight of 4000 tons came down on 140 pieces of wood. The timber cracked and groaned under the strain, but held firm; and then the interstices were filled with coal and shavings, and creosote and paraffin were poured over everything at the base of the shaft. At three in the afternoon a light was applied to this material, which instantly flared into a blaze, and volumes of smoke began to pour from the top of the chimney and the cracks at the sides. The steeple-jack alone remained near the structure, and frequently threw buckets of oil on those pieces of timber which he wished to burn away first, so that they might collapse before the others, and the chimney might fall in that direction. Eight minutes went by, and then the operator ran up a ladder outside the chimney, some twenty feet, and examined one of the cracks. He instantly descended, quite calmly, however, and walked backward a few feet, watching the tall shaft, which, as he reached the ground, began to lean over to the waste-land. At first it showed no signs of breaking, but suddenly it bent at one of the cracks, the bottom portion fell alone, and the upper part telescoped and dropped with a tremendous crash. The fall of these 4000 tons of masonry was an exciting sight, and was watched by 10,000 people; and all the time the steeple-jack stood less than 20 feet away from the descending mass.

A Sheffield steeple-jack has climbed several spires merely to decorate them with flags for public rejoicings; another climbed to the tower of Rochdale Town-hall by the lightning-conductor, merely to fix a flag. Of narrow escapes they have many. One tells how he was standing on the coping of a chimney which suddenly gave way. He seemed certain to fall to the ground, but the ladder remained firm, and as he slipped he caught it, and hung there while the stone went crashing to earth alone. The Rochdale climber spoken of once fell 70 feet from a mill at Linfitts, owing to an accident while he was laddering. He was terribly hurt, but recovered, and still carries on his trade with unshaken nerve. He once, however, had an adventure which exceeds in thrilling interest all the stories of steeple-jack daring in the north. He had a contract to demolish a chimney near Rochdale Station, and went up one day accompanied by an assistant, who had been drinking. Suddenly, the man gave a yell and tried to jump off the stage; his employer just managed to grab his ankle as he went over, and there for a moment the man hung, depending for his life on the strength of another man's grasp. Then he succeeded in getting hold of the belt which all climbers wear, and started to haul him up; but the madman bent upwards and dug his teeth into his preserver's thumb, and struggled and fought very viciously. A crowd soon assembled below and watched this extraordinary fight with great excitement, and the combat continued for several minutes. The man on the top could not get the other up, and would not let him down, so in the end he stunned him by hitting him on the head with a jemmy, and let him down by a rope. Then he followed him and discharged him on the spot.

Many less sensational adventures could be described, but they are of a kind common to steeple-jacks. The work of these men is of vast importance to the manufacturers, for big chimneys cost a great deal of money. The stone chimney of the Manningham Mills at Bradford, built in the style of an Italian campanile and 250 feet high, cost £12,000; and hundreds of shafts in Lancashire and Yorkshire represent an expenditure of £5000 or £6000 each. If aught go wrong with such erections, it is essential that the repairs should be entrusted to a capable man; and a chimney contractor who can belt a cracked chimney and make it safe, or restore a crooked shaft to a proper state of uprightness, saves the necessity for its demolition, and for a substantial outlay on a new one. Thus the contracting steeple-jacks of these districts, by their great nerve and judgment, and by their ability to keep the giant shafts in good repair and security, ensure not merely economy to the manufacturers, but the preservation of the public safety.

## SOLUBLE SILVER.

Truly, chemistry, above all the sciences, is the great-granddaughter of the fairy godmother of the folk-tales. She has always some new wonder in store for us, and her wonders are more beautiful and more astonishing even than the tree with the golden apples, the wishing-caps and Fortunatus' purses that we read of in Grimm and Hans Andersen. The magic spy-glass that enables the spectator to tell what is going on in any part of the world is a baby's toy compared to the spectroscope, which shows us what is happening in the farthest star, and the purse of Fortunatus is quite eclipsed by the cyanide process that enables us to extract gold from rocks so poor in the precious metal that no one but a chemist would suspect its existence. Precious and wonderful are the lesser gifts of our modern fairy godmother, and the curious substance we are about to describe is one of them. Like many other of her gifts, we do not know of any practical use for it at present, but we shall find a use for it some day, as we have done for nearly all her other

gifts. For the present it is sufficient that the gift is beautiful and interesting; so now to tell you all about it.

With one exception, metals, so far as we know, are practically insoluble in water. This is true of all simple substances, as, for instance, sulphur or charcoal. It seems necessary that before a body can become soluble it must unite with some other body of an opposite character to itself. Sometimes union takes place with the water, as in the case of the metals sodium and potassium, which combine with water so violently that flames are produced. Silver seems to be the only exception, and even then it dissolves in a curious gelatinous condition, quite unlike silver as we know it. This soluble silver exists in two or three forms, and is interesting not only as a chemical curiosity, but also on account of the intrinsic lustre and beauty of the different forms.

Soluble silver is not difficult to make. The materials required are: ordinary green sulphate of iron, citrate of soda, and silver nitrate. A thirty per cent. solution of the first should be made, a forty per cent. of the second, and a ten per cent. of the third. We give the proportions in case any of our readers might like to make some of these beautiful varieties of silver for themselves. The liquid becomes black immediately on mixing, and must be shaken vigorously for several minutes. It is then allowed to settle for a quarter of an hour, and the liquid portion is poured off, leaving a lilac-coloured gelatinous material behind. This gelatinous material is soluble silver. It can be dissolved in water to form a blue solution, or spread on paper in a blood-red layer. As it dries, the colour changes to a metallic blue when half dry, and to a dead blue surface when quite dry. If it be dried in lumps, various colours and lustres can be produced.

From the soluble form of silver, another variety is obtained by adding to it a solution of Epsom salts. The remarkable thing about these varieties of silver is the astonishing changes of colour they can assume. The insoluble variety is brown, gradually getting darker and darker, but various chemical solutions will re-dissolve it, changing it back into soluble silver, but of a colour totally different from the original. Solution of borax gives brown; Glauber's salts, yellow-red; sulphate of ammonia, red. Mr Carey Lea, who discovered these interesting substances, found in one case that the insoluble variety became soluble suddenly of its own accord, giving a beautiful rose-red liquid.

The films produced by spreading the insoluble variety on paper give gorgeous effects of colour, varying from yellow to blue through a whole series of brilliant metallic greens. The colours depend to a great extent upon the amount of washing the material has received. If it has not been washed at all, the film has the appearance of bright blue metal, but the blue seems to disappear gradually in washing, until finally almost pure yellow is obtained. When it is spread on glass, very perfect mirrors are produced on drying.

The next form is obtained by a more complicated chemical process. It is red at first, changing to black and then to bronze colour. If dried in lumps or spread on paper, it has the appearance of burnished gold. Like the former variety, it gives a perfect mirror when dried on glass. If the gold-like variety is kept perfectly dry it changes to a more brilliant yellow on exposure to sunlight, but in presence of moisture it is resolved into ordinary silver of great beauty in a few days. The other varieties degenerate rapidly on exposure to light into various shades of brown.

The different modifications that we have mentioned are only the most stable and clearly defined varieties of this curious form of silver. It seems capable of assuming all the colours of the spectrum. Almost every shade of blue, green, red, yellow, and purple has been obtained. On one occasion Mr Carey Lea secured a variety giving an intense yellowish-brown solution, which changed to bright scarlet on addition of phosphate of soda, separating, on standing, in a purple jelly, which afterwards turned bluish-green. No fairy tale that we have ever read has put on record such a wonderful substance as this. Even the *Arabian Nights*, with all the imagery of the East to draw upon, has failed to hint at such a marvel. Many chemical solutions, when brushed across the dry films, produce wonderful hues, and a crystal of iodine placed on the film becomes surrounded with rings of Newton's colours.

The only immediate application that we can think of for these beautiful forms of silver is in coating glass and similar materials with films of silver to form mirrors. We should have mentioned, by the way, that some of these films possess very interesting optical properties. Another possible application is in photography: if we could find a means of rendering them permanent, the films might be of much use, but the matter is too technical for us to deal with here. Nevertheless, even if it is of no practical use, and therefore, in spite of its beauty, uninteresting from an utilitarian point of view, the discovery of this form of silver may lead to the finding of other similar materials which may be of the greatest practical value.

## AT TWILIGHT.

Content thee, Love! Stretch forth no thought to seize
Joys that beyond this twilight hour may lie;
The silver silence holds us, by-and-by
To comfort into dark by soft degrees
All cares that man has suffered or foresees;
All doubt, all dread, all striving melt and die
Into forgotten dreams, and we descry
The Shadow and the Promise, only these.

So leave the word unsaid, the song unsung,
Forbear to praise or pray, so there may fall
A moment in the Temple's ritual
When even worship fails to find a tongue.
Keep this one hour, that Love's heart may approve
The sanctities and silences of Love.

E. Blair Oliphant.

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## THE SMALL COIN OF CONVERSATION.

The thought of all ages is the atmosphere we breathe; but sententious wisdom is handed down more compactly in maxims, proverbs, and sayings that influence us beyond our knowledge, perhaps beyond our belief; we are unaware of our immense debt to literature, and our equally immense dependence upon it for the conduct of life. For the conduct of life is regulated and guided, even in our most practical of nations, by theories of life, and theories are the outcome of thought, riveted in the memories of lesser men by some happy expression which conveys the idea in a terse sentence or striking phrase. A volume of philosophy may thus be summed up, and brought to the understanding of men who have never read it, simply by the electric flash of a proverb or maxim. When the philoscphy ceases to influence the age, the maxims are discredited, but new phrases take their places, drawn from fresh theories, and men continue to live as before, by the wisdom of the wisest, condensed to suit their weaker understandings, and to strike their hearts and imaginations. Thus in the last century, after the revolution against the intensity of Puritan times which produced the licentiousness of the Restoration, men turned to a cold morality as the refuge against extremes, and such maxims as 'Honesty is the best policy' came into common usage, summing up the philosophy of the time in a portable and striking fashion. At the end of the same century, with the new-born dreams of universal progress, Burns's grand couplet:

> The rank is but the guinea stamp,
> The man 's the gowd for a' that,

struck the imagination of his hearers and awoke in them a vivid realisation of truths they had not so well perceived in volumes of rhapsodising. And after the tumult and upheaval of the French Revolution had produced its reaction, came the calm of Wordsworth, with 'plain-living and high thinking' as a note to attract the attention and induce reflection.

All these golden sayings are the valuable coinage of the realm of thought. They have the highest importance. But in our most ordinary moods, our commonest conversation, we are not free from the influence of literature. Even unlettered people take upon their tongues, all unwitting, phrases which bear the image and superscription of great writers, of whom, perhaps, they have scarcely heard; phrases passed from mouth to mouth, generation after generation, because of their universal aptness, their perfection of significance. How many, for instance, speaking of the wife as 'the better half,' know that they are quoting Sir Philip Sidney, or invoking 'Mrs Grundy,' guess that her author was Thomas Morton, a playwright who lived till 1838? Such phrases, or snatches of phrases, are the small coin of conversation, which bear the same imprint as the more important quotation, and we use them freely without a thought of their origin, as we pass the 'nimble sixpence' from hand to hand in our daily traffic, without a glance at its workmanship. The metaphor that struck our ancestors as so admirable strikes us still, and we continue to use the apt adjective which, first given by Shakespeare or Milton, sounds as fresh today as when originally applied. The 'bubble reputation,' the 'itching palm,' the 'milk of human kindness,' the 'undiscovered country,' the 'green-eyed monster,' still our favourite synonyms for fame, covetousness, humanity, eternity, and jealousy, are from Shakespeare, who has indeed furnished us with much of our small coin. His adjectives are the most apposite, too, of any in the language. Quoting him, we speak of an 'ancient grudge,' of 'bated breath,' 'this working-day world,' 'good set terms,' 'a foregone conclusion,' 'better days,' 'fell purpose,' 'even-handed justice,' 'golden opinions,' 'a charmed life,' 'a towering passion,' 'a round unvarnished tale,' 'hair-breadth 'scapes,' and many more common expressions whose list it

were but 'damnable iteration' to extend. Verbal phrases of his are also of the most familiar. To 'dance attendance,' to 'scotch the snake, not kill it,' to 'applaud to the echo,' 'to sup with horrors,' to 'die in harness,' 'making night hideous,' 'a tale unfold,' to 'out-Herod Herod,' to 'fool to the top of his bent,' to 'cudgel one's brains,' to 'speak by the card,' are some of the most obvious examples.

Next to Shakespeare, we draw most profusely from King James's version of the Bible for terse expressions, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes furnishing the larger proportion from the Old Testament, and St Paul's epistles from the New. Milton, though far behind these two great sources of English speech, gives us more familiar expressions than any other writer after them. From him we have learned to speak of 'a dim religious light,' of 'grim death,' 'a heaven on earth,' and 'sanctity of reason;' of 'adding fuel to the flame,' of 'tempering justice with mercy,' of the 'busy hum of men,' 'the light fantastic toe' (that boon to provincial reporters!), and the 'neat-handed Phillis.' Chaucer, though rich in material for quotation, has given us no pithy phrases; but from Spenser, who sang of him as the 'well of English undefyled,' we get 'nor rhyme nor reason,' 'by hook or crook,' 'sweet attractive grace,' and 'through thick and thin.'

The wise Bacon has left little 'small coin' with his great and abundant riches of apothegm, but 'home to men's business and bosoms' is a somewhat familiar expression. It is, however, the picturesque, not the sententious writers to whom we are indebted for the briefer quotations which are the subject of our notice. Such great writers as Addison, Johnson, and Young, furnish few 'everyday' phrases; Addison's 'classic ground,' Johnson's 'good hater,' and Young's 'balmy sleep,' are the principal contributions from these three; Pope, however, is more generous. From him we have the 'ruling passion,' 'guide, philosopher, and friend,' 'ears polite,' 'labour'd nothings,' 'a little learning,' 'damn with faint praise,' 'run amuck,' 'every virtue under heaven.' The poet Thomson, less read by the general public, has transmitted several sayings; 'the young idea,' 'unutterable things,' 'beauty unadorned' (a misquotation, but manifestly from Thomson), 'hungry as the grave,' and the 'world's dread laugh' (also misquoted).

Goldsmith is responsible for a grave and sententious saying, 'men not measures,' as is Swift for 'sweetness and light.' Burke's 'wise and salutary neglect' is usually misquoted 'wholesome neglect.' From Burke also we get 'cold neutrality.' Cowper has given us our 'dear five hundred friends,' 'the cups that cheer but not inebriate,' 'gloriously drunk,' 'a frugal mind,' and 'an aching void;' Sheridan, 'the soft impeachment,' and 'a very pretty quarrel.' Coming to the present century, the task of tracing back our common 'parlance' to the originators becomes more difficult. Southey was the inventor of that happy phrase, 'the march of intellect;' Coleridge, of 'a sadder and a wiser man.' Sir Walter Scott has supplied us with a new title for woman in 'ministering angel,' for an audience in 'sea of upturned faces,' and for bravery in 'beard the lion in his den.' Keats's 'thing of beauty' is a household word, so is Tennyson's 'honest doubt,' and 'grand old gardener' has been parodied repeatedly.

Many of our pet expressions are traceable to obscurer sources. 'Glorious uncertainty' is from a play by Macklin, of the last century, 'pampered menial' from a poem by Moss, called 'The Beggar.' 'Masterful inactivity' was a happy inspiration of Sir James Mackintosh;' 'the Almighty dollar,' of Washington Irving. 'The schoolmaster abroad' is from a pertinent observation of Lord Brougham, and 'caught on,' to use a slang expression of later days, because of its immediate appropriateness. It is in this way that the small coin of conversation is generally manufactured. A new phase of activity, a new feature of society appears, and for a time is spoken of and written of in roundabout fashion. But one day some bright wit invents a new phrase which puts the whole movement or tendency into a nutshell, and straightway the public adopt it into their vocabulary. If the movement passes, the tendency diverges, then the phrase dies away too; but if they come to stay, the phrase too is retained, and perhaps crystallises at length into 'cant.' It is impossible, in the imperfect state of men's minds, that phraseology should not come to this. While words stand for ideas, and are the sole medium of their conveyance from one to another, the tendency to 'cant' is irresistible. Carlyle, who wrote so strenuously about the necessity of clearing the mind of cant, insensibly fell into the snare himself, or at least caused others to do so. Phrases of his, such as 'the Gospel of Work,' are the inheritance of his followers, and bear to all who hear them his own image and superscription. Quite recently, too, a thoughtful writer has called attention to the influence (in his eyes for harm) wrought by the common phrases of scientific thought, such as 'survival of the fittest,' which he contends has made society more selfish, and has destroyed compassion. However this may be, we shall always eagerly seize upon a bright and pithy saying to add to the stores we already possess of the small coin of conversation, and the coiner of such phrases is certain of being remembered for a long time to come, as one who has added to the convenience, picturesqueness, and flexibility of language.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

### CHAPTER II.—THE VICAR MAKES A NEW WILL.

Mary Dalton lay awake for some hours that night, and if we may take a peep at her thoughts, less explanation of what followed will be necessary. Dr Maitland now appeared to her mind in a new and unexpected character. Even when a maiden is wholly indifferent to a man, his appearance as her lover clothes him with a special interest. Mary was not indifferent to the young doctor—far from it; but this change was so sudden and unforeseen that she was not able to adapt herself to it at once. The love that is most worth winning is that which grows slowly, and that which grows slowly lasts longest. She did not know, in fact, as yet, whether she cared for Dr Maitland, or

whether her heart was going to respond to the tender touch of this new knowledge. She did not know anything clearly about herself in the matter—except that she was pleased, almost grateful, that Dr Maitland honoured her so much as to love her. Neither by reading nor experience did she know enough about the tender passion to understand her position and duty. For another thing, she had not the faintest suspicion of her uncle's wish that she should accept this man. Had she known it, the knowledge might have had a decisive influence.

Moreover, there was the memory of Freddie Farmley. That young gentleman had not hesitated, like Dr Maitland, to declare his love for her. The declaration had pleased her, and had given the young man a warm (though perhaps not quite secure) place in her heart. She attempted no comparison between the two lovers, though there was a consciousness of that nature. But when Farmley was going away he had pressed her to plight her troth to him, and, frightened rather than unresponsive, she had refused to do this. She had pleaded delay; and the urgency of his importunity induced her to promise that he should not lose her before she reached the age of twenty-one. Mary Dalton had not committed herself much by a promise in these terms; but in truth, as regards Farmley, as in the case of Maitland, she felt the uncertainty of resolution resulting from not knowing her own feelings very accurately. Had the first lover remained, or were he even now to return, his ardour would too probably have prevailed against his rival. The girl was not conscious of this, or she would not have come to the resolution that she formed before falling asleep. If Dr Maitland declared himself, she would ask him to wait for a few months longer, and she knew he would willingly do so. With any foresight, howsoever dim, of possibilities connected with the coming back of Farmley, the girl's honour would not have permitted her to take such a course with Dr Maitland.

It happened accordingly. The doctor made his declaration, and the way in which Mary received it made him not only willing, but almost eager, to postpone asking for her final answer for a little while longer. There was no *arrière pensée* in the blushing frankness of the girl's manner—she was incapable of it. The vicar was not so fully satisfied as the doctor, and had his private misgivings; but he accepted the position, and hoped that the altered relation in which his niece now stood towards his friend would tend to shorten the time of waiting.

All was going well, and would have gone well, and Mary Dalton and Dr Maitland were virtually regarded in the parish as engaged, when the sinister influence that troubled the vicar's life reappeared. Letters came from Frederick Farmley that, after six months of South Africa, he was coming home again. One of these letters was received by the young man's father, and two friends of Freddie Farmley received a similar communication. In each letter he named the steamer by which he was coming to England—the *Ross Castle*, sailing from Cape Town on the 25th of June. Thus the matter was placed beyond doubt. It was only small comfort to Mr Dalton to know that the scamp had not written to Mary; but of course Mary soon knew of his coming.

The Rev. Frank Dalton's fear of the name of Farmley was so violent that he now took a precautionary step which was only justified by the gravest apprehensions. By his will, all he possessed was left in trust for his brother's widow and child, the latter to receive a certain portion on marriage, and the remainder on the death of her mother. Mr Dalton also wrote to his solicitor to draw up a codicil revoking the disposition relating to Mary Dalton in the event of her becoming the wife of Seth Farmley's son. The motive was to protect rather than to punish, because the vicar was sure that, without her expectations, Mary was not desired by the Farmleys. In the event of the vicar's death (and the uncertainty of life was a dominating thought with him), the security of this codicil would be essential.

The confidential clerk of Mr Fairfield, the solicitor of Croham, brought the will and codicil to the vicarage one day when Mary was there with her uncle, and the latter was noting with some uneasiness the interest she showed in the expected return of Frederick Farmley. He had himself introduced the subject, and the steamer was due at Southampton in a fortnight. The clerk was announced as waiting in Mr Dalton's study.

'You know what this envelope contains, Mr Brock?' said the vicar, opening it.

'Yes, Mr Dalton; I copied it myself. Will you execute the codicil now, or defer it to another time?'

'Now,' replied the vicar, ringing the bell.—'If Mr White is in the school,' he said to the servant, 'ask him to step here for a minute.'

The schoolmaster having arrived, he and Mr Brock, the solicitor's clerk, duly witnessed the execution of the document. The vicar intimated his intention to keep the will and codicil for the present, and having, as a measure of precaution, shown the clerk the private drawer in which it was placed, the latter went away.

The uneasiness of the vicar had unconsciously communicated itself to Dr Maitland. There was danger in the coming of Frederick Farmley, and the way the doctor looked at it was different from that of Mr Dalton. Mary, as between the two suitors, was still free; and

would it be considerate—the doctor asked himself—generous towards her trustfulness, to passively allow her to lose that freedom without one more opportunity of exercising it? It was now some time since she had asked Dr Maitland to wait, and she had mentioned no limit. He was honourably justified in asking her if her answer was ready. In another week, in spite of her honesty, she would not be so free, and a decision would then cause her trouble.

On a Saturday afternoon, the 5th of July, while a glowing midsummer sun filled the sky with warmth, Dr Maitland set forth on his anxious mission. He had to pass the vicarage, but did not call. It was between two and three, and it was the vicar's habit to dine at the former hour. A little farther on, the doctor overtook Mary Dalton herself, going homeward from her uncle's house.

'Uncle seemed drowsy,' she said with a bright smile, 'and he likes an afternoon nap, so I came away. But I am coming back again in the evening to cut flowers for the church to-morrow.'

The day being very warm, they walked slowly, and Mary was very gracious and even tender towards her companion. She asked him to accompany her home and wait for tea, and he was thus spared the need of explaining that he was already going to her house. Everything on the way—her warm, half-conscious looks, the manner of her speech, the way she walked close to his side—raised his hopes high with the feeling that he had decided wisely in resolving to ask for her answer to-day. He could not speak until they were in the house; but he was not impatient now: it would be all settled before he came away. Dr Maitland would not fail to go with his news to the vicarage first—if the news, as he hoped, were good. Nay, might they not go together to the good vicar?—for Mary had promised to go back for her weekly task of cutting the flowers.

At five o'clock the moment came. Mrs Dalton left the little drawing-room after tea. After a minute's silence the doctor rose and softly approached the girl, whose instinct told her what was coming, for she started a little, coloured to the eyes, but did not seem afraid of it.

It was just a moment too late. Mary rose quickly, with a little cry. A man came running, hot and breathless, up to the door. The doctor was called for, and, hastening to the door, was asked to hurry to the vicarage with all speed. Imposing silence on the messenger and sending him away, Dr Maitland returned to the drawing-room.

'There is a sudden call for me, and I must go. May I come again? I want to speak to you.'

The composure of his voice did not agree with the pallor of his face. The girl was frightened. She did not know what had happened.

'Yes, please—oh yes—do come again—I am going to the vicarage,' she answered, somewhat wildly and disconnectedly.

There was no time for more words. Dr Maitland flew with all speed to the vicarage. He was ignorant what had happened. There were a number of people before the door, and passing quickly through them, he saw a constable in the hall, guarding the door of the dining-room. The disciplined nerves of the doctor were not proof against the shock they received. The vicar lay on the carpet, as the agony of death had left him.

## HER MAJESTY'S MINISTERS.

By Michael MacDonagh.

The salaries and emoluments of 'Her Majesty's Ministers' cost the taxpayers of the kingdom just £175,681 per year, a sum by no means extravagant when we consider the ability and genius of our statesmen, their devotion to duty, and the vastness and wealth of the Empire, which on the whole they govern so wisely and so well. Sixty years ago three times that amount hardly covered the egregious salaries of members of the Government, and what was more reprehensible, the fat sinecures bestowed on needy unofficial members of the House, and even on 'strangers' for party services. A century ago the state of things that prevailed in public life was even more corrupt and venal. Place-hunting was then almost universal amongst public men. 'To grasp a great estate out of the public service was too often their first thought,' writes Sir Thomas May in his *Constitutional History of England*. 'Families were founded, titles endowed, and broken fortunes repaired at the public expense. It was asked what an office was worth, not what services were to be rendered.'

The Prime Minister is the head of the Government, but as such he receives no salary, for his position is unknown to and unrecognised by statute law. Some State office with nominal duties, such as the office of First Lord of the Treasury, is accordingly held by the Premier. Lord Salisbury, however, departed from the almost invariable practice by associating the Secretaryship for Foreign Affairs, perhaps the most arduous and responsible office in the Government, with the Premiership in his own person. The First Lord of the Treasury, or, as he is more fully described, 'First Commissioner for executing the office of the Lord High Treasurer of Her Majesty's Exchequer,' has associated with him the Chancellor of the Exchequer and three junior Lords of the Treasury in the control of Her Majesty's Exchequer; but the post is now a sinecure in the departmental sense, and carries with it a salary of £5000 per annum. The famous house, No. 10 Downing Street, in which Cabinet meetings are held, is the official residence of the First Lord of the Treasury.

The real head of the Treasury, or the department which controls the collection and expenditure of the National Revenue, is the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The salary attached to the office is £5000 a year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is always a member of the House of

Commons, in which House all proceedings that relate to the public income and expenditure must originate, and is always in the Cabinet.

The 'titbit' of the Administration from the financial point of view is the Lord Chancellorship. The salary attached to the office is £10,000—£4000 as Speaker of the House of Lords, and £6000 as Lord Chancellor. In point of precedence it is also the highest office in the Government. The Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain takes precedence of every other subject of the Queen, except the royal dukes and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The First Lord of the Treasury—who as I have shown is usually the head of the Government—so far from being in point of precedence the first in the Cabinet, is nearly half-way down. So that at a ceremonial function Mr Gladstone, when Premier, would have had to walk behind five or six men whom he had appointed to Cabinet office, and whom he could, in effect, dismiss. Lord Rosebery was First Lord of the Treasury in the late Liberal Administration, but held also the office of Lord President of the Council, which gave him formal precedence before all his colleagues except the Lord Chancellor. The latter office is also the oldest in the Government. It dates back to the time of Edward the Confessor. The Lord Chancellor is besides, as head of the Chancery Division of the Supreme Court of Judicature, the highest judicial officer in the land. As Speaker of the House of Lords, he presides over that House when it is sitting either as a judicial or as a legislative body. It is his duty to appoint all justices of the peace, and he is supposed to exercise a general guardianship over infants, lunatics, and idiots. He has at his disposal an immense amount of church patronage and legal patronage, and, finally, he is 'Lord Keeper of the Great Seal,' and a member of the Cabinet.

The Lord President of the Council presides on the rare occasion that the Privy Council now meets. In past years he was also the president of certain committees of the Privy Council which are now defunct. In 1853 a committee of that venerable body, but entirely composed of Ministers, was appointed to administer the moneys which Parliament voted for educational purposes, and over its deliberations the Lord President presided. Three years later a new office was created—that of Vice-president of the Council—which in time became vested with all the administrative duties of the Lords of the Education Board. Again, till recently, the Lord President exercised all the statutory powers of the Privy Council in connection with the prevention of cattle disease. The creation, a few years ago, of a Board of Agriculture took that work out of his hands and left him with few duties that were not formal. But the office has now been entrusted with novel and important functions. The Lord President of the Council in the present Unionist Administration—the Duke of Devonshire—presides over a national defence committee, which aims at bringing into harmony of purpose the independent energies of the War Office and the Admiralty. The office of Lord Privy Seal is an ornamental survival from the historic past when the Privy Council sought to restrain the acts of the Crown by insisting that the Lord Chancellor should not affix the imprimatur of the Great Seal to any grant, or patent, or writ the Sovereign desired to issue, without their authorisation in the form of a warrant under the Privy Seal. But in these happy days of Parliamentary Government, the Lord Privy Seal has no departmental duties and no salary. The office is generally bestowed upon some old and eminent peer whose counsel is desired at the deliberations of the Cabinet.

There are five principal Secretaries of State—the Secretary for the Home department, or the Home Secretary, as he is popularly styled; the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, or Foreign Secretary; the Secretary for India; the Secretary for the Colonies, and the Secretary for War. They are always in the Cabinet, and each receives five thousand pounds per annum for his services. The Home Secretary and the Secretary for War are invariably in the House of Commons. The holders of the other Secretaryships of State may be in the House of Lords or the House of Commons; but in either event, the Under Secretaryship, which is attached to each of the offices, represents it in the other House. These Under Secretaries are each paid £1500 per annum. They are never members of the Cabinet.

The duties of the five Secretaries of State being easily understood, require no extended explanation. Until 1854 there were only three Secretaries of State—the Home Secretary, who is responsible for the preservation of the public peace, and the security of life and property in England and Wales, and supervises the administration of the various statutes regulating labour; the Foreign Secretary, who controls all international negotiations; and the Secretary for War, who in addition to administering the affairs of the Army, had to look after Colonial matters until 1854, when the development of our possessions abroad led to the creation of a Secretary of State for the Colonies. In 1858, the year that witnessed the transfer of the powers of the East India Company, or 'John Company,' by Act of Parliament to the Imperial Government, the fifth Secretary of State was appointed to take charge of the affairs of India. It is interesting to note that the law recognises no distinction among the Secretaries of State. The holder of any one of these five offices is simply described as 'One of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State,' and theoretically their duties are interchangeable. A Secretary of State must always be in London. Formerly it was also necessary that the 'Minister in attendance on the Queen' should be a Secretary of State. Now any member of the Cabinet suffices to discharge the nominal duties of superintending the issue of any State document by the Sovereign.

The salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty, who is, needless to say, responsible for the Navy, is £4500. The post is regarded, curiously enough, as of lower rank than the office of the Minister for War, who, as we have seen, has the distinction of being a Secretary for State, and draws £5000 per annum. The First Lord, however, is always in the Cabinet.

The Chief Secretary for Ireland gets a salary of £4425. There are also three Irish law-officers—the Lord Chancellor, who gets £8000 a year; the Attorney-general, who is paid £5000; and the Solicitor-general, who gets £2000. They need not necessarily be in either House of Parliament. None of the Irish law-officers in the late Liberal Government were members of Parliament; but in the present Unionist Administration, the Attorney-general and the Solicitor-general are in the House of Commons, and the Lord Chancellor, who has a seat in the Cabinet, is in the House of Lords. The highest paid office in the Administration is that of the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, who receives a salary of £20,000. But it is a post that few noblemen care to accept for various reasons, not the least being that, like the position of Lord Mayor of London, the allowance is not nearly sufficient to enable the holder to maintain its viceregal dignity. The full title of the Chief Secretary is 'Chief Secretary to the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland.' The Chief Secretary was therefore originally subordinate to the Lord-lieutenant, but the relations between the two have become somewhat inverted during the past fifteen years. Practically, the Chief Secretary is now solely responsible for the Irish Administration, and the Lord-lieutenant, as the representative of the Crown, is not much more than an ornamental and dignified figurehead. The seat in the Cabinet naturally went to the Chief Secretary since the rise of the office in importance. In the present Administration, however, there has been a reversion to the old order of things, so far at least as calling the Lord-lieutenant and not the Chief Secretary within the Cabinet is concerned. The Chief Secretary was also formerly subordinate to the Home Secretary; but he is now independent of all control of the Home Office. He is practically the Home Secretary, the Secretary to the Local Government Board, the Secretary to the Board of Works, and the Minister of Agriculture for Ireland.

Another office of dignity rather than of duty or responsibility, like the post of Lord Privy Seal, is that of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who exercises in the Royal Duchy the administrative duties, such as the appointment of magistrates, exercised by the Lord Chancellor over the rest of Great Britain. The duties, however, are purely nominal; and the holder of the office is generally a man who is able to come to the assistance of any member of the Administration when hard pressed in Parliament. He may be in either House, and generally has a seat in the Cabinet. He is paid £2000 per annum for his services.

Two of the busiest ministers in the Administration are the President of the Board of Trade, and the President of the Local Government Board, each of whom receives £2000 per annum, and as a rule they are both members of the Cabinet. The former looks after all commercial matters in the interest of the public. He also supervises the working of railways, trams, canals, harbours, and the mercantile marine service. The latter has charge of the public health, and controls our local authorities. The Postmaster-general, who manages the postal and telegraph services, receives £2500. He is not necessarily a Cabinet Minister. The President of the Board of Agriculture, whose principal duty is the prevention of diseases among our flocks and herds; the Vice-president of the Council for Education, who directs the working of our great system of national education; and the First Commissioner of Works, who has charge of the royal parks and pleasure-grounds, Government offices, and public buildings, are each paid £2000 a year, and may or may not be in the Cabinet. The Secretary for Scotland attends to matters of Scotch administration, and receives £2000 a year. He is now usually a member of the Cabinet. The Scotch law-officers, or the legal advisers of the Government in Scottish affairs, are the Lord Advocate, with a salary of £5000, and the Solicitor-general, with a salary of £2000.

The Attorney-general for England is paid a salary of £10,000; and the Solicitor-general, £9000; but both receive in addition high fees for any cases they may conduct on behalf of the Crown in the law-courts. According to a Parliamentary return published in 1895, the highest amount paid in salaries and fees to the Attorney-general for England in any year since 1880 was in 1893–94, when the total reached £20,285, this being made up as follows: Salary, £7000; fees and contentious business, £12,635; clerks, £650. The lowest point reached during the fifteen years was in 1889–90, when the total was £9179. The highest remuneration received by the Solicitor-general for England since 1880 was in 1888–89, when £6000 was paid for salary and £5056 for contentious business, total, £11,056, while in 1891–92 it fell to £7168. The English law-officers have recently been debarred from taking private practice, but as a solatium their salaries were increased by £3000, or from £7000 to £10,000 in the case of the Attorney-general, and from £6000 to £9000 in the case of the Solicitor-general.

Among the minor functionaries of the Administration are the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who assists the Chancellor of the Exchequer in revising and regulating the expenditure of every department of the State, and gets £2000 per annum; a Secretary to the Admiralty at a salary of £2000; a Civil Lord of the Admiralty at a salary of £1000, both of whom assist the First Lord of the Admiralty in the work of his department; a Financial Secretary to the War Office, who draws £1500 a year, the same salary as is paid to each of the Under Secretaries to the five principal Secretaries of State — Home, Foreign, War, Indian, and Colonial; and there are Parliamentary Secretaries to the Board of Trade, and the Local Government Board, who receive £1200 each.

Besides the task of appointing to the Ministerial offices, the Prime Minister has the duty of filling up a number of posts in the Royal Household, which like those in the Administration are vacated at a change of Government. The Master of the Horse is paid £2500 per annum; and the Master of the Buckhounds, £1500. The Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain are each paid £2000; the Vice-

chamberlain, £924; the Comptroller of the Household and the Treasurer of the Household, £904 each. There are also seven Lords-in-Waiting, each of whom draws £702 per annum; a Parliamentary Groom-in-Waiting at £334; a Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard and a Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms, each at £1200; and a Mistress of the Robes, generally a Duchess, at £500. The duties attached to these offices are of a ceremonial character, and are exceedingly light; but the appointments enable the Government of the day to secure, principally in the House of Lords, the services of men who may be able to assist their party both in and out of Parliament.

But it may be asked, has a Minister anything to look forward to on retiring from office? An ex-Lord Chancellor of England receives £5000 a year; but in consideration of the pension continues to act as a Law Lord. An ex-Lord Chancellor of Ireland gets £3692, 6s. 1d., the penny, like the more substantial remainder of the pension, being duly paid quarterly in farthings. Four pensions of £2000 each may be granted to as many ex-Ministers who, for not less than four years, have been either one or other of the five principal Secretaries of State, or First Lord of the Admiralty; and four more pensions of £1200 each may be granted to ex-Ministers who have filled for not less than six years an office of less than £5000, but not less than £2000 per annum. An applicant for one of these pensions, which were created by the Political Offices Pensions Act of 1869, must make a declaration that it is necessary for his support. The benefits of the Act have been taken advantage of by about ten ex-Ministers. If the holder of one of these pensions for 'political and civil services' should be again appointed to office with salary, he is not entitled to draw the pension while he is in the Ministry.

A member of the House of Commons must resign his seat and seek re-election on accepting office. The only post exempt from the rule is the Secretaryship to the Treasury. This custom was established by an Act of the reign of Queen Anne. The object of compelling a representative to submit his acceptance of office to the judgment of his constituents, was to restrain the corrupt influence of the Crown over Parliament by its power of conferring places of profit on servile and obsequious members. The danger the Statute was designed to avert is now happily past and gone. The Sovereign is still, theoretically, 'the source of justice and of mercy; of all offices, honours, emoluments and chartered rights;' and as such is supposed to confer their offices on the Members of the Administration, but in reality the appointments are solely made by the Prime Minister. It is under him and not under the Crown that Ministers hold office. The Act of Anne, however, continues in operation despite the fact that the complete revolution which has since occurred in our political life has made it entirely remote from the realities of the present time. Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to repeal the Statute. The only modification of the original Act is that provided in the Reform Act of 1868, by which a Minister who may be removed from one office to another in the same Administration need not seek re-election.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XXII.—A DELICATE NEGOTIATION.

THENCE I proceeded straight to Robert. Man, I discovered, is in these matters more difficult than woman. Pride, to begin with—well, you shall see how horrid an obstacle was pride. Never before had I understood the ecclesiastical hatred of pride. I went about my business in the grand, or diplomatic style. That is to say, I concealed the real object and worked round to it. I believe that it is always easy to deceive a strong mind. I mean that it is a part of strength to proclaim a purpose and to march straight towards it. It is your weak, knock-kneed persons who, having always to crawl and wriggle for themselves, see through the wrigglings of some, and divine the intentions of others.

Robert was at work, of course. Nobody ever found him doing nothing. He looked up, welcomed his visitor, and carefully covered his papers. He never liked any one to know what he was forging and contriving.

'Now,' I said, 'let us talk for half an hour. Then we will go and get some dinner; after that we will stroll about. What are you going to do this evening?'

'I thought of going to Lady Frances.'

'Good. You see her pretty often, don't you?'

'Very often. It is quite impossible to see her too often.'

'Quite impossible,' I replied mechanically, watching his face. He was nervous when he spoke; he took up things and put them down. I had never seen him nervous before.

'I wonder if there are many other women like her,' he said slowly.

'There is no other woman like her in the whole world, my cousin.'

'She understands—that is the extraordinary thing—she understands everything; an argument; a position; a combination—one hasn't to explain or to talk about it—she understands. If she were in the House she would lead it. She suggests a policy; she confers with Ministers; she catches the drift of the public mind; she knows how far we can go, and what we should attempt. George, I declare that I never before imagined it possible that such a woman could be found!' All these things he had said before. Robert was not accustomed so to repeat himself.

'And now you have found her, Robert, and she is your fast friend. Of course, I've known her all my life; she has become a kind of sister, you know, by long habit; but my admiration of her is quite equal to yours. And have you nothing to say about her beauty?'

'She is the most perfect woman I have ever seen,' said Robert, his voice dropping, because when a man feels strongly on such a subject he doesn't like to talk loud about it. 'Tall and queenly: she looks born to command'—the

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quality which he most desired for himself he must needs admire in a woman.

'But her beauty, Robert? Her eyes—her face—her features.'

'Yes. I think less of them—that is, of course, they belong to her—they make up the greatness and the splendour of her. If it were not for her beauty she would not be half so queenly.'

'She advises you in your public work; does she talk to you ever of your more private affairs?'

'She knows my history, such as it is, of course. I was not going to her under false pretences. Besides, there is nothing to be ashamed of. I told her at the outset that I am but a Craftsman—a Master Craftsman.'

'Have you told her that you once—a good long time ago—promised to marry Isabel?'

Robert changed colour. 'No,' he said shortly. 'There was no need to tell her that.'

'I think if I were you, Robert, I should tell her.'

'Why? What is the use of telling her such an insignificant fact?'

'Insignificant? Your marriage an insignificant fact to your best friend? Why, Robert, it is the most significant fact in the world. All your future depends upon your marriage.'

'It will not come off for years—I must make my position first. You must know I cannot take upon me for ever so long the burden of a wife—and a wife who would only pull me down instead of helping me up.'

'I know that very well. You want a wife who would help you up.'

'What does Isabel understand about these things? Nothing. What does she care? Nothing.'

His voice showed the bitterness within him. 'Has she shown the least interest in my ambitions? Why, from the very first, she has been content to be my clerk when she might have been my companion.'

'Come—come—you have never given her any encouragement. You never suffered her to think of being a companion. She has always been afraid of you. She is afraid of you still. Robert, I shouldn't like to marry a woman who was afraid of me.'

So it began all over again; but this time with results.

'There is no question of like or dislike, unfortunately.'

'I would let her go before the wedding bells began to ring.'

'You forget, George. I have promised to marry her. I will keep my promise—some day.'

'All very well. But there is her side of the question. Is it fair or right to keep this girl waiting for you year after year—living almost alone in that corner of the earth, wasting her youth, wasting her beauty, longing, perhaps, for love, every year widening the distance between you, while you chafe at the chain you drag, and she droops and languishes in bondage?'

'I must keep my word,' he repeated obstinately. 'And besides, Isabel promised to wait for me as long as I chose. She knows she has got to wait. As for my marrying now, she knows, and you know, that it is impossible. What have I got to live upon? The money which you paid for your share, and about three hundred pounds a year my share left. Do you suppose that I can marry and live among my new friends on two or three hundred pounds a year?'

'Then let Isabel go,' I repeated, as obstinate as my cousin for once.

'If I do, who is to protect the child? Am I to turn her, penniless, into the street? No, George, I am bound to her; and I must make the best of it. Otherwise'—— His head fell.

I became more hopeful. When a man—any man, the most obstinate of men—talks about making the best of it, he would certainly like to get rid of it.

'A man like you, Robert,' I went on, after a bit, answering the thing which was in his mind at the time—there's a diplomatic hint for you: always, if you can, make use of the other man's own mind—'wants above all things a wife who will stand by him, and think for him, and advance him by her influence and her personality. The wife for you, or for any man with such ambitions as yours, should supplement your qualities; she should be well born, well mannered, influential; well considered, beautiful, and rich.'

'Should be, yes, should be. But there is only one such woman that I know of'——

'Yes. There is only one that I know of. Her name is Lady Frances.'

He sprang to his feet and began to walk about.

'What do you mean?' he asked. 'I believe you've got something or other up your sleeve. Out with it, man. Don't let us have any fencing here.'

'I mean that with such a wife as Lady Frances to back you up, and with your own abilities to help you on, you would be quite certain to step into your place in the front before very long—far sooner, Robert, than you can hope to do by your unaided efforts. That is all I mean.'

'It is impossible. There is first—Isabel in the way. You are a good fellow to think about me—I don't believe any other man in the world would do so much for me. But no'——

'Never mind Isabel for the moment. Let us talk only about yourself. Do you—do you' .... I remembered the stipulation in the other engagement about the foolishness of kisses—did the man when he made that stipulation, understand, the least in the world, the meaning of love? Had he ever felt any kind of love at all for poor Isabel? and I put a leading question.

'Have you the—the kind of regard for Lady Frances which you ought to have for the woman you would marry? I don't mean the kind of regard which you have for Isabel, because she is not the woman you would marry.'

'Man,' he cried passionately. 'You don't know—I haven't told you. Nobody would think it possible that I should have the presumption.'

One has seen the passion of love represented on the stage, with exaggeration, as we think everything on the stage must be exaggerated.

One has read of the passion of love in the older poets, with their own flames, and darts, and swoons, and fierce consuming fires, and ecstatics, and raptures—exaggeration, we say. One reads of love in modern novels, and sometimes we ask how these writers can set down the exaggeration of passion with which they do sometimes regale their readers. Henceforth I declare that I shall never witness a love scene on the stage; never read an Elizabethan love poem; never read a burning page in a novel, and be able to call it exaggeration. Because the confession, the scene, the monologue, the unfolding of a heart which now I witnessed proved to me that there can be no exaggeration in poets and dramatists. Poets cannot get beyond the bounds of possibility in love. They spoke of flames and fires, because there are no words with which to speak of the passion which may sometimes seize and hold the heart. Not only in the nobler natures, in the strongest men, and in the men who have never known before the smarting of love, nor wasted the passion that is in them on objects unworthy.

This man, hitherto so cold to love, so contemptuous of women, now raged about the room like a caged wild beast. It seems a breach of confidence only to hint at his broken voice, his distorted face, his features aflame, but half ashamed, while he confessed the passion which possessed him.

'George!' he cried, 'I worship her. Yes, for every quality that she possesses—for her quickness, for her sympathy, for her insight, for her beauty, for all, for all, I worship her.'

'You do well,' I said weakly. But he regarded not what I said.

'Good heavens!' he went on, 'I count the hours between my visits. I make a thousand excuses to go there. When I reach the door, I remember that I was there only yesterday, and I creep away again. I lie awake at nights thinking of her. The only time when I am not thinking of her is when I am at work, for then I am doing what I know she would approve.'

I murmured something, I know not what.

'I confess to you, George, I want no other music than her voice. I think I could gaze upon her face, and in her eyes for ever, and never grow tired. Only to pass other women in the street makes me angry to think that they look so small and common.'

'They are small and common because they are meant for small and common lovers.'

'You come to think about her beauty, why, I hardly think of it except that it is a part of her, always a part of her; and she is always in my mind.'

'Poor Robert! Yet, perhaps there may be hope; no woman is so far above you as to be impossible.'

'Hope? How can there be hope? Don't talk nonsense.'

'I should think—but then I am not a woman—that love like this—so real—so full of worship, does not come often in the way of a woman. I can tell you, if the fact afford you any hope, that Frances has refused men by scores: she will never marry any man—I am quite sure—she has told me as much—unless he is a strong and able man. Why should such a woman give herself away to a man of the lower nature?'

'What hope can that bring me? George'—— And here he broke out into a torrent of passionate cries and ejaculations. For my own part I kept myself in hand. I let him bring it all out. Every ejaculation, every word of the confession strengthened my position.

'Always in my mind,' he concluded, throwing himself into a chair, 'always in my mind, day and night. There! now you know!'

'Yes—now I know. I have guessed as much a long time. Of course, it was inevitable. You were bound to fall in love with her, from the beginning. That was certain.'

'I might ask why you took me then—if it was certain. But I don't. For I would rather go on hopelessly all my life, than never to have met with her at all. Yes, I have had to thank you for many things, George, but for nothing so much as this.'

'Thank you, Robert,' I said. 'Well, you are in love at last. That is the cardinal fact. Poor Isabel! You never thought of her like this.'

'Never. Poor child! Don't imagine that I ever thought of Isabel in this way at all. I was only sorry for her. I thought that her father was dying—and she was a very good clerk—so I said I would marry her, partly to keep her on as a clerk, and partly to protect her from poverty. It didn't seem to me that it would make any difference to my future. But as for love! How could one love a girl and despise her for her intellect?'

'You have no cause to despise Isabel,' I replied with some warmth. 'Let me tell you that. You never took the trouble to consider her intellect at all. Well—the long and the short of it is that whatever else happens you must let her go.'

'No, she must release herself. I will never go back from my word.'

'Well then, Robert. Here is a bargain. If I bring you her release—by her own wish, written in her own hand; if I show you that she will not suffer but rather gain in the long-run for her release; if I can assure you that she will be the happier for the present by being released—will you let her go?'

Anybody else would have understood at once what I meant. Robert did not. He had not yet acquired the habit of thinking about other people, and their motives and minds. That might come by contact with a sympathetic woman. He told me, afterwards, that it seemed to him the very last thing possible for me to fall in love with Isabel—whom he himself could not love; and to desire to marry a girl without any knowledge of society. Perhaps, being new to the thing, he thought at this moment more than was necessary about society. Perhaps I knew too much of society, and therefore thought too little of its advantages. Besides, I was now a boat-builder, quite disconnected from society, and I really never asked whether Isabel was a woman who might be relied upon to shine at her own receptions, and to receive at her dinner-table the most distinguished people in political circles.

'You make three conditions,' he said. 'Every one of these seems to me impossible. Yet you have a way with you; I do not believe Isabel will send me a release; after these five years she has grown accustomed to consider me as her future husband; she moves in a groove; she considers me as her guardian, and her father as my dependent. No, Isabel will never release me—she cannot.'

'But,' I insisted, 'supposing these conditions to be fulfilled?'

'Oh! if they are fulfilled, of course, I am the last man in the world to keep a woman against her wish. If she would rather marry a foreman of works'——

There was the least touch of coldness; perhaps no man, not even my cousin Robert, likes to be dismissed by any woman.

'That is settled then. And now to return to Lady Frances.'

## CURIOUS DRINKS.

By G. Clarke Nuttall, B.Sc.

Man has apparently never been altogether satisfied with the simple beverage that Nature provided to quench his thirst. Throughout the history of the world there seems to have existed a certain dissatisfaction with cold water as a drink, and a tendency to obtain, if possible, a richer, more generous substitute. It is true that nothing actually quenches thirst better than cold water; but it is also true that in thirst, as in all his appetites, the simple appeasing of the desire is too little for man, he demands gratification — pleasure in the appeasing—as well as mere satisfaction. Hence the infinite variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks at present in existence. Many a man hardly knows the taste of cold water, and never lets a drop pass his lips from one year's end to another, although he may not venture to echo the bold assertion of the Mongolians, that 'plain water has a malignant influence, and ought on no account to be drunk.' With the modern beverages of civilisation, tea, coffee, cocoa, aerated waters, wines, spirits, and beer, &c., every one is familiar, at least in name, but the question arises, what do men drink who are outside the pale of these beverages; what substitutes have they found for water pure and simple? A little peering into the more unfrequented byways of earth reveals many curious and interesting drinks, some of which are here enumerated.

The Hindus make a highly esteemed beverage from the milky fluid contained in the climbing bindweed, one of the Asclepias. Their method is to carefully squeeze out the latex of the plant, and then induce a process of fermentation by allowing it to stand. This beverage is claimed as the original intoxicant of the human race, and the predecessor of the vine, so great an ancestry has it. Under the name of Soma, hymns to its praise occupy a large part of the sacred writings of the Brahmins, and there exalt it into a mighty god who can give new strength and vigour to his devotees, a claim resting on the exhilarating effect it produces on mankind. It is still regarded as sacred, and at a great annual festival, libations are poured out to Soma, whose boundless powers extend even to the granting of immortality. The ancient Persians also revered it as Haoma.

In certain parts of the world we find the sap of trees pressed into requisition as a satisfier of thirst. Thus Pulque, the favourite drink of the Mexicans, is the sap of the maguey or false aloe (agave). When the plant is on the point of flowering, and all its best energy is directed to flower production, the Mexican cuts and hollows out the flower-stalk, so that the sweet, sugary sap, on its way to feed the bud, is arrested and caught in the hollow. By standing it ferments slightly, and thus is formed a most agreeable beverage. A somewhat different drink, known as Tepache, is made by mixing sugar and water with the maguey sap, and allowing the mixture to ferment for a few hours. Those natives of Mexico whose tastes demand something rather stronger and more pungent, allow the fermentation of the sap to go on for a longer time until it becomes acid and almost putrid.

The cider-tree of Tasmania (*Eucalpytus gunni*) derives its name from furnishing the bushmen with a drink similar to Pulque. Here again in the spring, as the sap rises, the trunk is tapped by incisions made in its bark, and a cool, refreshing liquor flows out of the wounds, which can either be drunk in a natural state, or, as is more usual, be set on one side to ferment into a pleasant beverage.

The sap of trees, flowing in a steady current from roots to leaves and flowers, and bearing with it the nourishment the plant has elaborated for its own consumption, has been recognised all the world over as a valuable drink, though perforce the trees or plants supplying the delicacy vary in different climates. Thus, in Kamchatka, where neither eucalyptus nor maguey could live, the natives have called into requisition the more sturdy birch. Its sap, which is procured, as in eucalyptus, by boring holes in the trunk, is converted, with the addition of hops and sugar, into beer, or by a little different process, into wine. We are told that birch wine has an agreeable flavour and is very wholesome, also that that made in Russia effervesces like champagne. It is recorded that during the siege of Hamburg by the Russians in 1814, almost all the birch-trees in the neighbourhood were destroyed by the Bashkirs and other semi-barbarians in the Russian service, by being tapped for their sap.

In America, a drink is prepared from the pulp of the mucilaginous astringent fruit of Guazuma, a near relative of the cocoa-tree. This pulp undergoes various processes of fermentation, and thus furnishes a kind of beer. Chica is a maize beer made by some of the Indians of the Andes.

Chi-chi is the name given by the Patagonian natives to a rude sort of cider which they brew in the autumn, when the wild apples are ripe. Their method of making it is simple in the extreme; pits are dug in the earth and carefully lined with the hides of horses to prevent any juice soaking into the earth. Then the apples are gathered and thrown into the

pits. They decay and ferment, and their juice provides the material for the grand annual drinking bout of the Patagonian men. The women have learnt by experience what the results of this bout too frequently are; so when it commences they go round carefully collecting knives and other dangerous weapons from the men. With these and with their children they then steal away and hide in the woods until their lords and masters shall have drunk themselves mad, and slept themselves sober again. It is a somewhat sad reflection that these wild apples are the only legacy left by a few devoted Jesuits, who, soon after the conquest of South America, set out to convert the Patagonian savages. The Jesuits took with them various implements of husbandry, and European grains and seeds for cultivation; but they were all soon murdered, and only the apple-trees flourished, propagated, and produced excellent fruit, in a climate more congenial to them than to missionaries.

Dowra, or doro, is a primitive beer, brewed in many parts of Africa—in Nubia and Abyssinia, in Mashonaland, and among the Kaffirs. The method of brewing is much the same in all countries, and is thus described by Mr Bent: 'Corn is soaked in water, and left until it sprouts a little; then it is spread in the sun to dry and mixed with unsprouted grains; then the women pound it in wooden mortars, and the malt obtained from this is boiled and left to stand in a pot for two days, and overnight a little malt that has been kept for the purpose is thrown over the liquid to excite fermentation.' In Mashonaland the women are the chief brewers; in fact, to be a good wife one must also be a good brewer. The beer is always made in the fields, and is often very intoxicating. It must be drunk as soon as it is brewed, otherwise it quickly becomes disagreeable and worthless. A similar 'barley beer' was used by the old Egyptians both as a beverage and in libations to their gods. Xenophon speaks of 'bowls of barley beer in which the grains were floating.'

Of quite a different class of beverages is that known as kephir, drunk by the people in Caucasus. This is effervescing milk, the effervescence being caused by the introduction into the milk of horny yellowish-brown masses known as 'kephir-grains.' When these grains are moistened they swell up into lumps of a gelatinous consistency. Kern, a scientific observer, studied the nature of these grains from a scientific point of view, and found that they were made up of a rod-like Bacterium and a yeast living together on terms of mutual advantage. On their introduction into the milk, a series of fermentative changes were immediately set up, and the milk was broken up into its constituents. Lactic acid was produced, together with a little alcohol, and a large quantity of carbonic acid gas, the presence of the last named being, of course, the cause of the effervescence.

Koumiss, or kumis, is a similar beverage of effervescing milk. On the Asiatic steppes, the milk usually employed is that of the mares, though the milk of goats and asses is often used too. To European notions, koumiss made with the milk of mares or goats has a very unpleasant smell, though koumiss made with cow's milk is more palatable. This drink is credited nowadays with valuable nutritive properties in many wasting diseases. It was introduced into England by Dr Jagielski, who, in 1874, claimed, in the pages of the *British Medical Journal*, that koumiss will one day occupy a position in every materia medica, compared with which that of cod-liver oil, stout, beef-extract, revalenta, &c., will be quite secondary.

Lovers of the fragrant cup of tea, as we know it in Britain, would scarcely recognise their favourite drink were they invited to partake of it with their Tibetan brethren, who are no less devoted to tea, made after their own particular fashion. Brick-tea, made at best of the offscouring and dust of tea-leaves, and stems of the tea-plants (though more often of any worthless plant-dust), is used by them, instead of the crisp curly tea-leaves we employ. It derives its name from the dust being pressed into hard, solid, brick-shaped lumps, from which pieces are chipped when tea is to be made. The infusion obtained from brick-tea is harsh, intensely strong and stimulating, and instead of being served with milk and sugar, it is commonly flavoured with mutton-fat and salt. However nauseous the resulting liquid may seem to European nations, the Tartars themselves drink large quantities with great relish; and after finishing their cups of tea they end by eating up the residue of tea-dust as a dainty. Substitutes for tea have been found at different times by settlers in out-of-the-way places. Thus in Tasmania and the Falkland Islands the leaves of certain myrtles have been used to make 'tea,' and from this fact have received the name of 'tea-trees.' The Tasmanian 'tea-tree' is usually a shrub. The leaves are too aromatic to produce a really satisfactory infusion. The 'tea-tree' of the Falkland Islands has less aromatic leaves, which therefore give a more palatable beverage. The leaves of another variety were used for a similar purpose by the crews of Captain Cook's ships, who found this 'tea' passable, though if made too 'strong,' it had an emetic tendency, as has what we call green tea. These leaves, if added to spruce leaves in equal quantity, modify the astringency of the beer brewed from the spruce leaves, and much improve its flavour.

Kava, or ava, is a Polynesian intoxicating drink made by macerating in water part of the root and stem of one of the piperaceæ. Formerly it was prepared by women who carefully chewed the plant.

Saké is the national beverage of Japan, and until recent years was the only fermented liquor known in that empire. It is obtained by the distillation of the best kinds of rice. In appearance it resembles very pale sherry, though in taste it is somewhat acid. The best saké is white, but there are many varieties, and the poorer people in Japan have to content themselves with a turbid sort. A glass of saké is drunk at every function and ceremony of daily life; even all offerings to the gods at religious festivals, whether great or small, include a cup of saké. At the annual dinner last

year of the 'Thirteen Club' in London, at which everything was served *à la* Japanese, a glass of the national beverage was handed round to each guest after the repast, with an intimation that a second could be had if desired. It is reported, however, that there was by no means a run on the second glass, saké seeming to be far less popular with Englishmen than with Japanese. So doubtless, for most, if not all of the drinks mentioned in this short summary, a taste would need to be acquired with much diligence ere they could be drunk with any real satisfaction by the more civilised portions of the earth's inhabitants.

## THE COLONEL'S PLAN.

By R. Ramsay, Author of *Miss Drummond's Dilemma*, &c.

### I.

It was Rosebud's wedding.

The little white bride was running down the path with her hand clasped in her husband's. After them raced the six tall bridesmaids, with their faces buried in their bouquets; and over them all stormed a cloud of rice.

The Colonel gave his arm to the bridegroom's mother, and the two proceeded down the churchyard path. Some misdirected showers assailed them also, and Mrs Kennedy laughed shrilly as she shook the rice-grains off her bonnet.

'Quite superfluous,' she remarked, as they found refuge in a carriage, and were driven up to the house.

The dressmaker's apprentice had been in possession during the ceremony, that all the servants might go to see Miss Rose married. She had stipulated only to have a policeman on the lawn, because of the wedding presents, and had propped all the doors and windows wide, that he might hear shrieks if anything should happen, or if her terror of the Colonel's wolves' heads and tigers should get beyond control.

The first carriageful drove up to the empty house, and Rosebud and her bridegroom stood side by side, looking down the long room, smiling.

The bridegroom's mother was a woman with a presence; she sailed up in a rustle of heavy silk, and Rosebud put up her face nervously to be kissed. She was a little bit afraid of her mother-in-law. . . .

The crowd rushed in, and the champagne glasses began their perilous circulation, jingling and tottering. The Colonel had ordered a special brand of a dryness beyond disputing, and it acted like a tonic upon the lady guests, who sipped at it soberly.

Rosebud's billowy satin tail was getting entangled among other people's feet. When she moved, the end of it whisked round suddenly, and caused a great commotion. She looked charming, flushed with the glory of the minute; but there was girlish longing in her eyes when she glanced at the great white cake.

'I want a big piece to dream on,' she whispered, squeezing the Colonel's arm.

'Oh!' said Archie reproachfully, and then she remembered that she was married.

Then she disappeared, a little white, radiant vision, to run down the steps with Archie a little later, and dash through a shower of rice into the carriage that was to take them away together. The white rain pattered on the carriage roof, and Rosebud, putting her head out, smiled and nodded.

'A capital plan,' said the Colonel. He was addressing the aunts and cousins who had come down for Rosebud's wedding, and who were now scattered about the empty rooms. The carriage-drive was white with rice, and some fowls had thrust themselves in below the hedge, and were very happy. Inside, there were crumbs of hard, white icing upon the carpet, and the place looked bare. The afternoon was drawing to a close, and there was to be some kind of dinner sometime; no one knew when or what. The aunts and cousins smoothed out their finery, and stretched their smiles; they were inclined to feel melancholy. But the Colonel was very cheery.

'A capital plan,' said he. 'Old Mrs Kennedy will have the place ready for them. She is going to live with them, you know, and give them hints, which will be jolly for Rose.'

'Humph,' said the aunts and cousins. The six bridesmaids turned away from the window. A great deal of rice had slipped down their necks, and their views of life were not quite so rosy.

'Poor thing!' they exclaimed together.

. . . . .

The Colonel was going to see his daughter. As the honeymoon was over, the birds must be settled in their nest, and he was eager to see his little Rose in the glow and dignity of her new position. Driving into the town, he put up at an hotel, and marched down the street light-heartedly. Archie Kennedy managed the County Bank, and though his 'house' was over a shop, as often happened in Scottish towns, the county came in for afternoon tea, and waited up there for their carriages after concerts, besides showing themselves generally kind; for Archie was well connected.

'Mrs Kennedy?' said the Colonel, stopping to chuckle upon the mat. It seemed such a funny way of inquiring for Rose.

He was taken up-stairs solemnly, and put into the drawing-room, Rosebud's drawing-room. With another chuckle, he put up his glass and looked about him. How Rose used to scold at the shabby old drawing-room at home, a room that not all her fripperies could brighten!

'When I have a room of my own,' she would say, 'it will be all pink and pretty. Pink paper and cushions, and little crooked chairs, and Dresden china. Wait!'

This was, however, not the kind of room that the Colonel had been led to look for. It was long and dark, with heavy blue curtains, shutting out the windows and the sun. The wall-paper was of a dark-blue pattern, and the mantelpiece was covered with peacocks' feathers. Peacocks' feathers, of which Rose had such dread and horror, that she had burnt all there were at home!

The Colonel walked up and down, lost in

astonished contemplation. In his abstraction he knocked over a work-basket that had a table to itself, and stooped to pick up the contents, reels, scissors, socks, and wool, and a big bunch of keys. These keys looked business-like; they clattered much as the Colonel put them back; but he noticed that the basket was old, and the lining shabby: it could not belong to Rose. He straightened himself and wondered.

'Papa!'

She came flying up, in her old, hasty fashion. The door, with its heavy curtains dragging, swung slowly shut behind her.

'How are you getting on?' said the Colonel, drawing her to the light, and smiling. 'Like two little birds in a nest?'

'You have forgotten my mother-in-law,' said Rose. Then she buried her face in his coat and cried.

'What? hey? what?' ejaculated the Colonel helplessly. He had not expected this. Rose lifted her head and smiled, though her mouth still quivered.

'It's all right,' she said. 'Only I—I was rather lonely, and you did not tell me you were coming—and—and—I am so happy.'

She was trying to laugh, but the sound did not ring gaily. The Colonel stared at her, patting her head, and striving to make it out.

'Come into the other room,' said Rose. 'It is so dull and dark in here, and those peacocks' feathers send cold shivers down my back. Come into the other room. She is out.'

'*She?*' said the Colonel.

'Oh, Mrs Kennedy,' exclaimed Rose hastily. She took him across the landing into the dining-room, the windows of which looked on the street. There was a low chair in one window, a work-table, and a cat.

'I sit here with pussy,' said Rose. 'Then I can watch people go by in the street. And the bank is just opposite. If I look very hard—*so*,' she pressed her small face close to the glass, 'I can now and then see the top of Archie's head over the wire-blind in the window.'

'Is that the way you keep house, lazy person?' said the Colonel, patting the hand that lay in his own. 'I thought I would find my Rosebud buzzing up and down like a little bee, trotting to the shops, and making wonderful experiments in the kitchen. I was certain you would appear in a big white apron, clattering your keys.'

'I would like that,' said Rose. Her tone was woful. 'But Mrs Kennedy manages. There—there is nothing for me to do.'

She sighed, and then jumping up, began to talk fast and nervously. There was a step on the stair, and along the landing. Somebody looked in.

'My dear Rose, I do think'——

The voice was unpleasant. It was, however, altered as soon as the Colonel was observed. Mrs Kennedy came in smiling, and shook hands.

The Colonel would stay to lunch, of course? and to dinner? She must just go down and speak to the cook.

'You ought to do that, Rosebud,' said the Colonel, pulling at his moustache. 'I shall speak to Archie.' But Rose gave a little nervous laugh.

'Don't, papa; oh, don't! It would make such mischief; and she would hate me—and I am awfully frightened of the cook!'

. . . . .

'Poor little creature. I am so sorry for her!'

'I know old Mrs Kennedy makes her life a burden.'

'Shouldn't somebody speak to Archie Kennedy?'

'It wouldn't do any good. It isn't as if the old wretch had money. She has got to live with them, and I suppose that is why Mrs Archie puts up with her so sweetly. It can't be helped.'

'Poor Mrs Archie! The old lady's constant nagging must be enough to drive her mad. Did you see how ill she looked?' . . .

The Colonel heard bits of that conversation, for he was sitting behind the talkers' parasols. It sank into his mind along with his own conviction, and Rose's anxious little face.

'Promise that you won't be putting things into Archie's head,' she had once said, when the Colonel had come in and found her crumpled in a little heap on the sofa, sobbing. 'I was feeling a little low, that's all . . . and I would never forgive you. Promise, promise!' and she would not let him go until he gave in.

Rose was a plucky little soul, as she should be, being a soldier's daughter. She would not complain or tell tales, and if she did not show fight, it was for Archie's sake. But the Colonel grew to recognise a little patient droop of her mouth—a droop that she curved up into a smile if Archie came in. This was the Rosebud whose life should have been all summer, who ought to have been the happiest little wife in the country-side.

The Colonel pulled at his gray moustache, and his eyes were troubled. People talked of it, did they? What did they say?

'If only the horrid thing would go and get married, and leave those two in peace!'

'*Married!* Old Mrs Kennedy?'

'My dear, she would be only too delighted. You can see it in the twinkle of her eye. And it would be a mercy.' . . .

Hum! . . . the Colonel was thinking hard. There was one way out of it. The lines grew deeper across his brow. Those parasols were fluttering with many other parasols, and the talk was of other matters. The Colonel was driving home, and thinking. Light words lightly spoken are not always lightly heard.

The sun went down. A faint mist rose over the soft places in the moors, and the daisies were all asleep. As to the horse, he was going as he liked, and he stopped at the stable gate. The Colonel walked up to the house he had lived in for many years. The flowers the gardener sowed grew in the borders stiffly; but a rose-tree that had been planted long ago had grown all over the wide front wall unclipped, untidied—it had been planted by Rosebud's mother.

There was a dog in the lobby. It was an old campaigner like its master, in its own line; and had probably had a great deal to do with the getting of the many trophies that hung on

the walls. 'Grinning dead things,' as Rose had called them; but she had been early familiar with them, and did not scream at wolves' heads and tigers' jaws.

The look of the house was shabby. The rugs were worn, and the papers faded. It had the air of a man's house, very comfortable to the man, but a blot in the eyes of woman.

'Hum,' said the Colonel, stopping at the stairfoot and looking round. The dog sniffed at his heels, and followed.

There was one room up-stairs that was unlike all the others. The Colonel turned the door handle softly, as if he were on the threshold of some holy place . . . as if the faint, faded scent of roses was not to be lightly breathed. There was a strange silence in there—a silence that did not seem like the mere quiet of an empty room.

'Marguerite,' said the Colonel.

He was speaking to somebody who could give no answer, but his voice was anxious.

'Marguerite, you will not be angry? It is for our little one, our only girl. For her sake alone, my dearest!'

Then he turned and came out again. His face was darkened with resolution, and a decision that had been hard.

. . . . . .

Mrs Kennedy and her daughter-in-law sat at the window. Rosebud was gazing across to the Bank, with her hands clasped idle in her lap. The droop in her mouth was very plain. Mrs Kennedy, for her part, was glancing up and down the street, observing her acquaintance, the shops they went into, and the clothes they had on. Her sharp eyes travelled up and down, and her tongue was busy.

'There is that Lorrimer girl. Shocking style! Do you see her hat? I wonder how you can make a friend of such a person; I really wonder, Rose . . . Oh, she is speaking to Dr Smith. He has plenty of time to talk in the street, you see. I cannot understand your preferring him. I have always had Doctor Nivison'——

'Yes,' wearily from Rose.

'Ah, now do you notice how badly Miss Hallam walks? and you admire her? I can't agree with your taste. Look how awkwardly she crosses the street—she is standing on one leg outside Bailey's! There are the Merrimans, *your* friends. Positively—— Oh, who is that odd person with a bouquet! Good gracious, can it be your papa?'

Rose looked up the street. Yes, it was the Colonel marching stoutly along, with a great bunch of flowers.

'How funny! But, my dear, *pray* don't rush down the stairs like that. The servants'——

She only spoke to the tail of Rose's gown, for the girl was flying down to pull back the latch herself.

'Oh, the flowers! how dear and sweet of you,' she cried. The Colonel laughed in an embarrassed manner, but kept hold of his bouquet until they had come up-stairs.

'They are for Mrs Kennedy, if she will care to accept of them,' he said solemnly.

Rosebud gasped.

'You are quite gallant, Colonel,' said the mother-in-law, sniffing at the bouquet. There was a sudden sprightliness in her tone, and her look was arch. Rose thought she had grown younger.

'Was it a joke, papa?' she said half reproachfully, while Mrs Kennedy retired to put the bouquet in water. But the Colonel shook his grizzled head.

'A joke? My dear child, why should you think so?' he answered stoutly.

. . . . . .

It was not long after this that Rosebud, venturing into her mother-in-law's room to ask her something, found her at her toilet-table. She was sitting in front of the glass and smiling; there was a powder-puff in her hand, and one cheek was a brilliant pink.

*(To be continued.)*

## A WINTER VISIT TO A FRISIAN SUMMER-RESORT.

By Charles Edwardes.

It was rather an accident of the weather than deliberate design that took me to Fanö. I had run through from Copenhagen to Esbjerg with as little delay as possible, to catch the Tuesday's boat to England. But when I reached Esbjerg, the sea-captains of that rising, yet still small, port were all in a state of excitement about the ice. A south-west wind had set in, and the drift of floes from the mouth of the Elbe and the water between Sylt and Römö and the mainland of Schleswig had formed a pack some six miles long, which threatened to sever Esbjerg's communication with the North Sea for an indefinite period. As Esbjerg was at that time the only port in Denmark with any chance of an open sea, it may be imagined what a shock this south-west wind was to the place. Its quays were piled high, amid the snow, with sacks of hams and tubs of butter, and lading was going on fast enough. But when I asked the captain of the vessel if he meant to be true to the time-table, he almost lost his temper in the heat with which he declared that it was impossible.

That evening, having dined fairly well at Esbjerg's chief hotel (crammed with sea-captains, the colour of a chestnut), I strolled with my cigar down the long breakwater, which is the town's most serious effort in the direction of mercantile eminence. I had the promenade to myself. It was a stormy night—the wooden pier so iced that locomotion on it was not easy. It was also well-nigh dark, save for the faint light of the oil lamps which gleamed at the far end of it, and for the half-moon which showed fitfully among the speeding masses of inky cloud. Yet it was quite light enough for me to see the bustling and grinding field of ice on the southern side of the breakwater. The floes moved with deadly precision, and their pressure against the huge piles and stanchions of the pier was so great that at times the timbers trembled under the strain. The weaker ones ground themselves into a white paste against the stronger; these latter either rose masterfully upon their victims, or slowly fought their way toward the pier head, where they could join the open channel between Fanö and Jutland, and so seek their fortunes

farther afield. In its way it was a very sensational scene, and I felt it the more, as my hat took flight, and finally settled on one of the moving floes, where I had not the least inclination to venture after it.

From the pier head, once or twice in the gloom, I caught a glimpse of faint lights beyond this reach of ice. These were the lamps of Nordby, the capital of Fanö. Not the public lamps, or even the beacon lights for navigation, but just the oil lamps in the windows of the Nordby houses, set among the india-rubber plants and geraniums with which the Danes love to beautify their houses even in midwinter.

When, later in the evening, I heard that there was a sufficiency of open water between Esbjerg and Fanö for the passage of the tiny ferry-steamer—'wind and weather permitting'—I resolved, the next day, to visit this little island. Fanö, which is Frisian as regards its inhabitants, though Danish in its political connection, has an importance in Denmark quite out of proportion to its size. It is only some eight miles long, by two to three wide; but it is reported astonishingly rich in ships; in summer it is a health-resort (placards of its Cure-house adorn most of the Danish railway stations), and its women cling with laudable obstinacy to certain of their old costumes.

The next day, therefore, the sea-captains growling worse than ever, I found my way to the little ferry-boat. The weather was dismal in the extreme. A high wind blew, with long showers of sleet at quick intervals. But the ferry-boat captain only laughed when he was asked if it was too bad for him. He pulled his oilskins the tighter about him and went to the helm. We passengers (two German bagmen, and three sturdy women with very short, roomy skirts) stood about to leeward, took our drenching bravely, and watched the smart little boat bore its way through the ice till the dark water of the open sea was attained. Fanö was in a mist. In fact, we did not see it even when we were turned off the boat. And for this reason, the island was hugged on the mainland side by a broad fringe of solid ice, which stretched a good half-mile into the channel. The south-west wind had melted the snow on this ice, so that about an inch of water covered it, and it was on this delectable thoroughfare that, with the aid of a ladder, we six passengers were set loose to fight our way to Fanö's sandy shore. The wind was against us. You should have seen one of the Fanö dames when the wind caught her skirts, and seemed likely to whirl her obliquely along the ice into the sea. But the ladies laughed while they shrieked: the ferry-boat navigators also laughed. Nevertheless, it was far from easy to come to an anchor in the Ferry Hotel of Nordby. I, for my part, had been down on the ice half-a-dozen times, and was, moreover, well soaked by the sleet. The Fanö men who adventured to the vessel to help in unloading it, wore irons to their long boots, and had sledges which they pushed before them.

At first sight, Nordby seemed a higgledy-piggledy little place of two-storeyed red houses, with green doors and shutters. A few pretentious buildings rose amid the lesser houses; these, however, were shut until the summer season. The rain pelted into the narrow, rough, cobbled streets, and made every one who had to be out hurry home with a celerity not always consistent with grace. Thus early I saw something of the Fanö ladies' taste (an inherited one) in colours. They were conspicuous for stiff gowns, either scarlet or brown, bordered with bright green.

Here at the Ferry Hotel I was again instantly in another crowd of sea-captains. There is no mistaking the species. Fine hearty old salts some of them were, bronzed and bearded, and with wrists of iron. A man is a sea-captain, of course, whether he is the hired commander of a trading steamer, or the master and navigator of his own little barque of fifty or sixty tons. Most of these gentlemen were in the latter case. They were not anything like so much out of humour with the weather as their Esbjerg friends. Fanö was their home. In the fine season they go abroad to trade and fish; but in the winter they and their boats lie by. They were drinking schnapps in the hotel, and playing dominoes. I judge this is their chief vocation from November to April. They inhabit snug little villas in and outside the town of Nordby, keep as many parrots apiece as their wives will put up with, and have (according to repute) very comfortable accounts in the local and Copenhagen banks. Here, while they amused themselves, they were being screeched at all the while by a couple of lively green parrots. They were probably as happy as men could be. Certainly their smiles and easy expressions (for all their wrinkles and ruggedness) made them appear so.

I sat with these honest old fellows (we will suppose they were as honest as they looked) for half an hour, smoking, talking, and trifling with a thimbleful of gin. The German bagmen were less at home with them. They bewailed their dampness, and complained about the speech of the Fanö people, which they found harder to comprehend than that of the mainland. Half the sea-captains talked English. It was very forcible English, but that made it only the more picturesque.

Then when the sleet outside again abated, and I had to admit that I did not feel quite so wet as before, the landlord of the hotel was for getting me outside to see something of the island. He seemed to take my visit of curiosity as a personal compliment, and was deeply sorry he could neither talk English, nor understand my Danish, without a mental effort that was positively painful. But I was not to go off alone. There chanced to be in Nordby a young man freshly home from America. This young man was sent for. He proved to be still a-bed—at eleven o'clock. But he was pursuaded to arise and deck himself for the career of cicerone. In vain I protested. I did not want the strange young man for a companion. The fact that he was a Danish-American, and kept his bed at eleven A.M., was not calculated to alter my state of mind. But I was given so eloquently to understand by three sea-captains at once, that the young man was so remarkable, so well informed and well connected, and would feel so hurt if I declined his society, that I gave way and tarried for him.

He came at length, a dapper fellow of five-and-twenty, wearing a white-and-yellow satin necktie, and having borrowed an umbrella, he set out with me. Our peregrination was a terrible bore for the pair of us. He was anxious not to get wet, and it began to sleet again the moment we started. 'That,' he said, pointing to a comely cottage with a wind-blown tree before it, 'is my house.' 'My dear fellow,' I said to him, 'pray return to it; there's nothing in the world here that requires an explanation; no antiquities or things of that kind.' 'Oh no,' he replied, 'it is all new; but I shall accompany you. That is our city hall. It is not much of a place; but Fanö (with a light shoulder shrug) is not Minneapolis.' He was from that go-ahead Western city, where he earned four dollars a day as a carpenter. Small wonder he was reverenced in Fanö. I daresay the white satin necktie with the dandelion spots on it cost him a dollar in the States. It was as likely to dazzle the friends of his childhood, as his tale of earning as much in one day in America as they could in Denmark earn in a week.

We passed a church, a Methodist chapel, a schoolhouse, and one remote cottage among the scrub, and then we were in Fanö's wilds, with nothing but sand-heaps and a tearing wind, with sleet, about us. Trees, of course, do not flourish here, nor does agriculture. It is the sea that Fanö looks to for its prosperity, and its summer air, which seduces a good many stout Germans and others hither to the Cure-house.

When we had walked for a mile and a half among the sand-heaps, we came to the new Cure-house. It was a large red building with towers and an annexe. But it was quite empty. The debris of soda-water bottles in the sand hardly told of the season that was dead, and there was nothing to tell yet of the coming summer. On the other side of it was the sea; or rather, a field of ice, under which the waves throbbed shorewards with a dull, singing sound that was rather melancholy. Black clouds and mist hid the farther horizon. It was not at all gay, and it was almost too bracing to be desirable.

From this cheerless spectacle we turned away, and at once set our faces again towards Nordby. Such of the island as was visible in other directions was merely in its details a repetition of what we saw around us; sand thinly covered in places with a sickly coating of grass that looked at its dismalest with the melting snow about it. A few gulls screamed over our heads, as they allowed the fierce wind to speed them whither it listed. Other signs of life were not; even the Fanö kine and sheep were out of sight: stalled for the winter, or, at least, while the weather held thus boisterously.

My companion assured me that the rest of Fanö differed in no way scenically from what we saw of it. This being so, we were both willing enough to return to Nordby, with its prim red houses, its two or three shops, its barques stuck up for the winter, and looking as if they had done altogether with an active life, and its open and unabashed drains trickling into the sand adjacent to the houses. There is nothing 'loud' about Fanö's attractions; even in the hot summer-time, when the women work in the open, with masks to save their complexions, and when tourists arrive with each ferry-boat, the life can have nothing of a metropolitan glamour about it.

We found the dinner-table ready for us on our return. The landlord took the head of the table and ladled the soup. He seemed astonished when one of the German bagmen desired a second helping, and when this same gentleman asked that his plate might be replenished with fish a few minutes later, his face was a study. It was a meagre meal, and our conversation was at sixes and sevens: the young carpenter was in no mood to play the part of interpreter, and all the sea-captains had, like good husbands, gone home to dine. Immediately after the meal, my bill was put before me, and I was amused to find that I was charged liberally both for my own repast and the Danish-American's. 'We are wide awake here,' the landlord was made to say through my companion, in reply to some trivial comment of mine. The words elicited from the German bagman a strong echo: 'Ach, yes, they do not go to sleep in Fanö. They think themselves the sharpest folk in the world.'

Towards three o'clock I again faced the stormy outside. The ferry-boat was due across again in half an hour. It behoved passengers for Esbjerg to be on the ice in readiness for it. But it was late in coming, and we passengers, and the porters concerned with the transport of its mails and merchandise, grew sick of tarrying on polished ice in an inch or two of water, in pelting rain, and with a furious wind from the south-west, that kept us slipping to and fro in spite of our most strenuous efforts to stand still. It came at length, however, and another lady passenger was disembarked down the ladder, intensely to her own entertainment. When we were on deck, we had to bide for the unlading of the boat. There was a cargo of new deal benches for the school. It was delightful to see how the wind got hold of these things, the moment it had a chance, and sent them glissading towards the dark water at the edge of the ice, with a speed that almost defied the counter-efforts of the porters, in spite of the barbs to their boots. We left this struggle at its height, and were soon again among Esbjerg's ice-floes.

Fanö is, doubtless, a place that improves upon acquaintance. I could hardly expect to get the measure of its charms during so short and inclement a visit as this. As a parallel case, a man might as reasonably form an adverse opinion of a family whom he visits for the first time and finds under the cloud of a grievous domestic trouble. In the summer, out of question, this invigorating little island ought to be worth the tourist's attention.

## 'A DAY-DREAM.'

I HAVE sat, silent, dreaming, in the golden sun,
Of gladdening all mankind. And ah, life's day is done!

Unnoticed, ye who made the sunlight of my day
Without one look of love from me have passed away.

E. H.

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## WHO ARE THE BOERS?


By H. A. Bryden,

Author of *Gun and Camera in Southern Africa*, &c.


The Boers of South Africa are just now objects of considerable interest to the British people, as, indeed, they promise to be for many a year to come. Their history is indissolubly interwoven with the history of South Africa, and during the two hundred and forty odd years of their residence south of the Equator, these strange people furnish one of the most remarkable and interesting of studies. Theirs may truly be said to be a history of arrested progress. In thought and in mode of life the main body of the South African Dutch remain far more in touch with the seventeenth century than with the nineteenth. It may be not unprofitable to trace very briefly the African life-story of these singular people.

The Dutch were not in the first instance the discoverers of the Cape of Good Hope. The old Portuguese navigators were the first to brave the terrors of the Stormy Cape as they called it. In 1486 Bartholomew Diaz doubled the Cape, and pushed his way beyond the present site of Port Elizabeth. In 1497 that great sailor, Vasco da Gama, passed the Cape, and penetrated by sea as far to the eastward as the Mozambique coast. Although the early navigators occasionally touched at the Cape on their way to the Indies, there seems to have been no regular settlement there until well on in the seventeenth century. In 1591 Captain James Lancaster, with an English squadron, visited Table Bay. In 1595 four Dutch vessels, the first fleet to cast anchor in these waters, touched at Mossel Bay, a little to the east of the Cape. From this time fleets of the various nations were in the habit of calling at the Cape of Good Hope for rest and refreshment, obtaining oxen and sheep from the Hottentot aboriginals, and picking up wild fowl, fish, and green herbage. The British may be said to have been the first to take formal possession of the soil of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1620 Captains Fitzherbert and Shillinge landed there and proclaimed the sovereignty of James I. Their employers, the East India Company, took no further steps to form a settlement, however, and the proclamation lapsed. In 1652 the Dutch East India Company finally took possession of the Cape, and founded a settlement there. Jan Van Riebeek landed with a number of colonists, and at once set vigorously to work to establish the foundations of Dutch supremacy in this quarter of the globe.

Governor Van Riebeek and his settlers, isolated as they were, had many difficulties to contend with in the early days of their colonisation. The discipline observed was of the most inflexible kind. Herman Van Vogelaar, Volunteer, for instance, was in the year 1652 sentenced to one hundred blows from the butt of his musket 'for wishing the purser at the devil for serving out penguins instead of beef and pork.' In 1657 Jan Wouters, assistant, was condemned 'for blasphemous injuries against the characters of females at the Cape, including the commander's wife, to beg pardon on his bare knees, to be bored through the tongue, to forfeit his wages, and to be banished three years.' A sufficiently severe array of penalties, surely, for uttering scandal! But the Dutch Afrikanders have always remained extremely touchy in the matter of slander and libel. At the present day, in all parts of South Africa, it is the commonest thing to find inserted in the local newspaper such an apology as the following: 'I, the undersigned, A. C. du Plessis, retract hereby everything I have said against the innocent Mr G. P. Bezuidenhout, calling myself an infamous liar, and striking my mouth with the exclamation, "You mendacious mouth (Jij leugenachtige bek), why do you lie so?" I declare, further, that I know nothing against the character of Mr G. P. Bezuidenhout. I call myself, besides, a genuine liar of the first class. (Signed) A. C. du Plessis.—Witnesses, P. du Plessis, J. C. Holmes.'

This is an actual apology, taken from the columns of a well-known South African paper, *De Afrikaanse Patriot!*

The settlement, which in the first instance was planted at the Cape solely as a place of refreshment for the Dutch fleets passing to the Indies, slowly increased. Wives were presently wanted by the settlers, and a number of young girls were sent from the Orphan Houses and Homes in Amsterdam. It has lately been suggested by Mrs Cronwright-Schreiner (Olive Schreiner), in an article on the Boers, that to these orphans, who became mothers of many of the Cape colonists, is due the lack of sympathy and interest which the Dutch farmers of the Cape now display towards Holland. I can scarcely agree with that theory. These orphans were not the only Dutch mothers at the Cape, and the leaven of male and female settlers who once had real homes in the Batavian Republic was amply sufficient to perpetuate the natural love and affection towards the home-land. The gradual decay of that spirit of affection towards the mother-country was more probably due to the difficulties of communication, and the small hope, among the majority of the colonists, of ever being able to return to their native land. They turned to South Africa as their true home and abiding place, and in process of time they developed for their adopted country that passionate love and affection with which every Dutch Afrikander now regards it. Moreover, as the colonists moved ever inland, and became more and more isolated from civilisation, and from communion with the mother-country, the home instincts of the first settlers became gradually outworn and forgotten.

The settlement of the back country proceeded at first very slowly. In 1670 there were only some ninety of the Dutch East India Company's servants who had been granted their discharges, and had, with the encouragement of the Company, taken to farm-life. These ninety men—Dutch mainly, with a few Germans and Danes—may be regarded as the true ancestors and forerunners of the present race of South African Boers. The word Boer, by the way, is not, as some suppose, a term of reproach. It signifies simply a farmer, or a tiller of the soil, but is pronounced as the English *boor*, which word meant originally nothing more than 'agriculturist.'

In 1672 the Dutch East India Company purchased from the Hottentot chiefs, who claimed to be lords of the soil, the whole vast tract of country stretching from Saldanha Bay to the Cape peninsula. The nominal consideration for this concession was—to the Hottentots—£1600 in goods, but it seems that the actual cost to the Dutch was no more than £9, 12s. 9d.! Unfortunately, this nefarious sort of bargain with the black man has not been unknown to British colonists. It obtains, to the discredit of Europeans, down to the present hour.

Between 1685 and 1688 came a most important accession of strength to the Dutch settlers. Thanks to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV., large numbers of Huguenots were driven from France. By arrangement with the authorities in Holland, it came to pass that some of these French Protestants, to the number of between two hundred and three hundred, were taken to the Cape. They were granted free passages, as much land as they could bring under cultivation, and were assisted with money to buy implements, seed, and other necessaries, on condition of thereafter repaying the same. These French Huguenots, nearly all steady, honest, and God-fearing folk, became a source of great strength to the rising colony. They planted vineyards and fruit gardens, introduced irrigation, and by the year 1714 had firmly established the wine industry, and made the Cape famous for its wine-producing capabilities. Thanks to the vigorous repression of the Cape Dutch authorities, these Huguenot settlers found it impossible to perpetuate their separate nationality in South Africa. They were incorporated, perforce, in the Dutch Reformed Church, and the use of French in official matters was forbidden. The young were to be taught in Dutch, the reading of lessons at the church services in French was presently suppressed, and every effort was made to obliterate the nationality of the new settlers. So completely successful was this policy that, within a hundred years of the Huguenot landing, the French language had completely died out, and there was but one old man who remembered it. Resigning themselves to their fate, the Huguenots intermarried with their Dutch fellow-settlers, and in no long time became as completely Boers in thought, language, and sympathy as any of their neighbours.

Among the French names which at the present day may be found widespread throughout South Africa, from the Cape to the Zambesi, are Marais, Joubert, Du Plessis, De Villiers, Le Roux, Malherbe, Du Toit, Malan, Retief, Jourdan, Thèron, Hugo, and others. Some of these are so pronounced as to be unrecognisable. De Villiers, for instance, is pronounced by the up-country Boers De Filyee; while the name Valjean has been radically altered and is now spelt Viljoen and pronounced Filyune. Although at the present day their names, and occasionally their features and dispositions, betray their French origin, every man in South Africa bearing these Gallic patronymics is as completely Boer as any of his fellow-colonists owning names of the purest Netherlands origin. Their prejudices are also, to the heart's core, as purely and essentially Afrikander Dutch. The name of the Transvaal President, by the way, is usually pronounced 'Krieger,' with a hard but extremely guttural *g*.

Only by slow degrees did the settlers penetrate into the interior of what is now Cape Colony. Some of the early governors, it is true, sent expeditions to the north to spy out the land and make discoveries. Some of them even accompanied the expeditions themselves. There is a quaint account in the Cape archives of the journey of Simon Van der Stell, governor from 1679 to 1699, towards the Namaqua country. The expedition had not proceeded very far upon its course when it was charged and put to flight by a huge rhinoceros. At that time, and for more than a century after, the Cape settlers were seriously inconvenienced by the extraordinary profusion of wild animals in every part of their country.

In 1714 the free burgher population of the Cape settlements amounted to no more than 647 men and 341 women, with 467 male and 484 female children. The colonists had long been chafing against the arbitrary, selfish, and unfair restrictions put upon them by the Dutch East India Company and its officers. They could only buy goods through the Company at its own price, and the produce of their land, in the same way, had to be sold to the Company at fixed rates. This same produce was thereafter sold by the Company at vastly enhanced prices to the ships of various nations putting in at Table Bay. The severest penalties were enforced against persons attempting to evade these regulations. It may, indeed, almost be asserted that the early Boers of South Africa were driven to their nomadic, wandering ways by the persecution and tyranny put upon them by their hard masters, the Dutch East India Company.

During the last century the Boers spread far and wide into the Cape Colony, traversing pathless deserts, waterless karroos, and difficult mountain country, in search of new homes and pastures. Many of them were hunters pure and simple, and followed the elephants for their ivory. As they moved inland, magistracies were tardily established in their midst, not lest they might lapse into utter barbarians, but to enable an anxious Government to draw its taxation from the land on which they settled. Churches and schools followed the settlers yet more tardily.

It may be said that since the admission of the Huguenot element into the settlement at the close of the seventeenth century, there has been little addition to the strain of Dutch and French blood which mainly composes the present race of South African Boers. At a fair computation the Boer of to-day is two-thirds Dutch, one-sixth French, and one-sixth German or Danish. At the time of the Huguenot landing there was also an assisted immigration of Dutch settlers to the Cape. There have since been few large additions to the original stock; and it is curious to find among the considerable Dutch Afrikander populations of the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, and Transvaal, how few names are represented. It is probable that less than three hundred names would exhaust the patronymics of all the Boers of South Africa. These names are far spread; and undoubtedly one of the great bonds of sympathy which link the Dutch colonists of the Cape with their kinsmen of the Orange Free State and Transvaal lies in the fact that they are all closely — one may say inextricably—allied by blood and marriage. It should be remembered to the credit of these people, during their endless wanderings from farm to farm, from veldt to veldt, and from country to country, that they have preserved pure and unmixed their European blood. There is no strain of the black race among the Boers of South Africa.

In the same way, far removed though they have been from churches and pastors, they have yet clung closely to the primitive faith of their forefathers.

Wherever they have trekked, the great Dutch Bible—often more than two hundred years old—and its lessons have gone with them. At morning and at night, wherever they may be, prayer and thanksgiving are invariably offered up. It is the fashion among the 'Uitlanders' to ridicule the long and somewhat dreary prayers of these Dutch farmers; yet surely it is to the credit of the Boers that, amid every danger and difficulty, they have thus preserved their faith. Even when marching to fight the Zulu hosts under Dingaan in Natal, they offered up prayers at every halt, and the 400 farmers who met and conquered 10,000 Zulus at the Blood River in 1838 attributed their astounding victory to the direct intervention of the Lord of Hosts in answer to their supplications.

In 1796 the British, by arrangement with the Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic, then a fugitive from the armies of the French Republic, took possession of the Cape, which in 1803 was handed back to the Dutch. In 1806 the British, being then at war with the Dutch, again took possession of the Cape Colony, after a severe struggle near Cape Town. From that time the Cape has been continuously in the hands of Britain. At that period the European population of the Cape settlements amounted to 26,720 souls, the bulk of whom were of Dutch descent. The Boers have large families — from ten to fourteen children is not an uncommon number—the climate is exceedingly healthy, and the Dutch all over South Africa have largely increased since 1806. In the Cape Colony at the present time there are between 230,000 and 235,000 Dutch Afrikanders, or Boers. In the Orange Free State there are some 70,000 Boers; while in the Transvaal, or South African Republic, there are—as far as can be judged from the last census of 1890—about 85,000 Dutch Afrikanders. People who know little about the subject talk very glibly about turning the Dutch out of South Africa. That is a matter of impossibility. The vast majority of the Boers are rooted firmly to the soil; they care for no other occupation than pastoral farming; and they are not in the least likely to quit the fatherland in which they have been born and bred for two hundred and fifty years past.

There are, unfortunately, people of British blood who seem burning to force on a war between British and Dutch in South Africa. These people are few in number, but they have to be reckoned with. It may be well to remind them that in the Cape Colony the Dutch Afrikanders (or Boers), who have for many years been loyal and contented subjects of the British crown, far outnumber the British settlers. In the Cape House of Assembly, it is well to remember, the Dutch farmers have a large majority. In the Orange Free State Republic the population is almost entirely Dutch. In the Transvaal the Boers probably outnumber the British, in spite of the gigantic growth of Johannesburg.

The early Cape governors were not remarkable for their sympathy or friendliness for the Dutch settlers, and the grievances of the latter were seldom listened to. The fathers of the present Dutch population in the Transvaal and Orange Free State quitted their homes in the Cape

Colony, and trekked into dangerous and unknown deserts to avoid what they conceived to be gross and burning wrongs. All these facts ought to be remembered in an estimate of the present situation in South Africa. We here expressly avoid discussing the questions at issue between the Transvaal Government and the Uitlanders.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

### CHAPTER III.—THE FLOOD AND THE EBB.

THERE were two newspapers published in the town of Croham, and nothing could testify more strongly to the kindly and respectful feeling with which Mr Dalton's memory was regarded, than the manner in which these journals, mutually hostile in most matters, set themselves against any attempt to make a sensation of the sad occurrence of the 5th July. There was material enough for sensation, but it was judiciously and even reverently dealt with by those who gathered the particulars.

Dr Maitland hardly required a second glance to perceive that the vicar's death had been a violent and painful one. The deadly agent had been strychnia. An empty wine-glass on the table by the easy-chair had contained the poison. How it had come there, in the wine Mr Dalton had been sipping, the doctor did not stop to conjecture. He ascertained that life was extinct, and divined the cause, before bestowing a half-dazed look round the apartment. He raised the wine-glass to his lips and quickly put it down again. But there was something still more remarkable, on which the constable's eyes were fixed in official amazement. A small revolver lay on the table, behind where the vicar had been sitting (with his back towards the door), and the five chambers were loaded. The weapon had not been used; but there it lay, in that peculiar position.

On realising the situation, as far as this hasty examination enabled him, the first thought of Dr Maitland was about Mary Dalton. She had left her uncle in that chair, drowsy after dinner with the heat, at about a quarter to three. Although no shadow, other than that of the grief of this shocking event, could fall upon the unconscious girl, the mere imagination of such an accident was appalling to the doctor. It would be dreadful if she should even be called upon, as the last person known to have been with the vicar, to describe how she left him, herself occupying a position from which it would be almost impossible to dissociate at least silent suspicion.

The housekeeper, Mrs Atkins, who was prostrated with the shock of her master's death, was summoned by the doctor. Her daughter appeared behind her; and they looked distraught enough to dissuade any one from questioning them, had not the questions Dr Maitland desired to ask been few and simple. The constable had already heard their statements, and he now attended silently to what they said in answer to the doctor. It was exactly what they had said to the officer of the law.

'When did you discover Mr Dalton's death?'

'Immediately I got back from the town'—the town of Croham—'before five o'clock.'

'Had you left nobody in the house, except your master?'

'No one, sir. Jenny (my daughter) came with me to Croham, to carry some things I was getting for the house.'

The doctor personally knew that it was not uncommon for the vicar to be alone in the house when his 'establishment' went to the town on housekeeping affairs. In warm weather like the present every door and window was left open. The house was about thirty yards back from the road, from which the lawn was divided by a low railing.

'At what time did you last see Mr Dalton, Mrs Atkins?' Dr Maitland asked, with an interest he could scarcely conceal; and if anything could have given pleasure to him that moment, it would have been the woman's prompt answer.

'At three o'clock, exactly—the church clock was striking when I came to say we were starting for the town; and Mr Dalton took out his watch and looked at it.'

'Did he appear ill at all?'

'No, sir; he was reading a newspaper, with a half-glass of wine near him on the table: it was not long after Miss Mary had gone away.'

In answer to a further question as to whether there had been anything else on the table, the woman firmly declared there was not. The decanter had been put away, she thought, by Miss Dalton, for Mr Dalton never took a second glass of wine. Nothing remained on the table except the wine-glass.

Further than this the doctor did not feel it to be his duty to go. He told the constable that the vicar had been killed by strychnia, and by a more than usually strong dose, and that the poison had been in the wine-glass. The rest it was the business of others to investigate.

Dr Maitland walked away from the house with a heavy heart. He was going back the way he had come; the duty was his to communicate the news to Mary Dalton and her mother. From the bottom of his heart he prayed that he might not meet the girl on the road—coming to the vicarage, with the dread knowledge of what had happened; or, perhaps worse still, ignorant of it. Should he meet her, he anxiously asked himself whether he would be able to dissemble until he got her back with him to her mother's house?—because, independently of other things, if she knew nothing yet, on what pretence could he turn her back with him without exciting her suspicions? The public road, under the glaring July sun, was not a place for what he had to tell her.

It was singular, whether due to accident or considerateness, that when he arrived at Mrs Dalton's house, no news had reached there before him. He was the first to break the intelligence, and he did it with all tenderness; but his recollection of the scene was ever afterwards very indistinct. Into the sorrow

of that darkened cottage, after the doctor left them, we need not seek to look. A friend—more than brother, more than father, full of solicitous affection, the good vicar had been to those two women.

Now, the fact known to all persons, that the vicar's gentle life had been as loving and delicate and sinless as that of any mother or maiden in his parish, invested the circumstances of his death with incomprehensible mystery. No one could conceive his having had an enemy to desire his death, or compass it. It was still less conceivable that he could have taken his own life. The hypothesis was rejected as absurd and monstrous—nearly as much so as the suggestion of murder. The theory of misadventure only remained. This, too, was surrounded with elements of mystery. All inquiry failed to ascertain in the smallest degree how the fatal drug came to be in the house, when or where it had been procured, and by what imaginable mischance it had got into the wine—after a portion of the latter had actually been drunk. In an ordinary case, murder or suicide would at once have been suggested by the circumstances; but the case of the vicar of St John's was not an ordinary one, and those who were best qualified to judge—his neighbours and flock—distinctly, and indeed indignantly rejected both hypotheses. The official zeal of the police was checked by the emphasis of public opinion; and under the cloud of a verdict of 'death through misadventure,' the tragedy of Mr Dalton's end passed into local history.

Certain points had, indeed, for a moment seemed to question the general conviction, but they did not appear palpable enough to affect the conclusion. It is not intended to do more than mention them in this place, as they may be heard of again. One was a report that some men working on the road a quarter of a mile from the vicarage, towards the open country, had observed a tall woman in a long gray cloak, and wearing a bonnet and veil, coming from the direction of the church on the afternoon of the 5th of July. But there was difference of opinion as to the hour—whether two, or three, or four; it seemed to be some time within these hours. The woman had turned into another road, with the manner of one who knew her way. This was all, and it received little attention, seeing that many women might have come along the road from Croham that Saturday afternoon; and it seemed idle, even to the police, to examine all the housewives in the neighbourhood on so flimsy a clue. Had the alleged female seemed strange to the locality, and made an inquiry as to the way, the matter would have worn a more suspicious complexion.

The other perplexing point was the loaded revolver. It was found on the table, undischarged, not by the dead man's side as he would have been sitting in his easy-chair (the position the wine-glass occupied), but behind his shoulder. He might have had such a weapon in the house without any person's knowledge, and might have been examining it from curiosity. For some unexplained reason, which was sufficiently satisfactory to a predisposed public, little was said about the pistol, and the matter dropped into the same darkness with the rest of the affair.

On the Tuesday after his death—the inquest having been reverently held the day before—the parish of St John's laid their late vicar in his grave under the shadow of the church.

Had it not been for the immunity with which the sanctity of grief surrounded her, or had Dr Maitland been less considerate and respectful than impulsive, no moment had yet been when Mary Dalton was so ready to lay her head upon his breast as during some thirty minutes which she spent alone, after the funeral, in the still darkened drawing-room of the vicarage. The softening and dissolving influence of sorrow and affectionate remembrance was full upon her heart. The vanished face was in the accustomed chair; there was the piano he had bought for her; the little pretty trifles he had loved her hands to arrange reflected his happy smile. The touch of sad recollection awakened every feeling of undutifulness, of ingratitude, which so sensitive a time is calculated to excite in a grateful and loving nature; and if at that moment one whom the vicar had liked so well as Dr Maitland had come to her, touching again ever so gently the chord that had begun to tremble lately in her heart, she would have been impelled to throw herself and her sorrow on the refuge of his love, for the sake of the dead as well as for that of the living.

The propitious hour passed by, and he did not come. He was waiting by the grave to see the turf laid over it.

Mr Fairfield, the solicitor, was in Paris at the time of the vicar's death, and in answer to a telegram from his clerk, had only returned in time for the funeral. As Mr Dalton had not sent back the will, the confidential clerk, Mr Brock, with a telegram of instructions from the solicitor, presented himself at the vicarage late on the Saturday evening, and in the presence of the police sealed the room known as the study. It was only opened after the funeral, in the presence of Mrs Dalton, and of Mr Fairfield and the vicar of Croham, who were the trustees appointed under the will. The clerk, Mr Brock, attended to point out the drawer in which he had seen the documents locked by Mr Dalton. Mr Fairfield then dismissed him and opened the drawer, where he found the envelope.

## IMITATIVE ODOURS.

EVERY year, essences and odours for the toilet increase in variety, changing with every turn of Fortune's wheel. Though flower-farming is one of the most important industries of Southern Europe, employing, as it does, thousands of women and youths, it is quite insufficient for the needs of the perfumer.

To take only one odour which will never go out of fashion. Millions of violets, 'sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,' nestle at Grasse and Nice under the gray shadow of the orange groves, yet the two hundred thousand pounds

of this flower, sacrificed every year to the flower press, are not sufficient for the toilet. The perfumer is glad to fall back on the intense violet odour of 'Cassie, sweet to smell,' for sickly as its scent is when used alone, it gives the indispensable note to many bouquets, and is longer available than the violet, the blossoms of *Acacia Farnesiana* being successive, while those of its better known floral ally are quickly over. There cannot be a greater contrast than that existing between the lowly tufts of the Parma violet, and the tree fifteen feet high, with its stem thick as a man's wrist, and its branches six feet long. Yet the blossoms have the same characteristic odour. Cassie, too, the flower-farmer's latest crop, forms a fitting introduction to the violet harvest, occurring as the former does in November and December, while the purple shadow of the latter is not seen under the olives till the beginning of February. Both odours are obtained by the characteristic *enfleurage* system; pure, inodorous lard being placed on sheets of glass, and covered with flower petals. Forty or fifty of the trays are then piled on one another, till the lard is charged with their perfume, the flowers being changed from thirty to forty times before the *pommade* is considered sufficiently scented.

The fat thus obtained is packed in air-tight tins, and from it, through the medium of rectified spirit, the perfumer prepares his *extraits*. A more delicate process is now being resorted to; coarse cotton cloths, *molletons de coton*, being soaked in the finest almond-oil, and laid on a frame of wire-gauze. Fresh flowers from time to time are thrown on these cloths till the oil is violet-scented. Another way of obtaining the odour is to pass an alcoholic shower through several layers of freshly gathered flowers, placed in a sort of sieve, beneath which is a receptacle—a process called the *nyrogene*. Three species of Iris, *Iris germanica*, *Iris pallida*, and *Iris florentina*, are grown on Tuscan flower-farms, and in Calabria, to furnish the violet-scenting orris of our sachets. The rhizome, or creeping underground stem, when freshly dug, has indeed an earthy scent, but after two years it acquires the characteristic indispensable violet odour, and is used, not only in the preparation of sachets, but also in the preparation of Jockey Club and other bouquets. A violet-scented ally of *Acacia Farnesiana*—the myall wood of the deserts of East Australia, which retains the characteristic odour so long as it remains unpolished—the pure white violet-scented anemone of South Australia, the violet-scented lily from Buenos Ayres (the *Priteleia uniflora* that is now making its way into our spring borders), two orchids (*Dendrobium heterocarpum* and *Oncidium oriostrium*), and the young green parts of the reed-like 'scented palm' of Brazil—have also this much-coveted odour, and may possibly, as the demand increases, be impressed into the perfumer's service.

The rose, the queen of flowers, that has been said to preserve 'all the fragrance of summer when summer is gone,' yields its fragrant attar or 'otto' to the villagers of Turkey and the peasant proprietors of Grasse, Cannes, Nice, and the Valois in no niggardly quantity. Yet the true otto does not satisfy the needs of the toilet. Pure attar of roses is of extreme rarity, and is worth its weight in gold, the rose attar of commerce being largely adulterated with sandal, or with otto of rose geranium, which is largely grown for the purpose in France and Turkey. The characteristic rose scent is shared by *Pæonia albiflora fragrans* (an ally of the lovely rose-scented China pæonies of our gardens), the root of *Rhodiola rosea* (a species of Sedum growing on damp rocks on the high mountains of Scotland, Ireland, and in the North of England, and on sea-cliffs), and by the rasped wood of the Brazilian tulip-tree.

A small quantity of genuine white lilac scent is annually obtained from Southern France by the *enfleurage* system; but the perfumer in this case does not hesitate to avail himself of substances really forming a bouquet. He adds to a mixture of tuberose and orange-flower *pommades* a minute quantity of oil of almonds, and a little civet to give permanence to the scent on the handkerchief.

Another delicate odour, heliotrope, is obtained in small quantities from the heliotrope hedges of the Riviera by the process of *maceration*, a quantity of very pure lard being placed in a copper vessel with the flowers, and melted over a slow fire. The flowers are then strained away, a process repeated till the fat is sufficiently flower-scented, when the liquid fat is poured through a sieve, and the greasy flower paste subjected to hydraulic pressure. Since heliotrope blossoms must be used as soon as they are gathered, and the melted grease carefully kept at the lowest temperature that will maintain it in the liquid state, the perfumer accepts as a substitute *heliotropine*, the white light crystalline powder obtained from the ground pepper. Even if these difficulties of manufacture were avoided by the *nyrogene* or *enfleurage* systems, pure heliotrope essence could never become a popular perfume. Heat injures it. The direct action of sunlight destroys it. Artifice replaces it with a mixture of the spirituous *extraits* of vanilla, ambergris, rose, and orange-flower, to which are added a few drops of essential oil of almonds.

Lemon verbena is a plant whose otto is sometimes extracted by the process of distillation, the leaves being covered with distilled water, and the still-head linked down so that the joint is vapour-tight. The still is then connected with a condensing worm, and a fire being lighted underneath, the otto and vapour of water distil over, are condensed in the worm, and pass into a receiver, the oil forming a layer on the top of the water, from which it is readily removed. The perfumer seldom avails himself of this source, preferring an artificial method, the mixture of oil of lemon grass with rectified spirit. The 'verbena' otto, so much used in the manufacture of Eau-de-Cologne, it must be remarked, comes, not from the verbena, but from the leaves of a species of

coarse grass, *Androp̆e citratus*, the peculiar odour of which occurs in several species of the Australian Eucalyptus.

Lately, a lady flower-farmer in Lincoln has succeeded in getting some good examples of natural wallflower *pommade*, but the scent usually sold under that name consists of a mixture of *extraits* of orange-flower, vanilla, orris, and cassie, to which a few drops of essential oil of almonds are added.

Similarly, narcissus scent is carefully made up from the *extraits* of tuberose, jonquil, surax, and tolu, and although a small quantity of jonquil *extrait* is prepared from the flower, by treating jonquil *pommade* with grain spirit or spirit of wine in a steam perfumery churn, or *batteuse à extraits*, the scent usually known by that name consists of *extrait* of jasmine, mixed with tuberose, orange-flower, and vanilla *extraits*. There are, indeed, jonquil plantations round Grasse, but each of the four or five yellow blooms that appear on each stem towards the end of March has to be carefully picked off at the calyx; the crop is uncertain, and the harvesting period is very short.

Eglantine is another blossom which cannot be said to repay the flower-farmer for its collection. The perfumer counterfeits it with a mixture of rose, cassie, and orange-flower *pommades*, rose-spirit, neroli, and lemon grass.

Magnolia, again, is a blossom too large and scarce to be cultivated by the flower-farmer, but can be imitated by the addition of a few drops of the ottos of citron, zeste, and almonds, to the spirituous *extraits* of orange-flower, rose, tuberose, and violet.

Myrtle, 'the flower of brides,' is seldom sought by the lover of essences. A hundredweight of the leaves of the common myrtle yields only about five ounces of the volatile oil. Hence a substitute is found in a mixture of the *extraits* of vanilla, orange-flower, tuberose, and jasmine.

The gardenia is counterfeited by a skilful mixture of orange-flower and tuberose *extraits;* the clove pink by dissolving balsam of tolu in a small quantity of solution of potash.

Lily of the valley scent, again, is a complex odour formed by a mixture of the *extraits* of tuberose, jasmine, vanilla, cassie, and rose, to which are added a few drops of the indispensable oil of almonds.

Honeysuckle perfume is composed of rose, tuberose, vanilla, and tolu *extraits*, together with a few drops of the ottos of neroli and bitter almonds; while a similar odour, that of the sweet pea, is counterfeited by combining the *extraits* of tuberose, orange-flower, rose, and vanilla.

Passing to purely chemical substances; terpenol, a colourless, strongly refractive oil, obtained by the oxidation of turpentine, has the characteristic odour of the hyacinth, and is its substitute; while chloride of sylvestrine possesses the rather crude scent of bergamot, formerly obtained by the *écuelle*, or metal cup covered with spikes, but now obtained by squeezing the unpeeled fruit with the right hand against a clean sponge held in the left.

We have seen that many of the characteristic odours of flowers can be counterfeited. It must be remembered that more than one kind of scent is often liberated at the same time from a flower, the scent of honey in particular frequently combining with some other odour.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XXII. *(continued).*

He shook his head. 'Oh, that is hopeless.'

'I am not so sure. Consider the thing from a political point of view. You offer yourself, with your career; she brings herself, with all that it means—an immense contribution. Perhaps she may think in her modesty that your side of the balance lifts up her side.'

Robert shook his head again, but with less firmness. The shaking of a man's head is a most expressive gesture, because there are so many shades in it.

'Next, we will consider the situation from a personal point of view. Frances is in every way admirable and delightful, it is true.'

'Yes,' he sighed. 'Admirable and delightful.'

'But you, my cousin, are not a bad specimen of a man—well set up, and well looking, and well mannered. And you are a masterful kind of creature, and women admire masterfulness in a man. And you have already shown cleverness, and women admire cleverness.'

'Yes. It is all very well, but'——

'And then the lady is a young widow, her own mistress; free to please herself, and she has shown herself difficult to please. She is wealthy, and'——

Here he jumped up again. He was very jumpy this afternoon. 'Yes,' he cried, 'she is wealthy, and there—there you have the whole difficulty. We will suppose that she might possibly get over the differences of birth and rank, and all that, because they mean nothing.' You perceive that Robert was as yet imperfectly acquainted with the true inwardness of things—birth and rank to mean nothing? Dear me! And to hear these words from my own pupil! 'They mean nothing,' he repeated. 'She is the daughter of an Earl, and I am a boat-builder. What do I care about that, eh?' He turned upon me quite fiercely. 'As if that could be any real obstacle. I am a man, I say'—he snorted in his wrath—'I say, a man in whom a woman may take pride. I know that very well. I believe that even Lady Frances though she is—all that she is—might take a pride in me. Lesser women,' he added, with his usual arrogance, 'would. Of course they would.'

'Well, then, what bee have you got in your bonnet now?'

'Can't you understand? You say she is rich. I know she is rich. And that's the real obstacle. As for the rest, I have thought over all that you said by myself. Only I liked to hear it from you as well. It's the money, George.'

'What about the money? Now don't go raising foolish ghosts about Frances' money. What if she is rich? What does that matter?'

'I have tried to get over it, and I can't. One must keep some self-respect. George, how

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would you like to live in your wife's palace—your wife's, not your own?'

'Her country-house isn't a palace.' But it is, as Robert knew.

'How would you like to be every day sitting at your wife's table, not your own, drinking your wife's wine—not your own; waited on by your wife's servants—not your own; spending the money that your wife—your wife—chose to give you? No, I could not—I could not—say no more about it. I would rather remain as I am, and go on thinking about her without hope all my life, than marry her for her money—for her money! Pah!'

'If you come to that, you must just as well say to another woman: "How would you like, all your life, going about enjoying honour—not your own, but your husband's, a name not your own, but your husband's?"'

'Nonsense,' said Robert; 'the things are not parallel. Of course a woman may take all that a man has to give.'

'And a man all that a woman has to give.'

What was it my solicitor had told me? 'Marry money. Marry money.' And I despised that advice, and now I was trying to make Robert do just exactly that very same thing. Well, it was quite certain that this proud, independent person would never become a dependent on his wife. Fortunately, I had one more card up my sleeve.

'You are perhaps right,' I said, with assumed thoughtfulness. 'You could never become that unhappy creature, the man who lives upon his wife's money. You have got some hundreds a year, however.'

'And she has, how many thousands a year? My whole income would not pay my share of the servants.'

'Then, again, a man and wife are not obliged to have equal fortunes. If one is a little richer than the other'——

'A little! Oh, he says a little!'

'Go on. You will give me a chance presently.'

'Let her give away all but three hundred pounds a year. Then we should start on equal terms.'

'No, because you would have still before you your ambition with its solid side, and she would have nothing left. In ten years' time you might be drawing five thousand pounds a year official salary, and she have nothing more than her three hundred. No, Robert, the equitable way would be to reckon your future prospects and your future position as an asset worth ten thousand pounds a year, or anything you please a year.'

Robert shook his head. 'An asset is something that can be realised. No one would advance a farthing on the security of my prospects. As a business man, George, you really ought to know by this time what an asset means.'

'You are not going to a pawnbroker or a bank. You have an asset, I say, that in a certain lady's eyes might outweigh all her own advantages.'

'All the same, George,' he replied doggedly, 'I shall not stoop to live upon my wife.'

'You are nothing but a perverse, obstinate, and pig-headed bourgeois. You had better go back to Wapping. Come, then, I will meet you on your own ground. You admit that a few thousands, more or less, matter nothing.'

'I'm sure I don't know. All I do know is that I've got about three hundred pounds a year, and that Lady Frances has got twenty thousand pounds a year, and that the thing is impossible on that ground alone.'

'It isn't impossible on that ground—if you could rise to the situation. You have done very well, Robert, so far, but you ought to throw off the last vestige of the shop.'

'What the devil has the shop got to do with Lady Frances and her money?'

'Why, you are not going into partnership. Her money would be simply a means of keeping you in a set of people and style of life necessary for your ambitions. It is a detail. You feel that you belong to that kind of life: you don't want to use her money for gambling, or for horse-racing, or anything at all: this roof, which would perhaps be hers, and the food and the wine and the rest of it would be nothing—nothing at all—in comparison with the solid advantages of society and influence. You ought to rise above such considerations, really. I am ashamed that you are tied down by such unworthy considerations. They belong to Wapping-in-the-Ouse, believe me, not to Piccadilly.'

He laughed and shook his head. 'I cannot live upon my wife,' he said doggedly. 'Wapping or Piccadilly—I care not where I live—so that it is not upon my wife.'

'Well—then'——

'Say no more about it, George. She is as far from me now as if I were at Wapping. I am sorry I told you. Yet I don't know. It's a relief to tell somebody, and you are the only man to whom I ever told anything. Meantime—there's an end. She doesn't suspect, at any rate.'

I was for the moment diplomatically doubtful. I might tell him at once of the wonderful find that would clear away one obstacle at least. But then, I knew so well, beforehand, the lofty scorn with which Frances would sweep away such an obstacle; how she would make him understand the paltry nature of her own wealth compared with the riches and abundance of his own abilities; how she would make him ashamed of his own weakness in not perceiving this fact for himself, and how he would become converted and resigned and submissive—this strong proud man. Knowing all this, I would not tell him—yet.

'There are,' I summed up, 'three obstacles in the way. There is Isabel—very good—you shall be released. Oh! I am not guessing. I tell you plainly that she does not care for you, except as a generous benefactor. You can't marry a girl who is only grateful. You have never made love to her.'

'Of course not—I had no time.'

'And you cannot expect her to be in love with you. Moreover, my dear cousin, I have reason to believe that if she were free to-day, she would be engaged to-morrow.'

'Oh! To some little clerk in the docks, I suppose. Isabel has no greater ambition than that.'

'Perhaps.' He had no suspicion at all—yet he knew that I had been wandering about with

this girl all the summer evenings. 'Girls,' I said, 'are sometimes singularly free from ambition. Some of them want nothing but love and a tranquil home; they are easily contented.'

'I suppose that is so,' he said with pity. 'And so Isabel really wants to be released. Why could she not tell me so herself?'

'Why; because she has always been afraid of you. And grateful. She would never take such a step unless she knew that you wished it. I shall fill her heart with happiness to-night when I tell her what you really want.'

'Then let her be happy—with her dock clerk!' His face cleared immediately, and he laughed. 'Poor child!' he said. 'She was a good clerk and a good accountant. How should her mind soar any higher?'

'As for the other obstacle, Robert, that objection to the lady on the score of wealth: it is unworthy of you: it is also unpractical. You ought to be quite above such considerations.'

'All the same, George,' he repeated, 'to live upon my wife would choke me.'

'You shall not be choked, my dear Robert. This obstacle, too, shall be removed. Trust me—believe me—when I tell you—on my word of honour—that it shall be removed.'

I had, I say, the greatest confidence in Lady Frances and in the arguments which I knew she would employ to break down this heart of stone: but there was also the additional comfort of feeling that the bag of precious stones was in that seaman's chest. How beautiful is the working out of the Doctrine of Chances! When one takes up a hand at cards there are millions to one against the particular hand that turns up. Yet it does turn up—that hand always turns up—in the face of those overwhelming odds. So with that bag of diamonds. Everybody in the Wapping branch of the Burnikel family had examined that chest; turned it upside down: taken everything out: yet had never found that hiding-place. If it had been found at any time it would have changed the fortune and altered the future of the whole family. Robert would have been impossible. Had Robert been born, brought up and trained otherwise, he would have been quite another Robert. He would have understood, for instance, which he has never yet perfectly succeeded in understanding, the audacity of his ambition, and, as it would seem to those who know the world—but not to himself—its impossibility. Why do young men of obscure birth and poverty succeed so often and so greatly? Because they do not understand the audacity of their own ambition. 'I will win scholarships: I will go to Cambridge: I will be Senior Wrangler: I will be Master of my College: I will be Vice-chancellor of the University,' says the lad of parts—low down in the world. The lad of parts higher up understands that the very flower of the English-speaking youth are his rivals: that he must beat the best: that he must actually be the best: and he is discouraged for climbing. For nerve, and hand, and eye, the poor boy has a far better chance than the rich. All our boys before they are born ought to pray for poverty—with brains and courage.

All these fine reflections passed through my head between my last speech and Robert's reply. He held out his hand. 'Trust you, George?' he said. 'Isn't it rather late in the day to ask that question? But how? How can that obstacle be removed?'

'I shall not tell you. Now go on without any misgiving; and conquer—if you can. Only, Robert, pray remember. This is not quite the same thing as the other venture, you know. Then you had to do with a school-girl, a child. Now you have an equal. You cannot understand. You must stoop to woo—even you—oh! Samson.'

'Only an equal? An equal? Don't speak like a fool, George. You who know her?'

'You think that way at last. You have found some one to whom you are not equal. So much the better. But—I say, how about the foolishness of fondling and kisses?'

'Oh!' There rose upon his cheek the roseate hues of early dawn—yet he was six-and-twenty. 'Of course this is different—quite different. Isabel was only a school-girl, as you say. That kind of thing would only unsettle her at that age. This is quite different.'

### CHAPTER XXIII.

I found my mistress—it was nearly nine o'clock in the evening—in the parlour, playing her thoughts to herself. The room had no light except that of the street lamp, which showed her in her light gray dress, something like a ghost. She turned her head as I opened the door. In the lamplight I saw her sweet, serious face, and her limpid eyes. I was dragged by ropes to fall at her feet. But I refrained. There was something to be said first.

'George,' she said, 'you are worried about something. What has happened?'

There must have been something in my eyes—yet the room was so dark. Perhaps she could feel in some magnetic way—the way of love—the presence of emotion. This kind of thought-reading is a branch of the science which has been too much neglected. It is, unfortunately, incapable of being put upon any stage, or even illustrated in any drawing-room. Which is, of course, the reason of this neglect.

'Isabel,' I said, 'you are a witch. Come into the study, and I will tell you why I am moved.'

The study was also in twilight, the light of the same lamp in the street falling upon the polished wainscot, and reflected about the room. My hand touched Isabel's, and again that temptation fell upon me to take the girl in my arms and to kiss her, and never to be weary of that kissing.

'You promised, George,' she said, reading my mind a second time. 'Not yet—not yet.'

'I promised, Isabel, only until there was no longer need to keep that promise.'

'There is still the need, and greater need than ever. Quiet yourself, George—I can hear your heart beating. Tell me, or let me go.'

I lit the candles. 'I am quiet, Isabel.'

'Now tell me what has happened.'

'That need, Isabel, exists no longer.'

'Exists no longer? Is Robert dead?'

'No, he is living still, but that need exists no longer.'

'What has happened then?'

'Sit down, Isabel. Take a pen and paper. So now, write at my dictation. It is the only act of obedience that I shall ever ask of you. All the future I shall be your slave. This evening alone I ask you to obey me.'

She hesitated. Then she sat down.

'Write: "My dear Robert."'

'I am to write to Robert?'

'You shall hear if you will be obedient for this one and only occasion. "My dear Robert"—have you got that?'

'It looks very odd on paper. This is the first letter I have ever written to him.'

'Write: "I learn that you yourself are anxious that our engagement should be broken off." Have you got that?'

'But, George, anxious. Robert anxious? What does this mean?'

'Finish the letter. "To me it has always been a meaningless engagement, and really impossible. When you made that promise to me, I was only a school-girl, and I was frightened. My only comfort was in thinking that it was to be a long engagement. I release you from your promise very willingly. You made a mistake, and you have been too proud to acknowledge it, though I have never ceased from the beginning to understand that it was a mistake.—Yours." What will you be—yours sincerely? That will do. "Isabel." Have you written it?'

'Yes, I have written it. But I do not understand it. Does he really and truly desire his release? Why?'

'He does, really and truly. But he will never ask you himself. The release must come from you.'

'You have not told me why. Is Robert going to be engaged to some one else?'

'Perhaps. You are not jealous. But of course not. How could you be jealous? I think it is very likely that he will be engaged before long.'

'No,' she smiled. 'I have no right to be jealous. He never loved me. I never cared enough about him to be jealous. His engagement was just a part of his kindness. It gave him the right to maintain us without the appearance of almsgiving. No, George, I am not jealous.'

'At present he could not afford to marry, unless it was some woman with money. He understands, however, that he has no right to bind you any longer to a loveless engagement. He says he has had no time to make love. If he marries it should be to some woman of political influence, and with political friends, who would advance him.'

'He never thinks of anything at all but his own advancement. I wonder if he has a heart somewhere hidden away.'

'He has plenty of heart, Isabel, if you can get at it. The misfortune in your case was that while he was here the business of his own advancement did occupy all his soul and all his strength, and all his mind and all his heart. The ground is cleared now, and he has begun his march. The rest is easy, and now is the time for the flowers of passion to show themselves and to expand. We look to see strange things before long.' With such shallow humbug did I attempt to veil the truth. But in vain. Women's minds are swift and far-shooting.

'There must be another woman,' she said thoughtfully, and not in the least jealously. 'Otherwise, he would not have considered the question of his engagement at all. Why should he? I am hidden away down here: he was not going to marry me for years—any number of years. He never writes to me; he takes no notice of me; his engagement did not make the least difference to him. Yet he suddenly expresses his wish to be released. Well, George, he shall be released. About that other woman you will tell me what you please.'

Therefore, I told her all.

'Robert in love!' she laughed gently. 'I cannot understand it. Will he tell her, as he told me, that there is to be no foolishness of fondling?'

'I don't think he will, Isabel?'

She heaved a deep sigh. 'I have worked for him,' she said, 'for five long years—you will never understand how long those years have been. He is a hard master; he expects the best work always; no one must be tired, or sick, or weak, who works for him.'

'A hard master indeed.'

'And never a word of praise or approbation. Oh George, I have longed for a word of kindness. It was dreadful to be engaged to a man who was only a master all the time. Never a word of kindness would he give me.'

'He was absorbed, Isabel; he thought of nothing but the work—never anything of the people who helped in the work.'

'What was the work? What did he intend? He never told me. I was like a man blindfolded, dragging a heavy cart along a road that led whither he knew not. Well, he wants his release; he shall have it,' she repeated.

'Since he wants that, Isabel, forgive him all the rest.'

'I have forgiven him, George. I have forgiven him since you came—and—and—and since my heart was softened.' The tears rose to her eyes.

'Isabel!'

'Are you sure, George, that he desires his release?'

'Quite sure. Robert knows that I have come this evening with the intention of asking you for it.'

'Then I will write him a longer letter than this.' She tore up the little note that I had dictated, and wrote another and a much longer one. 'I shall not suffer my loveless lover, my patient bridegroom, to depart without a little explanation. I am glad—oh! so glad to be released. But still, no one likes to be told to go without a little understanding of things.'

It was certainly a much finer letter than mine. But then, you see, I was thinking of nothing but the release, and Isabel was thinking of what the man had done for her.

'Dear Robert,' she wrote, 'George tells me that the time has come when you desire the termination of our engagement, entered upon by you out of pity. You wanted an excuse

for maintaining two penniless people—one of them helpless, and the second too young and ignorant to be of much use. I understand now exactly why you forced this engagement upon yourself without any thought of love. That was five years ago. I was then seventeen, and am now two-and-twenty. During this long time I have looked in vain for any word of interest, any look of affection from you. It has been quite plain to me, all along, that you had no kind of love for me. I could not tell you this; partly because we owe you so much that we must always do whatever you desire: partly because it is hard for a woman to say such things: and partly because I was afraid. That you should release me, therefore, is a great relief to me. It must be unhappiness enough for a woman to marry a man whom she does not love: it must be far worse if that man does not even profess to love her.'

'You are quite free, Robert. You have lifted a great weight from my heart. You will be far happier yourself without the fetters of an engagement which had proved impossible. You must marry a woman who will help you in your ambitions. This I could never do; and when you become a great and famous man you will be pleased to remember that you released one who would feel no pride in your success, and could take no part in your ambition. And so I am always, and just as much as ever, your grateful and obedient servant, clerk, and housekeeper, but never your bride,

ISABEL.'

I took the letter and placed it in an envelope. It was done. Robert had got his release, and Isabel was free.

'Oh! my love!' I cried, and held out my arms.

'Oh! No—George,' she shrank back. 'Not so soon. 'Oh! I am like a newly-made widow: but I am full of joy. Is it right? Oh! George—so soon!'

'Isabel! At last! At last!'

## GRETCHEN AT HOME.

THE German girl has a halo of poetry and romance around her. Love has been made to her a thousand times in music. She is blue eyed. She is golden haired. If she be only a miller's daughter, she is, like Schubert's 'schöne Müllerin,' seen and instantly beloved with rapture, and the poet cries out that so exultant a passion shall be carved on every tree, and told to every brook: 'Thine is my heart—my heart is thine forever!'

O blissful poet—the same adorable maiden had been killing a fowl that very morning and plucking it! Of course there is no harm in that. If we are to have chickens for dinner, we cannot have them alive; somebody has to kill them. Still, one is troubled by a sense of incongruity; these occupations are not those of a sylph surrounded by poetry. One thinks of Charlotte cutting bread and butter, when she had seen the last of poor Werther. We are all human, and the necessities of life make unromantic work behind the scenes. The great difference between girl life in Germany and in England lies in the doing of this domestic work. In Germany every girl has to take her share in it, from the young baroness (the daughter of the elder baroness, you know) down to the aforesaid miller's daughter—whom we were so shocked just now to find killing the fowl just at the moment when the poet was singing 'My heart is thine forever!'

Opinions differ as to what work is unfit for a sensitive nature, and a refined pair of hands. Nor do we all think alike as to the necessity or wisdom of kitchen occupation for the daughters of the house. One titled lady, the wife of a Scottish earl, has given her children a small cottage in the grounds to play with, which cottage is kept in apple-pie order with the greatest delight; her ladyship's little daughter keeping the fireplace polished, the boy kindling the fire, and both getting tea with milk from their own cow, when the elders are expected to call at this life-size dolls' house on a summer afternoon. But that is play. With Gretchen in the Vaterland it is otherwise. She sets to work with the system and thoroughness of her nation. She may be destined to be the life companion of an intellectual man, but what is most impressed upon her is that genius must have a dinner. The poetry which surrounded her blonde head as a halo vanishes on nearer approach, and the ideal side of life with it. What should we think of the fairy tale, if the Prince awoke the Sleeping Beauty, not with a kiss, but with a hesitating question as to whether she knew how to cook?

There can be no question of Gretchen's marriage unless she is already a good housewife. As soon as schoolroom days are over, her mother places her in another household—perhaps with the Baroness von Somebody-or-other, for a year, paying about a hundred pounds. Meanwhile, another girl, from somewhere else, comes to the first household, to replace the daughter and to cover the expense by learning housekeeping and paying a similar premium. At this point, of course, every one asks, Why does not Gretchen's mother teach her own daughter instead? It seems strange; but Gretchen is supposed to accept the routine of housework more willingly among strangers, and also it is hoped that she may learn new style, improvements on the old ways at home. During the year, the baroness has not only to teach Gretchen, but to bring her out in society. There are to be dances and dinner parties, and the pupil *débutante* is to help in preparing the house for the dance, or decorating the table for the dinner. Dinner is in the middle of the day; dances are seldom prolonged into the night; so the next morning our young friend has to forget at once her partners and all the pretty things they said, and to go out early to market to cheapen sausage and cabbage for saurkraut. She will see also to the linen and the washing. If it be a house where there are no sheets, but only as we foreigners think, one feather-bed on top of

another, bed-making will not take very long, and will develop the maiden's round arms. Then she has to trot about in the three kitchens, to help with the cooking. One kitchen is for rough work; another contains the stove; the third, which our little friend likes best, is a bright and well-appointed pantry for making sweets and dainties.

If it be a country-house, the dinner is served in the hall—a primitive arrangement reminding one of the use of the larger baronial hall in the castle. The door from the garden opens into this panelled apartment, where the pavement is simply flagged, and a few family portraits look down from the walls. The principal woman-servant in many households takes her place at the table—perhaps a remnant from the times when all the retainers were seated beyond the salt-cellar.

The girl's chief recreations are her Kränzchen ('Little Garland') and her share in pleasure parties. The wreath or garland idea is one which our girls at home would enjoy. Gretchen and five friends of the same age meet once a week for tea and cake, and talk and sewing, at the house of each in turn. What is said in the wreath is said verily 'sub rosa.' If anything is repeated outside, the young gossip is turned out of the 'Wreath' forever, nor will any other little circle of six admit the expelled member who could not keep confidence. At every meeting the six friends give a copper coin each; and the money kept to the end of the year furnishes a day's pleasure for all together.

The financial side of these girl circles is essentially German. The same idea of practical economy is carried out in the country parties which take place in the summer. All the young folks club to pay their shares strictly afterwards, and then they sally forth to some riverside inn, surrounded perhaps by the woods, and within hearing of a waterfall. They have already dined. Instead of afternoon tea, they take lager-beer at little tables in the garden. Early in the evening the musician comes, and the big room with its rough boarded floor is given over to them for dancing. Dressing for a dance is no difficulty to the German girl. All her summer dresses have full sleeves only to the elbow, and the neck is cut slightly out in a square, back and front. So she has put on the pink, or white, or blue dress, which happens to be freshest, and is quite ready any time for an impromptu whirl, with a little thin beer instead of an ice for refreshment. For the last dance, the girls are expected to choose their partners; and it is still early when they all pay their share, both man and maid, in a practical and unromantic manner. And then they go home through the woods, perhaps singing part-songs about those very pine-forests which have inspired so much German poetry. The next morning, the round of marketing and cheapening, and cooking and eating, begins again, just as if nothing had happened. And one of those days, when Gretchen, with the consent of her parents, is engaged, it is not a quiet happiness, a secret whispered with private congratulations, and happy blushes. Cards are sent at once to all the friends and acquaintances making the great announcement, and the betrothed pair are presented to everybody at a ceremonious reception. Gretchen is a good housekeeper, and Fritz has money. Let us congratulate them and offer flowers.

## THE COLONEL'S PLAN.

II.

THE Colonel's attentions grew, and upon Mrs Kennedy their effect was marked. She became curiously gracious by fits and starts to her daughter-in-law, and the acid undercurrent slipped out of her talk. Rosebud was greatly puzzled, but rejected the suggestion that Archie proffered, with disdain. Her father—her dear, faithful soldier father could not have any such intention. It was not likely! So Archie held his peace.

. . . . . .

'Come over to tea with me some afternoon,' said the Colonel once, and Mrs Kennedy, who took all his speeches to herself, responded:

'Charmed!'

He fetched them in the dogcart, and Mrs Kennedy got up as lightly as she was able, and fancying that only old ladies were supposed to dread accidents, would not show her terror, but sat smiling nervously, while the horse capered round and round. Rose held on behind and wondered.

It was a lovely day. They skimmed along with glimpses of moor and sea beyond the rowan-fringed high-road. Mrs Kennedy chattered happily, pointing out little bits of scenery to the Colonel, who, fully occupied, could only glance at them out of the corner of his eye, and mutter 'Beautiful!'

There were houses here and there, showing through trees dimly, as became country mansions. Mrs Kennedy did not omit to take note of these.

'Do you see Castle Whin?' she said. 'It is quite deserted now, since Sir James went abroad. He has been frequenting some foreign Bath place for his gout. I am sure it must be Monte Carlo, really—because he was always rakish. He was an old admirer of mine, by the way!'

She laughed, a little high-pitched laugh, and kissed her hand to the chimneys of Castle Whin. Then she looked behind graciously.

'My dear Rose, are you comfortable?'

. . . . . .

They turned in at the gate, and the Colonel made a pretty speech. Mrs Kennedy skipped up the steps, expressing her curiosity to see the wonderful trophies of his adventures.

'I shall be delighted, if it will not bore you,' said the Colonel courteously.

Rosebud rolled up her gloves, and ran out into the garden to fill her hands with flowers from the dear old untidy home. She could hear the Colonel throw up the windows to let Mrs Kennedy see the view, and she could hear her mother-in-law making exclamations in a young, affected voice. But the flowers, the familiar flowers were smiling up, and Rosebud forgot everything else, bending eagerly over the borders.

The Colonel was taking Mrs Kennedy all over

the house, sparing her no tiger story, no pig-sticking tale. There was only one door that he did not unlock, walking past it hastily.

'And this?' inquired the visitor in passing; but he did not seem to hear.

Lastly, he invited her to behold his study, and the treasures it contained.

'What a delightful room!' said Mrs Kennedy, sinking deep into a shabby old leather chair. She was slightly fatigued by her royal progress from room to room, although she did not show it, as her colour was not able to come and go.

The Colonel looked wistfully round his den.

'A few little touches would make it charming,' went on Mrs Kennedy. 'At present it gives too much of a brown effect. A lighter paper—and art serge drapery—and a few frilled cushions, would make it lovely. And then these old swords want polishing.'

'Whom have I to do that for me?' said the Colonel suddenly, leaning against the oak mantelpiece, grizzled and brown himself. 'I am only a solitary old soldier, as rusty as my swords, and who would take pity on me in the kind way you suggest? I have nobody to—ah—to frill my cushions.'

Rosebud's mother-in-law sighed gingerly, and said nothing. The blush was fixed in her cheek.

. . . . .

The tea-table was brought in. Rose waited, making her flowers into bunches, and rubbing the roses against her cheek. The other two were long. Perhaps the Colonel was wearying out her mother-in-law with his old Indian stories—and then Mrs Kennedy would be tired and cross, and she would suffer. Oh, if only she and Archie could have a home to themselves! no house could be big enough for them, as she had discovered. It was of no use bothering Archie; poor Archie, who could not help it, and who must not know that his little wife was unhappy, that she could hardly bear the tyranny of his own mother. . . . She was not sorry—oh no, she dared not imagine she regretted having persuaded the Colonel not to make them wait. He had said that it would be better for them to marry when Archie's success had made his position as good as his birth: he had looked higher for his little Rose. But she had been wilful and had got her way, and—oh, she was not, would not be sorry. But it was very hard. . . .

Her mother-in-law came in, followed by the Colonel, who shut the door.

'I have some news for you, Rose,' said he, standing awkwardly in front of his daughter. 'Mrs Kennedy has done me the honour to promise to be my wife.'

. . . . .

'Oh, Papa!'

Rose had succeeded in getting one minute alone with her father, and out came the reproach that had until then been only in her eyes.

'Aren't you glad, little one?' said the Colonel.

'Glad?' repeated Rose, with a gasp. She had not thought of herself—she could not stop to consider her own affairs. Only she thought of a white stone cross with 'Until the day break' written on it—and of the one closed room up-stairs, full of untouched memories. When the day did break, how would it be, after this—desecration?

'Oh, Papa, Papa, how could you!' she cried, trying vainly to recover from the shock. The Colonel winced. He could not say to her: 'It was the only way I could think of to rescue my little girl from being bullied. And the dead will know why I do it.' But he laid his hands on her shoulders, remarking stoutly:

'So you don't approve, Rosebud? Ah, but you must remember that I have no little girl to look after me now. Think it over, think it over as we drive back. A stepmother can't be as bad as—well, well, give me a kiss and be quiet!'

'I am ready, good people,' interrupted Mrs Kennedy, tripping briskly in. 'Run and put on your things, my dear, and let us make haste. We have news for Archie, haven't we? He will be so astonished!'

. . . . .

'What has come over the Colonel?'

'Heaven knows. Or perhaps the other place has had more to do with it. He looks very queer.'

'Some old bullet making itself unpleasant.'

'More likely to be a new bullet, between ourselves. He looks as if he would be happy to put an end to himself. May mean to do it with a halter.'

'What do you mean?'

'Why, he is always hooked on to old Mrs Kennedy. Never comes to the Club now. But if you look over there you'll see him three days a week, sitting in the middle of smoke and varnish, while the old lady frisks about with a tea-kettle.'

The men grunted. They were smoking in the veranda of the Golf Club, a solid stone building with a tower; and they looked across the links to an imitative structure that the Ladies' Club had erected on a hillock. Ladies were not allowed in *the* Club, and to avenge that lack of privilege they had made a law that no man should enter their domain. When they had parties, they handed teacups out of the windows. But gradually the severity of the laws were lessened, and fathers, brothers, and other people's brothers, were taken into the pavilion, and given tea in the small, varnished room, with its rows of lockers, and its smoking stove-pipe.

Of late, the Colonel—the Colonel who used to sit and smoke with his cronies in the Club after his round on the long course—had been observed with horror pottering round the ladies' links with Mrs Kennedy, and stooping his head under the pavilion lintel. His old friends began to fancy that he was mad. . . .

It was on one fine afternoon, when the sea and the sky were blue, and the golf links were a vision of green delight, that six veterans sat in the Club veranda and judged the Colonel.

'It's all up with him,' said one, pointing grimly with his pipe to two objects on a far hillock. One was the Colonel, leaning heavily on his putter—and the other, skittishly clad in scarlet, was Mrs Kennedy. 'All up with him. An old soldier should be able to run away. However, he has gone down. He is going to marry her.'

The other five started out of their chairs.

'Absurd!'

'True'—and there was a universal groan, in the middle of which a new-comer pushed open the glass doors, and came out on to the veranda.

'What are you plotting, hey?' said he. They made room sadly.

'You have come home to behold strange signs and portents, Sir James,' said the teller of the news. 'Your old flame—Mrs Kennedy—is going to get married.'

'What? Annie Kennedy? She must be an old woman,' remarked Sir James, settling himself in their midst. He was a rakish old baronet, with a twinkling eye and a love of gossip. The smokers drew together, and told the news, going on to other stories and the doings of ten good years. . . .

'I shall go and call upon Mrs Kennedy,' said Sir James, with a chuckle. . . .

III.

Mrs Kennedy sat in state in the peacock drawing-room. She had had many callers lately.

Rose was a meek accessory to these receptions; she shook hands and sang when she was requested, and then subsided, or managed to slip away to watch for glimpses of Archie across the street. Mrs Kennedy did not require her presence.

The bride-elect was in all her glory when Sir James came to call. A party of lady friends had just departed, evidently struck by the youthfulness of their hostess. She had grown—or made herself—twenty years younger. The knowledge that they saw it brought a gleam of triumph to her eye as she stepped forward to greet her old admirer.

'You are quite a stranger in Scotland, Sir James,' she said.

'Who drove me away?' said he, dropping into the manner of a great many years ago.

Mrs Kennedy laughed airily. She was looking her best, with a bright dab of pink upon either cheek. 'The gout, I was told,' said she.

Sir James edged his chair a little nearer and chuckled. She was a fine woman, and had worn wonderfully. 'So you are to be congratulated, hey?' he said. '*I* didn't know you were in the market. 'Pon my honour, it is too bad!'

Mrs Kennedy's eyes were lit up with a sudden gleam.

. . . . . .

The Colonel was marching up the street to call upon his bride. He looked up as he crossed the road. Mrs Kennedy was in the habit of stationing herself at the window when he was late, and of tapping archly upon the pane. To-day he could not distinguish anything, for the afternoon sun was shining upon the glass. He walked down the entry and rang the bell. Then he was taken up.

Mrs Kennedy received him in the dressing-room. She greeted him with an embarrassed laugh that was strangely like a girlish giggle.

'I am so distressed!' she said.

'Anything the matter with Rose?' said the Colonel quickly.

'Oh dear, no. This concerns you more—personally,' said Mrs Kennedy, hesitating.

Personally? The Colonel could not help staring. 'The fact is,' she continued, 'I must throw myself on your generosity, and beg of you to release me.'

'My dear lady,' began the Colonel anxiously. Was his only plan to be scattered to the winds? He had gone through so much already.

'Pray forgive me,' said Mrs Kennedy, with her handkerchief to her eyes; 'I cannot tell you how culpable, and vexed, and sorry for you I feel. But, Colonel, first love is unconquerable!—And Sir James Dalrymple of Castle Whin has—has been to see me. We were attached to each other long ago, but he was not, presumptively, Sir James then—and there were obstacles. So I eventually married poor Mr Kennedy. . . . But the lapse of years is a trifle—a mere trifle; and when I discovered that his feelings are still the same, I could not help letting him see the state of my own. With his position in the county, and his gout, and the great, desolate house of Castle Whin, he requires a helpmate. You will be angry with me, Colonel, but I could not resist his appeal. I feel for you most sincerely, and I trust that you will find some other who will be to you all that I might have been.'

The Colonel bowed solemnly over her hand and took his leave. He found it very difficult to express himself, and his only resource was flight. But on the landing his feelings got the better of him, and he could not help indulging in an impromptu war-dance, eloquent of joy.

Rosebud happened to look over the stair. Her voice rang down anxiously from above:

'Papa, what is the matter?—oh, Papa!'

'Cramp, my dear, cramp,' said the Colonel hastily.

CONCLUSION.

## MAHWO.

By F. Harvey Major.

I LOVED him from the moment when my astonished gaze first rested upon his form. Do not think, I beg, that I am some sentimental, love-sick maiden about to bore you with the namby-pamby details of an *affaire du cœur*. I am an old weather-stained West African trader with a parchment-like epidermis, an abnormally developed liver, which keeps me well posted up as to how the wind blows, so to speak, but still possessing a warm corner in the region of my heart for anything absolutely unique in the shape of mortality, and Mahwo decidedly filled the bill.

I was a passenger on board the R.M.S. *Cameroon*, on a voyage from Liverpool to Old Calabar, and as was customary, we called at Grand Sestros, on the Liberian coast, for Kroomen.

Kroomen, or 'boys' as we invariably call them, are the tribes inhabiting the district around Monrovia, and are employed by the white traders as labourers, in the oil rivers and elsewhere. They engage for a term of twelve months, and for this term they are given as remuneration goods to the value of about three

pounds each, in addition to their keep and passage out and home again. They are a strong and intelligent race, very similar in character to coolies; and since slavery has been abolished, trade could scarcely be carried on without their assistance.

As the anchor was let go, the krooboys came out in hundreds in their little canoes to meet us. They crowded on board, seeking engagements, and looking about for any unconsidered trifles sufficiently light and portable to be quietly dropped overboard to their friends, for thieving is an inborn trait in a krooboy's character.

It was whilst watching the animated scene on deck from the break of the poop that I first saw Mahwo. I dropped my handkerchief, and was stooping to pick it up, when he, rushing out from a group of boys, anticipated me, and as he returned it, tried to speak some words; but being afflicted in a terrible degree with the defect of stammering, was unable to make me understand him. Even had his elocutionary ability been of the highest, I should not have heeded it; my mind being solely occupied in considering the extraordinary physical eccentricities of the figure before me.

There was no mistake about it. From the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, he was, without doubt, the ugliest negro as yet discovered in the vast continent of Africa.

And now to describe him! It is a difficult matter, and I fear I cannot do justice to it.

He was probably sixteen years of age; tall, with a hump growing on one shoulder; tattooed from his scalp, which was clean-shaved, to the soles of his feet; and horribly pock-marked. He squinted in a truly diabolical manner, not in the ordinary way, but each eye having an individual twist peculiar to itself; possessed two odd legs, varying by about an inch in length and consequently causing a grotesque limp; bore upon his face and body half-a-dozen or more jagged scars, honourable mementoes of warfare; and to crown all, his upper lip was split open to his nose like a bulldog's, and his teeth were filed down to points, so that when he endeavoured to smile, the effect produced was such as to involuntarily remind one of Victor Hugo's unfortunate hero, '*l'homme qui rit*.'

When I recovered from the surprise his presence occasioned, I asked his name, which, after some atrocious attempts, he gave me to understand was Mahwo; and I engaged him on the spot.

By the time we reached Old Calabar he had displayed such qualities and zeal that I appointed him to act as my valet and general factotum. I told him to count my clothes before giving them out to the washerman, and again upon their return, to make sure that nothing was lost; and the next day, seeing a lot of curious chalk marks on the side of my room, I inquired their meaning, when he replied, in his stuttering style, which, however, I now thoroughly understood, 'He be tally for clothes side, sah;' meaning an account of all the clothes delivered.

The marks seemed so incongruous that I wanted further enlightenment, and learned that he stretched out to its extreme length each article, making a chalk mark corresponding at each end on the wall. I asked how he would know the things on their return, and he said he should 'pull them out to the marks again.' I laughed at this, and pointed out that he would not know to which article each two marks referred, but he explained that *he had cut nicks the same length as the chalk marks in the clothes*. I kept my own account after this.

He was, of course, an inveterate thief, but although he helped himself with the most unblushing effrontery to my belongings, and told the most startling lies to screen himself, he took, so far as I could judge, particularly great care to let no one else steal from me.

I remember he one evening took his place behind my chair at dinner wearing over his loin cloth one of my silk singlets upon which I had that morning stamped my name in marking-ink. I called his attention to the fact, when he at once explained that he had feared I should suspect him as he had unfortunately splashed some ink when clearing the table, and it had made a mark on his singlet like that which I put on my clothes. This excuse was unanswerable, so I said no more.

His propensity for 'acquiring' things proved, however, of genuine advantage to me. I used to take him everywhere I went, and soon noticed that upon the morning after spending an evening on board a mail-steamer, my breakfast-table was supplied with fowls a few sizes larger than usual. I had not troubled as to the *raison d'être*, until one morning a Captain Sullivan of the s.s. *Loanda*, whose hospitality I had partaken of the night before, came to breakfast with me, and, to my astonishment, when the covers were lifted, I found a fat roast goose before me. I turned to Mahwo and asked where it came from, whilst Sullivan tried the temper of his knife. Mahwo said it was one of a lot of fowls I had bought from a native that morning. This, of course, I knew to be a lie; and Sullivan jocularly remarked, 'You've not been raiding the poultry pens aboard my ship, have you, Mahwo?'

Mahwo grinned, and my eyes were at once opened to a hitherto unsuspected 'virtue' in the treasure I possessed. When Sullivan had taken his departure, I taxed Mahwo with the theft; and he, seeing that I was more amused than annoyed (for Sullivan had a reputation for 'annexing' parrots, and besides, I had lived some years on the coast myself, and I fancy the heat tends to warp a man's honesty somewhat when eatables only are concerned), admitted that he generally picked up a few fowls when we visited a steamship at night, because he knew I liked fat ones. I looked at him reprovingly, saying that such conduct was not honest; but he silenced me by saying, '*Oh yes, it was, for he paid himself for them out of my tobacco-box!*'

After this I made a point of easing what little conscience I suffered from by inviting the captain, doctor, and purser of any ship where I might spend an evening, to come and

breakfast with me the next morning, promising to give them something special, a promise which I seldom failed to keep, thanks to my henchman.

The mention of parrots reminds me that some friends in England had been pressing me to send a few home; and as birds were somewhat scarce in Old Calabar at the time, I wrote to a friend in Benin asking him to send a few dozens round to me by the *Forcados*, a little river-steamer.

In response he shipped about thirty, advising me at the same time by letter.

When the *Forcados* arrived I went on board, and after reading my letter asked Tom Diaper, the captain, for the birds.

'Very sorry, old man,' he replied; 'but they've gone the way of all flesh and feathers. Dead—every one.'

Seeing some scores in cages under the bridge, I asked to whom they belonged. 'Oh,' said Tom, 'those are my birds.'

'Well, yours seem healthy enough; it's a singular thing that all mine should die,' I remarked.

'Ah, quite so,' replied Tom, and then added impressively, 'but mine never do die—they know me too well—*they daren't*.'

I saw it was no use arguing about them, for there is no morality in the matter of parrots on the coast, so I dropped the subject, but invited myself to dinner that evening; taking Mahwo with me after casually telling him of my loss. When we left the *Forcados* about midnight my gig resembled a Maltese bumboat. Mahwo had managed to 'appropriate' thirty-three parrots, a sack of potatoes, about two dozen ducks and fowls, and a young pig; to say nothing of eight or ten assorted bottles of sauces.

I gave a big dinner the next night, and had roast pork at the head of the table. I smiled significantly upon Tom, remarking that 'I hoped he would find it to his taste, as I had had it sent to me from Benin,' as I sent Mahwo with a plateful to him. Like the sailor's parrot he thought a good deal if he did didn't talk much.

At the end of my 'venture' I brought Mahwo to England, but did not keep him more than a few weeks as he suffered so severely from cold. I handed him over to a purser of my acquaintance to take back to his home in Grand Sestros; and some months afterwards, when again at my business on the coast, this time at Bonny, I was one evening on board a mail-steamer that had arrived during the day, when the doctor, addressing me, said, 'Oh, by the way, we've got a friend of yours on board.'

'Indeed,' I replied, 'who's that?'

'Mahwo,' he answered, and passed the word for him. He was very pleased to see me, and said he should like to stay, but had arranged to go south with the ship and back again to the Kroo country.

I remained on board rather late, it being one or two o'clock in the morning when I entered my gig, and throwing myself down amongst the rugs in the stern-sheets, gave the order to 'shove off,' and 'give way.'

I was barely clear of the ship, when I felt something rubbing against my legs, and reaching my hand down found a rice bag full of live poultry. Mahwo was in the bows of the boat keeping a live sheep quiet. The next morning I had English mutton for breakfast, a great improvement on goat's flesh, and Mahwo was again at my elbow.

## THE NEW AND THE OLD.

Oh maiden of ancient romances,
So modest and stately and fair,
Knowing nought of the power of your glances,
Of your loveliness all unaware,
And full of fine words like a poet,
Of tears as of water the sea,
Of love (but you don't seem to know it)
And innocent glee;

I seek you in Smith's and in Mudie's,
But ever I seek you in vain;
Though many a heroine wooed is
And won, it is not in your strain.
And a novelette now is your medium,
Replacing the folio of yore,
Your sentiment's voted a tedium,
Your virtue a bore.

Clarissa, Pamela, resplendent
In virtue, and all of your kin,
Do you blush for your modern descendant,
For Dodo, the Aster, the Twin?
Do you ask of what *genus* this maid is,
(Whether maiden or man do you know?)
In that ultimate region of Hades,
Where dead heroines go.

Yet were you so hemmed and so girt in,
Oh maid of the past, as we think?
Had *you* never the pleasure of flirting?
Did that maidenly eye never wink?
Were your feelings forever the Stoics
They seem: did you always preserve
Your fine words, or when tired of heroics,
To slang did you swerve?

We hear *you* were never exponent
Of theories, a novelist's X,
Your sweet lips were never resonant
With views on law, marriage, and sex.
You were dainty as china of Dresden,
You were pedestalled far from all vice,
Oh maiden, immured and compressed in
A strait Paradise.

At times when the fair but pedantic
New woman proves rather a bore,
More logical she than romantic,
Too prosy by far to adore—
We sigh for that heroine less clever,
That light o'er old folios cast,
Though we know you have left us forever,
Oh maid of the past.

W. H.

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## THE DEFENCE OF THE ALAMO.

By J. L. Hornibrook.

In the history of almost every nation, there are notable instances of heroism and self-sacrifice on the part of those who have risen in defence of their country in the hour of her greatest need. These men, generally drawn from all grades of life, have no claim to be regarded as other than volunteers, pure and simple. They fought from no mercenary motive, nor even for the sake of renown, but from that stern sense of duty which alone can make men heroes in the truest meaning of the word.

Too often these gallant deeds are accorded no suitable recognition. The graves where the heroes lie are sometimes neglected; their memory is not cherished as it ought to be, and even the anniversary of their glorious exploit calls forth no grateful tribute from their fellow-countrymen. And yet if they had not stood, as it were, in the breach, disaster and conquest would inevitably have followed.

Perhaps in no other instance is this more strikingly exemplified than in the case of the brave defenders of the Alamo fort during the Mexican invasion of Texas, in the earlier part of the present century. Never, in the whole of American history, has there been a more glorious achievement, and but rarely one attended with greater results. Yet, what is known of it now? How often is the incident referred to? Few even can tell the name of the indomitable commander, William Barrett Travis.

The story is well worth telling, for it affords another illustration—and a very striking one—of what a mere handful of resolute men can do, even when pitted against overwhelming odds. For us at home it ought to have a special interest, not only on account of the admiration such deeds evoke, no matter by whom they are performed, but from the fact that two, at least, of the immortal leaders of the defence originally hailed from this side of the Atlantic.

Early in the year 1836, a force of two thousand Mexicans, under the fierce and brutal Santa Anna, raided Texas. Houston, the Texan leader, who made a brave stand against the invaders with his gallant little band, was overwhelmed by numbers, and driven back into the interior, losing most of his followers.

Meanwhile, the Mexicans had been reinforced, a fresh body of troops having crossed the frontier, so that Santa Anna could count upon five thousand strong. With this force, composed of men as fierce and lawless as himself, he advanced with all the confidence of a conqueror, pillaging as he went, and carrying destruction into the very heart of the country. He announced his intention of sweeping Texas from end to end.

In this critical state of affairs it became a matter of vital importance to hold the Mexican marauders in check, until Houston had time to rally his scattered followers, and take the field with an adequate force. But how was this to be done? There was no regular organised force available, and to collect a sufficiently strong body of settlers, separated as they were by immense distances, involved a delay which would undoubtedly prove fatal. If Texas was to be saved, prompt and decisive measures must be taken.

It was then that the heroic Travis came to the front with his hundred and forty gallant volunteers. Incredible as it may seem, this devoted little band undertook the almost hopeless task of stemming the Mexican advance. They took possession of the Alamo fort, determined to hold out to the last, even though it ended in their total extermination.

Their example seemed to be contagious. One morning, as they looked out across the plain, they beheld a small body of men advancing towards the fort. The strangers proved to be thirty-two brave fellows from El Refugio, who had come to swell the little garrison. The only other reinforcements that arrived consisted of the renowned David Crockett and two of his

companions. The total strength of the garrison amounted to only one hundred and seventy-five, and against them five thousand Mexicans were advancing!

Still, in spite of these enormous odds, not a man flinched from the deadly struggle that was about to commence. They knew their country's fate was in their hands. With such leaders as Travis, Crockett, and Bowie (of 'bowie-knife' fame), the force shut up in that grimy little fort, small as their numbers were, was one not to be despised.

On the 23d of February the Mexican troops appeared in sight, and halted within range of the fort. The impetuous Santa Anna, confident of his ability to carry the place by storm, lost no time in making the attempt. But he had reckoned without his host; he was promptly repulsed with considerable loss, and deemed it expedient to get out of range of the deadly fire of those Texan riflemen.

Then the struggle commenced in downright earnestness—a struggle perhaps unparalleled in the history of warfare. Five Mexican batteries were placed in position, and began to play upon the doomed fort; but the defenders knew how to handle their rifles, and picked off the gunners with unerring skill. Santa Anna, mad with rage at being baffled by such an inferior force, made more than one desperate assault, but was driven back again and again.

With dogged obstinacy he stuck to the siege, determined to reduce the place at all hazards, and vowing vengeance on the defenders. Day after day the attack was renewed, but still the garrison showed no signs of surrender. Hemmed in on all sides by their fierce assailants, the besieged fought on with unflinching courage. In less than a week their deadly fire had brought down more than one thousand of the enemy. The ground around the fort was literally covered with the slain.

For twelve days the fight went on without interruption, and by the end of that time fully one-third of the whole Mexican force had been killed off. But the brave defenders had not escaped scot-free — far from it. Their ranks were wofully thinned; many were already wounded, and to add to their sufferings, sickness and hunger began to prey upon them.

On the morning of the 6th of March, it was evident that the Mexicans meditated a combined attack upon the fort. Santa Anna had resolved to hurl the whole of his remaining force against it, and carry it by sheer strength of numbers. He knew to what straits the garrison were now reduced, and hoped to succeed where he had so often failed.

Travis rallied his men for the last time. As he ran his eye over the remnant of his gallant band, and then looked out towards the thousands moving across the plain, he knew too well that the crisis had come, and that they could not expect to hold out against this fresh assault.

But no thought of capitulation seemed to have entered his mind; he announced his intention of dying behind the walls, and his comrades were determined to follow his example. In silence they betook themselves to the ramparts, there to await the expected attack.

The fighting that day was more fierce and stubborn than on any previous occasion. The defenders, though so reduced in numbers and weakened by the rigours of the siege, made a desperate stand. The Mexicans first assailed the fort from the south, where their guns had done most damage; but at that point they were met by Travis himself, whose presence always seemed to inspire his comrades with renewed strength and courage. Such was their determination and pluck, they succeeded in repelling the attack, and the Mexicans were once more repulsed with heavy loss.

But the brave defenders were not given much breathing time. The assault was renewed in less than an hour, the Mexican forces now surrounding the fort an every side. They rushed to the attack with fierce yells, and fought with the fury of savages. The struggle was as brief as it was glorious. Not until the greater number of the heroes who remained within the fort had been killed one by one, not until the immortal Travis had fallen dead upon the ramparts, did the assailants succeed in gaining a footing.

Even then, though only a dozen or two of the garrison remained alive, resistance was not at an end. They fought manfully to the last, for most of them had promised their dead leader never to surrender, and they meant to keep their word. The savage conquerors showed no mercy, even to the wounded. Bowie was lying in bed, suffering from sickness and injuries, when they broke in upon him with the intention of despatching him then and there. But they caught a Tartar in the wiry little colonel, who, even in his enfeebled condition, stretched four of his assailants dead on the floor before he was slaughtered.

Crockett was one of the last to die. When they surrounded him, he fought with his clubbed rifle. He and five others — all that remained of the Alamo defenders—stood back to back, and so fierce was their resistance, they actually kept their assailants at bay until the Mexicans were glad to offer them quarter.

They were led out from the fort and brought before Santa Anna. The Mexican leader regarded the heroes with looks of fierce exultation. They must have thought then, when it was too late, that it would have gone better with them if they had shared the fate of their comrades, rather than have fallen into the hands of this tyrant.

Though the brave fellows had been promised quarter, they were led out from his presence and massacred in cold blood. The brutal instincts of the conqueror were not satisfied until he had mutilated the bodies of the slain.

So ended the siege of the Alamo. The noble defenders were exterminated, but Texas was saved, and to them the state owes its freedom and prosperity. Santa Anna marched away north, bent upon revenging his heavy losses. But Houston, who subsequently gained for himself the proud title of 'The Liberator of Texas,' had made good use of his time, and was able to get together a sufficiently strong force to meet the invader.

He encountered the Mexicans at San Jacinto, where a fierce and bloody battle was fought. The invaders were defeated, and Santa Anna

himself taken prisoner. The remnant of his scattered force retreated across the frontier, and Texas was free.

It is strange that the story of the Alamo should have been allowed to lapse into oblivion. Texas, at least, should honour the memory of those heroes, and point with pride to the spot where they made their gallant defence. The ancient Greeks or Romans would almost have deified such men. England, France, or Germany would have raised a national memorial to them. In America they have only one monument. It stands upon the scene of their glorious death, and bears two lines of grand import:

> Thermopylæ had its messenger of defeat:
> The Alamo had none!

## A LOCAL VIEW.

### CHAPTER IV.—THE MISSING WILL.

'Of course,' he observed, drawing a chair to the table, 'it is unnecessary to mention the provisions of the will, except perhaps as a formality. Mrs Dalton and her daughter are the sole beneficiaries, besides the two servants and a few other persons. The value of the residuary estate will be over thirty thousand pounds, the interest of which belongs to Mrs Dalton for life without power of anticipation; and on the death of Mrs Dalton, the trust terminates, the estate wholly passing to Miss Dalton or her heirs. I need not go into details. But the testator,' said Mr Fairfield, drawing the document from the envelope, 'was latterly disturbed by a certain apprehension, and in order to guard against'—— He stopped abruptly, with a start. There was no second will.

Visibly agitated, but without speaking, Mr Fairfield looked in the drawer, and on the floor. Finding nothing, he pulled the bell, and asked for Mr Brock. The clerk soon appeared.

'You are clear,' said the lawyer, fixing his steady eyes upon the clerk, 'that you saw Mr Dalton place the two documents in that drawer?'

'Quite clear, sir,' was the emphatic reply. 'The schoolmaster and I saw the new one executed, attested the same, and when the other witness left the room, Mr Dalton requested my attention to his depositing the envelope in that drawer.'

The vicar had not left many private papers, and these were so methodically arranged as to facilitate a rapid search. It soon was made clear that no trace of the second will existed. For some reason, Mr Dalton must have changed his mind, and destroyed it. The circumstance of his retaining the documents ('for the present,' he had said) instead of giving them to Mr Brock to deposit in the solicitor's strong-box, suggested an idea of indecision quite consistent with the conclusion that he had altered his mind and destroyed the last instrument—leaving the original will as it stood and had stood for several years, bequeathing a life-interest in two-thirds of his estate to his sister-in-law, the remainder to his niece absolutely, with succession to the whole on her mother's death.

A passing thought went through the lawyer's mind, associating the destruction of the will with the vicar's death; but there was nothing for the association to rest upon.

'After all,' he said at length—for, during the foregoing proceedings, the lady and clergyman were left ignorant of the cause of them—'after all, it is not very material. Mr Dalton had lately executed a second will, which he has evidently destroyed. That, however, made no change in the dispositions of the original will, except in postponing until her mother's death the benefit of his niece—a course to which he was impelled by a motive which had great force with him. We need not refer to it further.'

Mr Fairfield was aware of his client's fear of Farmley, and the cause of it.

'Anything that had ever been his wish,' interposed Mrs Dalton, 'must be sacred to my daughter and me.'

'But there is no obligation now,' the lawyer objected; 'the latter will does not exist.'

'There is no obligation upon you and me, as trustees,' said the clergyman, who sympathised with Mrs Dalton's feeling. 'But with Mrs Dalton and her daughter it is different. Would there be any objection to informing her? The matter is for Mrs Dalton's ears only,' he added, rising to withdraw.

'No, Mr Everard,' Mrs Dalton objected; 'do not go. You were his friend—and you are our friend, too, in accepting the burden of this trust with Mr Fairfield.'

'Since you both wish it,' said the lawyer, 'I will mention that the second will altered the dispositions of the first in regard to Miss Dalton with the view of preventing her becoming the wife of Mr Seth Farmley's son. Of course, why he altered his decision, I do not know. His retaining the two wills here, instead of sending them back to me at once, seems to indicate some uncertainty of mind.'

The theory was sufficiently plausible, and suggested an idea to the clergyman in possible explanation.

'Perhaps the intelligence that young Farmley had abandoned his escapade in foreign ports so soon, and was returning to England, made the vicar shrink from doing him a possible injustice. I know how sensitive a conscience he had.'

'Ay, that may have been,' observed the lawyer indifferently. 'I had not known young Farmley was on his way back. But Miss Dalton's welfare may be safely left in her mother's hands—a reflection which I surmise would influence Mr Dalton even more than the one you suggest.'

Even Mrs Dalton herself felt that this conjecture was nearer to the truth—it was so like the good vicar to shrink from leaving an ungenerous memory after him, even from the most praiseworthy motive.

There the matter was allowed to drop.

A carriage was waiting at the gate to take Mrs Dalton and her daughter home. In walking down the little path, the latter turned her head, either to look again at the spot where her uncle lay, or at Dr Maitland, who was still there. It was a momentary impulse. The young man saw it and hastened to hand them into the carriage. He would not at the moment have held Mary Dalton's fingers an instant

longer than was necessary, but, unconsciously, the girl held his until she was seated. And she gave him a sad and earnest look as the carriage drove away, which was more than he had ever before received from her, Mother and daughter saw him slowly return to see the last touches given to his friend's grave.

The simple action filled Mrs Dalton's eyes with tears. She had long ceased, in the preoccupations of wifehood and widowhood, to revert to the small romance of her maiden-time; but the curtain was suddenly lifted now, and she saw that early love as it had never before appeared to her. Tears silently coursed down her face, of grateful remembrance of the tender and reverent loyalty which had lasted to the end. And the curious and unconscious thought passed through her mind, that the stranger still lingering at his grave—stranger as compared with them—deserved better of the dead than they did.

'Mary,' she said softly, 'if his spirit can return, it is—it is nearer, at this moment, to Dr Maitland than to us!'

'Yes, mamma,' was the quick, eager answer—'oh yes, yes!'

The unexpected enthusiasm of the girl's words, the sparkle of her eyes, and the colour for an instant suppressing the sadness of her face, were an irresistible prompting to the mother to take advantage while the heart was warm.

'And if—if he can see us—and know everything, Mary, should we not think how we can best please him—how we can do what he would most wish?'

'Mamma, mamma,' she answered, laying her face on her mother's shoulder, 'I know what you mean. I would have promised—last Saturday, but the messenger just came. We must wait a little now; but it shall be, all the same, when he asks me.'

Mrs Dalton kissed her daughter, and felt happier. The recollection of that passing fear of the late vicar, embodied in the destroyed will, was hovering about her. There was no fear now, and she piously prayed he might know it.

A violent outbreak of scarlet fever in the poorer quarter of Croham, and adjoining Crownley, whose outer fringe was touched by the contagion, caused Dr Maitland to second the advice of the trustees, that Mrs Dalton and her daughter should go away for a while to the sea-side. They went to the north coast of Kent, and in the quiet village of Herne Bay they spent two months. The doctor, often thinking of them amongst his many preoccupations, was busy fighting the epidemic at home; at the sea-side, mischief was busy working a catastrophe which he was powerless to prevent.

A few days after the departure of Mrs Dalton and her daughter, a friendly and somewhat shy little letter came to Dr Maitland from the latter (it was the first she had ever written to him, and was written with a certain consciousness that, maiden-like, she was afraid of betraying), asking him to send her certain books from home which he knew of, and adding a few lines about her mother and herself. That was all, but it was very pleasant to the young man; and the letter, deposited in an inner pocket, made his heart more sympathetic with his patients during the day. He sent the books, and told her all the news of the short interval since their departure, and slept very happily after his day's work.

Next morning he received his first awakening. Another letter from Herne Bay was on his breakfast-table.

'Dear Doctor Maitland—Mr Fairfield writes to inquire as to the disposal of the books at the vicarage. I have referred him to you to select those which you think we would like to keep for ourselves; of the remainder, we wish Mr Everard and Mr Fairfield to choose such as they would themselves like to have as souvenirs, excepting any volumes which you may desire to have for your own shelf.

'This is a very pretty and quiet place, and we like it very much.—With kindest regards, yours sincerely, Agnes Dalton.

'*P.S.*—I suppose Mary mentioned to you that Frederick Farmley has returned. He is staying here, and meets us every day.'

Mary had not mentioned the fact. The doctor drew an uneasy breath and asked himself, Why? In a moment he shook the ungenerous feeling from him. Mary Dalton was incapable of deliberate deception, even by silence. When writing to Dr Maitland she had not been thinking of young Farmley—which only showed how small a place, even as a returned prodigal, he occupied now in the girl's interest. The doctor saw no concealed warning in the mother's postscript; and waited to realise that generosity in love, at a certain critical point in the tide, is folly.

Dr Maitland would have dismissed the matter of young Farmley wholly from his mind had not the young man been brought before him in the course of the day in a new and, in truth, more alarming light. The character of a son of Seth Farmley would have required many aids foreign to its paternal source to win general confidence, and it had wanted most of these; and his late trip abroad had not strengthened his social position in that respect. This knowledge made it easier for Dr Maitland to disregard the young man as a rival now to be feared, though he would have wished to be able to keep Mary Dalton from his contact. But on this particular day he discovered what had never before been suspected—namely, that Frederick Farmley had virtues which he was very careful to conceal.

Amongst the doctor's patients was one of the children of Brock, the confidential clerk of Mr Fairfield. This was Tuesday, and the preceding day he had remarked Mrs Brock say that her husband had been away since Saturday. His return after so short an absence was not enough to account for the look of pleasure in the wife's face to-day.

'I suppose you have heard, Dr Maitland, of Mr Fred Farmley's return?' Mrs Brock said, as though communicating a piece of good news.

'Yes: he has not been long away, Mrs Brock,' he remarked, writing a prescription.

'My husband has been to Herne Bay to see

him. He never told me where he was going; but, of course, he would go to the end of the kingdom to see Mr Fred again!'

'Why—of course?' Dr Maitland asked curiously.

'Ah, doctor,' she answered, a warm colour rising in her face, 'just before Mr Fred went away, when he wanted all the money his father allowed him, one of his last acts was to put his hand in his pocket and pay a debt that had hung like lead round my husband's neck for four years. It was eighty pounds; and the generous-hearted young man did not think an instant about it, and would listen to no refusal. I declare to you, doctor, my husband broke into tears in telling me of it afterwards. Good reason he had to be the first, if he could, to welcome back Mr Fred. No one ever knows the kind of heart a young man may carry under a careless outside.'

'Very true,' said the doctor thoughtfully.

'And I don't think it's ungrateful to say it,' she added. 'Mr Fred must have got his heart from his mother.'

'I think we get most of our best qualities from our mothers, Mrs Brock.'

'Next week, when Annie is better, we are all going down for ten days—I mean the children and I—to Herne Bay. It will do me good to have an opportunity of thanking Mr Fred myself, because I—I don't think my husband knows how to do it half as well as he ought.'

'Indeed, Mrs Brock, if you have an opportunity of thanking the young gentleman,' said the doctor, smiling, 'he will have no reason to doubt the sincerity of your gratitude.'

The fervid feeling of the poor woman came back to Dr Maitland in another way after he left the house and was on his way home on the completion of his fatiguing rounds. The effect of that story upon Mary Dalton, if the woman had an occasion of telling it to the girl, was a contingency not to be regarded without uneasiness. It was just the breath to fan the embers (perhaps still warm) of her former feelings for young Farmley. The situation was one of danger; but what could the doctor do? Tied to his patients, respectful of her recent grief, Maitland was powerless to move. And his reticence was the other's opportunity.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE GARDENER-KINGS.

By W. St Chad Boscawen.

The reader who has followed during the last few years the course of Oriental research, must have become fairly accustomed to surprises. Each year the spade of the explorer or the skill of the decipherer seems to bring to light some new and astonishing find, enlarging and extending, often into an undreamt-of antiquity our knowledge of the past. Generally speaking, the result of these discoveries has been a great retrospective enlargement of our knowledge; but there are cases in which the reverse has taken place, and the most striking of these has been in the case of the great 'Celestial Empire.' Chinese historians had, with unblushing effrontery, claimed for their civilisation an antiquity ranging many thousands of years before the Christian era. Oriental research, with its cool analytical acumen, has shattered this fabric of mandarin tradition, and the civilisation of China is now reduced to its proper position. It may be briefly described as being the oldest civilisation in existence, but not in history. The isolated position of the Celestial Empire, the unbending conservatism of its officials, and the hatred of the foreign barbarian, had all combined to give to its civilisation an artificial veneer of antiquity. Research, however, showed that these claims were in no way justified, and that even the great culture of the Flowery Land had a beginning, and that a very simple one.

It was not in the writings of Confucius or his school, the severely classical school, that the traditions of the childhood of the Empire were to be found. The great philosopher of Lû severely edited all that was mythical or from traditional sources. In the Taoist school, however, myth and tradition were less severely excluded, and it is from them that the folklore of the beginnings of China is to be gathered—and the tale is a simple one.

In about the twenty-third century before the Christian era, a body of tribes called the Bak families—formerly called the 'Hundred Families'—entered China, coming from the south-west. They were under leaders who had considerable knowledge of the elements of civilisation—far in advance of that of the aboriginal population of the Chinese Empire. They brought with them a system of writing which could not have been invented in China, and which, from its primitive forms, was manifestly derived from a cuneiform system of writing. They came, having traversed Central Asia, under organised leaders, and bringing with them many important innovations, the result of long contact with the great civilisations of South-western Asia, in the Tigro-Euphrates Valley, and in the mountains of Luristan, the seat of the ancient Elamite kingdom. The evidence of the non-Chinese origin of the civilisation of the Celestial Empire had accumulated to a great extent before any solution was afforded; but at last an explanation was forthcoming, which is rapidly becoming more and more clear. This discovery—undoubtedly one of the most important of modern times—was chiefly due to the late Dr Terrien de Lacouperie, Professor of Indo-Chinese in University College, London, who was the first to show an undoubted connection between the elements of civilisation introduced into China by the Bak tribes, or the so-called Hundred Families, and the traditions and culture of South-western Asia.

The Bak tribes entered North-west China about the middle of the twenty-third century before our era, under the leadership of a personage named Nai-Hwang-ti, a name which in its ancient form was Nakhunte. This name is exactly the same as that of the great Elamite god and hero, Nakhunti or Nakhundi, whose name is an element of so many of the kings of Elam down to the seventh century before Christ. Of this leader there are many traditions, which contain curious echoes of the traditions of the old home. He was a native of Shoden, which recalls the old Akkadian name Suedin, given to

the plain between the Elamite Mountains and the Tigris; while one name of his followers was that of Ketsa, evidently a corruption of Kasti, 'the people of the bows,' an extremely ancient name of the people of Elam. Those people of the land of 'the bow' are represented on the oldest known Babylonian monument, the 'Stela of the Vultures' in the Louvre, which carries us back to an antiquity of at least 4000 B.C. Indeed, the bow seems always to have been the token of the people of Elam, as indicated in the words of the prophet Jeremiah (xlix. 35), where he refers to 'the bow of Elam.' According to the legends of Nakhunti in China, in his reign all the generations of Shen-nung—a certain semi-mythic ruler—were dead, and his ministers oppressed the Bak tribes, who at last revolted under Nakhunti. This last statement is most important, as it brings into the field another interesting legend which these early civilisers of China must have learned in their mountain home in the highlands of South-western Asia.

Among the legends which the Bak tribes brought with them into China was one of a certain Shen-nung, the 'Imperial husbandman.' This primitive hero 'did not know his father; but he belonged to the family of Kam, "the long-robed." His mother was of the family of the rulers of Anteng, and her name, Nhemti. He was born at Tamdan, and grew up near the Kam River. He received the teachings of a sage named Oho, and became known by the names of Ukut or Eket, and of Letsam, places which he inhabited for a time. He established himself in Tchen, and afterwards at Kohbut, but the people of Sosha rebelled against him; he turned his arms against them and defeated them. He built the city of Utuk, and died at the age of 120 years.' This is a legend almost every detail of which is to be found in the legends and history of the earliest of the Semitic kings of Chaldæa.

During the excavations at Aboo-Hubba—the site of the ancient city of Sippara (the Sepharvaim of the Bible)—there was discovered in the lower strata of the excavations a small mace-head, bearing the inscription, 'Sargani, King of the City, King of Agade, to the Sungod in the city of Sippara he gave.' In a cylinder inscription of Nabonidus (555 B.C.), the last of the Babylonian kings, who was of a very archæological turn, we are told that he found in the temple of the Sungod the memorial stone of Naram Sin, the son of Sargon, which no one had seen for the long period of 3200 years. This would give to the reign of Sargon the remote antiquity of from 3750-3800 B.C. years. Sargon was, however, no mythical monarch, although the remote antiquity of his reign had caused his birth and deeds to be clothed with a certain mythical glamour. The recent explorations at Nipur, in Babylonia, by the American expedition under Dr Peters of the University of Pennsylvania, have brought to light several inscriptions both of Sargon and his son. The inscriptions of the former read, 'To Mullil (the ghost god), the Great Lord, Sargon, the King of the City, the Great King of Agade, Builder of the Temple, the House of Mullil in Nipur;' so that we have undoubtedly a real historical monarch.

There is, however, a remarkable legend with regard to this king. It is inscribed upon a terra-cotta tablet found at Nineveh, and now in the collection of the British Museum. It reads: 'I am Sargon, the Mighty King, the King of Agati (Akkad). My Mother was a Princess; my Father I knew not; the brother of my Father dwelt in the Mountains. In the City of Atzupirani (outlet of two streams), which is on the Banks of the Euphrates, the Princess, my Mother conceived me; in a Secret Place she brought me Forth. She placed me in a Basket of Reeds, with Bitumen my exit she closed. She gave me to the river, which drowned me not. The river carried me along, to Akki the Irrigator it brought me. Akki the Irrigator, in the Goodness of his Heart, lifted me up; Akki the Irrigator as his own Son brought me up; Akki the Irrigator made me his Gardener; and in my Agriculture, Istar the Goddess loved me.'

Here we have a legend which is almost the same as that of Shen-nung. The Chinese name is but a corruption of the Babylonian one. Each hero knows not his father; each is born in secret near the river. The mother of Shen-nung was of the family of Anteng; Sargon's brother dwelt in the mountains—that is, in the land of Anzan, or North Elam. The Chaldæan sage is rescued by the Irrigator Akki, who teaches him the profession of gardener; while the Chinese hero receives the instructions of Ohi, and finally rules in the city of Eket, which resembles exactly the Agade or Akkad of the Babylonian inscriptions. The name of the Chinese hero is associated with two other cities —Letsam—where they dwelt for a time—and Uluk. The former is manifestly a corruption of Larsam or Larsa, the southern Heliopolis of Chaldæa; the latter, Unug or Unuk, the Uruk or Erech—the old capital of Chaldæa, which may have been built by Sargon. With such a number of almost identical names as these, it seems impossible to doubt the similarity of origin of the two legends.

We have, however, other inscriptions of the hero of Chaldæa which enable us to carry the identifications even farther. In one of these records we read that he conquered the land of Magan—that is, the peninsula of Sinai, which is probably the Tchen or Sin of the Chinese legend; and its preservation is of great interest, as this was a conquest of which the Chaldæan king was most proud.

Sargon also carried out important campaigns, as did also his successors, Naram-Sin and Alusarsid, in the land of Anzan or Elam, and conquered a district called Apir or Apirak, which is obviously the Khapir or Khalpirti of the Median inscriptions in the vicinity of Shushan. This name is evidently preserved in the Kohbut of the Chinese legend, especially when we see it followed by the statement: 'But the people of Sohsha rebelled against his orders.' In an inscription of Kurigalsu, King of Chaldæa, we have the record of his bringing back (1400 B.C.) a talisman which had been taken away (2285 B.C.) by the Elamite King Kudur-Nakhunti; and on it he wrote the inscription: 'Kurigalss, King of Karduniyas (Babylonia), the palace of the city of Shasha of Elam, when he had taken

(this) to Belit for his life he dedicated.' The Shasha of the inscriptions, the Sohsha of the Chinese, and the ancient Shushan, are certainly one and the same city. The age of Shen-nung is also curiously exactly two Chaldæan *sossi*, or periods of sixty years. Taking all this accumulation of evidence together, there can exist no doubt of the identity of the two stories; the legend of Shen-nung, the royal gardener, which the Bak tribes brought with them to China in the twenty-third century, was one which they had learned in the mountain home on the borders of Elam.

As it was from Shen-nung that the Emperors of China get their title of Hwan-nung, or 'Imperial husbandman,' so it was from Sargon that the Babylonian Kings got their titles of 'the Gardener of Babylon,' or 'the Great Gardener.' We have two examples of this title—one in an inscription of Bur Sin—about 1500 B.C., who claims the title of 'the Great Gardener of Ur, who the Holy Tree of Eridu restored;' and the other the great Nebuchadnezzar (606 B.C.), who claims the title of 'the Gardener of Babylon.'

So then we see how research in the East and the Far East have helped to bring together the most ancient civilisations of the world, and to find in the legends of the Gardener-Kings a common meeting-ground of the traditions of China and Chaldæa.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

### CHAPTER XXIV.

I SHOULD very much like to tell you exactly what Robert said, and what Frances said, and how he played the wooer, and how she accepted the wooing. I cannot, however, for the very sufficient reason that I have not been told, by either, what passed between them. It is enough that Frances accepted as her husband this man of the people, who will remain a man of the people though he has joined a party and now fights under the banner of his party, and is party champion. He will remain a man of the people, working for them in legislation so far as laws can help, which is not much; by teaching; by addresses; by writing. He can never cast off the early conditions of his life, nor get rid of the early impulses, nor forget the nobler ambitions. What was it that Frances said? The lesser nature puts the reward first, and the work second; the nobler nature puts the work first, and the reward second. There lies before him, unless accident prevents, a long and a successful career; the labours of the future may wear him out, though this kind of work seems to prolong life and strength; he will have beside him a woman as strong as himself in her way; full of sympathy with his work; full of admiration for his strength; a woman who loves him all the more, perhaps, because he needs, not so much as some men do, the support and encouragement of love. I think of them, not as those who cling together like the columns of a cathedral aisle, but as those who stand together side by side; but the man looks out upon the world, and the woman looks up towards the man.

And now there only remains to tell you about the diamonds.

Robert brought her down to Wapping. She came to tea with us—the homely bourgeois five o'clock meal which Isabel prepared, just as she had prepared the little banquet for my first visit. I laughed when I saw once more this noble spread; the plate of ham in slices, the plate of shrimps, the cakes—half-a-dozen kinds of cake—the biscuits, the muffins, the buttered toast, the thin bread and butter. Isabel saw nothing to laugh at. Nor, indeed, was there. Tea, considered as a meal, is most properly graced by these delightful accompaniments. And it is the principal meal, the most social meal of the greater part of our people, and the greater part of the American people.

To this feast, then, came the Lady Frances. She came dressed like a queen, with wonderful lace and embroidery. She looked like a queen, gracious and kindly. Isabel had put on a plain white dress. She had never looked better, my dainty mistress, than when she stood, so simple and so sweet, beside that regal woman.

'George has told me about you,' said Frances, taking Isabel's hand; 'I have been wanting to make your acquaintance. My dear, we shall be cousins: we must be great friends.' So she stooped and kissed her, and I could see that she was pleased with my simple maid of Wapping Old Stairs.

Then the Captain was presented, and behaved as an honest old sailor should: full of admiration of so much beauty and grandeur, and not afraid.

Frances took off her hat, and we all sat down to tea, and were cheerful. The talking was conducted chiefly by Frances and myself. Robert sat silent, preoccupied. Only from time to time he lifted his eyes and rested them for a moment on Frances, with a softer light in them than I had ever seen before. Love doth tame speedily the most masterful of men.

Tea despatched, I took Frances over the way to see the Yard. I thought that Robert would perhaps like to say something to Isabel. What he did say was very simple and straightforward. He said, quite meekly, in the presence of the Captain: 'Isabel, I thank you for the release. You have forgiven me, I am sure, for what was meant for the best—a great mistake—a great cruelty—to you, as now I understand.'

'Oh! yes,' she said, 'it was impossible. Why did you not let me know before? But there is nothing to forgive. The gratitude remains, Robert, and the obligation—and you will be very happy, I am sure.'

'Believe me, Isabel,' he replied humbly. 'I could not be happy unless I was sure you were happy too, in the same way.'

As for me, Frances spoke very gracious words. 'George,' she said, not pretending in the least to be interested in the ribs of a barge which we were building—yet a beautiful barge—'you have brought me to this place of chips and shavings for no other purpose than merely to ask me what I think of her. Well, she seems a sweet and lovely girl—and she loves you, George. I saw it in her eyes and in her voice.

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What do you chiefly desire of life, George? Love and tranquillity, is it not?'

'Indeed, Frances, there seems nothing better to desire.'

'Then you will have the desire of your heart. But, George, if you have sons, remember that you have an hereditary title. Rank has its uses, and yours may be useful to them. Perhaps your sons may aspire. I can perfectly understand how Robert came to make so great a mistake — who could bear to think of that delicate creature turned out upon the world?— and I understand why Robert desired his release; and I understand, as well, my dear George, that your Isabel will make you perfectly happy.'

Looking at this little speech as it is written down in cold language, I perceive that it has a suspicion of condescension in it, as if Isabel was good enough for me, and not good enough for Robert. But one cannot convey the manner of the words, which was wholly sweet and sisterly.

So she glanced round the shed, and stepped to the edge of the quay, and looked up and down the river.

'It is all impossible, George,' she said. 'I cannot understand how Robert came out of such a place, or how you could go into it. Why, it is nothing more than a kind of carpenter's shop.'

'By your leave, Frances, a boat-builder's yard. Chips and chunks and shavings belong to the craft of carpenter, it is true, but to that of boat-builder as well.'

'Well, I am glad that Robert is out of it. I confess, my dear George, that I could not live down here, nor can I promise to come here often—perhaps never again. All this side of life, with the warehouses, the ships, the wharves, the wagons, seems to me to belong to the Service. The place is kitchen, scullery, pantry, cellars. You and I were born in the class that is served, not in the Service. I do not want so much as to see the kitchen. Yet you—well, I say no more. Curiosity brought you here; an interesting couple made you stay here; love has chained you here. Let us go back to the others.'

The moment had arrived for my surprise, which I had arranged with the greatest care, so as to produce a fine dramatic effect. I took the party into the study. On the rug before the fireplace stood old John Burnikel's sea-chest, hidden by a table-cover. No one in the house, except Isabel, knew what I was doing. And even Isabel did not know why I did it.

'This, Frances,' I said, 'is Robert's study. In this room he learned all he knows.'

'It is a beautiful old room. I had no idea that there could be among these warehouses so lovely a house. This wainscoting is worthy of any house, however fine.— So this was your room, Robert, was it?'

'This was my room.—What have you got on the floor, George?'

'You shall see directly, as soon as Frances has done admiring the walls.—Sit down, Frances; sit down, Isabel. I am going to show you something of interest.—Now, Robert, remember the last talk we had. We spoke of obstacles, did we not? In the way of a certain event of some importance to you.'

'Yes, we did.'

'I told you that the first obstacle was waiting for your wish to be expressed. Is that obstacle removed?'

'It is.'

'The second obstacle was a difference in birth and social position which cannot be removed, but may be trampled upon.'

'We have trampled upon it,' said Frances, for her lover looked at her. 'Robert has forgotten that there ever existed this apparent, not real, obstacle.'

'There remains the third obstacle. Shall I remind you of what you said?'

'I said that it would choke me to live upon my wife's money.'

'And now you say?'

'Let me say it for him.' Frances rose, and placed her hand upon his shoulder. Yes, I am quite right; she will not cling to her husband, she will stand beside him—the Queen Consort. 'Robert forgot that wealth is nothing. It can give me no more than a house, and servants, and carriages. It is of no other use to me. But it may be of use to Robert, and he takes it—with me. It is a part of me; he takes me altogether, just as I am. The woman herself with her heart and her soul, and her thoughts, and her abilities, if she has any, and with the woman her rank, and her family, and her wealth.—Is that so, Robert?'

'It is so, Frances,' he replied humbly.

'Wealth may be useful to such a man as Robert. It is good for such a man to have a well-appointed house. Freedom from money anxieties with some men is almost a necessity. —Do you not agree, Robert?'

'You have made me understand,' he said. 'I thought I was asserting my independence when I was only betraying narrow prejudice. That you—you should give me money shames me no more now than that you should give me yourself, and that will shame me always.' Oh, the change in Robert that he should say this!

'You know, you two,' Frances went on, 'I want Robert to become a great man. It is his ambition, and it is mine as well. I want him to become greater—far greater—than he allows himself to dream. I want him to be such a leader of men as has not been seen for many a century in this country: he must never be accused of mean or sordid motives: never be led aside by temptations which ruin smaller men. Oh! be certain that he will become what I think he may become. I would give not only all my heart, and all my soul, and all my strength — and all my wealth — which is nothing—but I would give my very life—my heart's blood—at this moment.' She laid her hand upon his shoulder, he stooped and kissed her forehead: and in his softened eye I saw—oh! the wonder of it—actually, a tear! In Robert's eyes, a tear! This foolish love makes school-girls of us all. And Frances was splendid—she was splendid.

'Well,' I said, after a moment, 'things being as they are, I am inclined to stop. However, we must carry this thing through to the end. I understand, Robert, that you no longer desire that kind of equality of which we spoke the other day.'

'No longer,' he replied. 'I would rather owe everything to—Frances.' It was quite pretty to notice how he dropped his voice at the very mention of her name. 'Everything,' he repeated.

'I am truly sorry, Robert,' I continued, 'to disturb an arrangement which is so beautiful. But when I told you that the obstacle of comparative income was removed, I meant more than its removal by Frances, though of that I was certain. I meant, my cousin, that I was able to place in your hands a fortune which would go far at least to equalise things.'

'What do you mean?' asked Robert.

'I am now going to show you. In fact, Robert, I am about to restore to you, as the sole and rightful heir, the Family Fortune.'

'The Family Fortune? What is that?'

'Oh! Basest of Burnikels! He has forgotten the lost bag of jewels.'

With these words I removed the tablecloth and exposed the sea-chest.

'The jewels? Is it possible that you have found them?'

'It is more than possible.—Isabel, dear child, help me to take out the contents of the chest.'

We took out everything: the sextant; the Indian things; the mummified flying-fish; the odds and ends; and laid them on the floor.

'I have done that a hundred times,' said Robert.

'What is the bag of jewels?' asked Frances.

'It is a bag full of the most lovely, precious stones,' I told her. 'Our great-great-uncle, John Burnikel, Master Mariner, possessed this treasure. How he got it I do not know. That is, a knowledge of the truth came to me in a dream, and I do know. Some day I will tell you. He used to say himself that an Indian Rajah, presumably the Great Mogul of Delhi, took him into his treasury, bade him fill his pockets with jewels in return for some signal services rendered to the Mogullian Dynasty. Well, he died, and his nephews could not find that bag anywhere, and nobody has ever been able to find it—until now. It was reserved for me to make this discovery.—Is the box quite empty, Isabel? One moment.—The nephews quarrelled over the loss, Frances; they fought, I believe; they dissolved partnership; one was my great-grandfather, and the other was Robert's. That's all the history. Now, you will observe that the box with all that it contains belongs to Robert. His great-grandfather bought or took over the old mariner's furniture. His own father bequeathed it to him. The box with all its contents, therefore, without any possible doubt or dispute, is his own.—Now then—you've got nothing to say to that, I suppose, Robert.'

'I suppose not. But why so fierce?'

'Very good. I thought you might begin advancing absurd objections about other people's imaginary rights. It's all yours. And now look at the box.—Do you see any possible hiding-place in it, Frances? See. It is empty; the sides are papered. I hold it up and turn it over. There are two compartments; both of the same depth; is there any possibility of a hiding-place?'

'I can see none,' said Frances, 'but of course there must be. You are like a conjurer before he shows his trick. Why don't you turn up your sleeves, and assure us that there is no deception?'

'What do you think, Robert?'

'I have thought of a false bottom, and I have measured. I used to think that there is no possibility of a hiding-place. But I am now convinced that there must be, otherwise you would not talk in this way.'

'Well, look along the lower line of the pattern at the back—the thick dark line—can you discern nothing?'

'No, no. Yet, there seems to be a line not in the paper. What is that?'

'You shall see.' So I knelt down, opened my knife and slowly passed it along the almost invisible junction of the shutter or lid of which you have heard. This widened the opening.

'There is a secret pocket, after all!' cried Robert.

'There is. This is a lid with a spring which keeps it tightly pressed. You do not look for hinges at the bottom of the box, and you do not observe the line of juncture. I think it is one of the most admirable hiding-places I ever saw, and I have seen a good many. Now, Robert, I pull open this lid; you see this side of the chest is made of wood much thicker than the other side; also if you look at the outside, you will observe that it widens at the bottom. The widening is designed by the cabinet-maker who made this excellent box, for in it he has cut out a narrow little cupboard in which anything could be hidden, and where nothing could be suspected. In this cupboard'—I pulled open the lid—'look, Robert, lies the bag.'

I took out the bag. It was, as I have told you, more like one of those long round things which they lay on the windows in order to keep out the draught; I gave it to Robert. 'There is your fortune, Robert; you are the heir to the family fortune. It is yours and yours only.'

He received the bag with the awkwardness of one who has the most unexpected thing in the world sprung upon him.

'Pour out the contents, man,' I said. 'Let us see your treasure.'

He poured out the glittering contents on the table. There they were—diamond, ruby, emerald, turquoise, pearl, opal, chalcedony, and the rest; of all sizes from a seed pearl to a ruby as big as a pigeon's egg; diamonds worth thousands; pearls worth the ransom of an earl.

'Oh, heavens!' cried Frances. 'What are we to do with all these things?'

'They are yours,' said Robert. 'Let me give them all to you.'

'No, they are your fortune. They are yours. Stay, I will take them, Robert, in case, at any time, you may want something—I know not what. Oh! after all these years that you should find them, George. Oh! but you should have some of them.'

'Take half of them, George.'

'No,' I said. 'Your house is the best place for them, Frances. We will have none of them. Put all back in the bag; so.' I tied the mouth. 'Take it home with you, Frances.

In the High Street of Wapping-on-the-Wall we want no diamonds, do we, Isabel?'

So she consented, and took the jewels, greatly marvelling. It was time for them to go. So we said farewell.

'We shall meet seldom, Frances,' I said. 'We are setting off along roads that never meet. Perhaps in the years to come, we may try to meet, if only to ask each other whether the obscure and tranquil life is better than the never-ending struggle in your arena.'

So the two women kissed with tears, and Robert gave me his hand, and they left me down at Wapping-on-the-Wall—a Master Craftsman—with Isabel.

THE END.

## ECCENTRIC TESTATORS.

THERE is no one more capable of giving his friends a really genuine surprise than the eccentric testator. Paul Scarron, who bequeathed to his wife permission to marry again, to the Academy power to alter the French language, and to Pierre Corneille five hundred pounds of patience, was probably the most farcical of such will makers; but the race is a hardy one, and never wholly dies out. It is confined to no particular country, age, or condition of life, and there appear to be as many curious wills made nowadays as ever before.

What, for instance, could be more extraordinary in its way than the following clause in the will of a Frenchman who died recently: 'I request that my body be delivered to the Paris Gas Company for the purpose of being placed in a retort. I always used my mental power for the enlightenment of the public, and I desire that my body be used to enlighten the people after my death.'

Another Frenchman who was an enthusiastic card-player bequeathed to certain of his card-playing associates a legacy of a hundred pounds apiece on condition that, after placing a pack of cards in his coffin with his body, they bore him to the grave and stopped on the way to drink a glass of wine at a small tavern where he had spent 'so many agreeable evenings at piquet.

Still more odd, if not altogether unique, was the whim of a wealthy old bachelor who, having endured much from 'attempts made by my family to put me under the yoke of matrimony,' conceived and nursed such an antipathy to the fair sex as to impose upon his executors the duty of carrying out perhaps the most ungallant provision ever contained in a will. 'I beg,' so it ran, 'that my executors will see that I am buried where there is no woman interred either to the right or to the left of me. Should this not be practicable in the ordinary course of things, I direct that they purchase three graves and bury me in the middle one of the three, leaving the two others unoccupied.'

Cremation is no longer a novelty; but a German who was a member of an angling club in New York, in his will requested his fellow-anglers, after cremating his body, to throw his ashes into the sea on the Romer shoals of the bay of New York, where they had often fished together. The will was carried out to the letter, and whether or not the ashes had attracted the fish cannot be known, but when the anglers next threw out their lines where they had sprinkled the ashes of their deceased friend, they certainly made an exceptionally heavy catch.

Some millionaires during their lives appear to enjoy the luxury of preparing at great expense the splendid mausoleums they wish to occupy after death. M. Lalanne, a wealthy Parisian, went to the other extreme. He had a horror of anything like ostentatious funerals, and after bequeathing over a million francs to various public institutions of his native town, he directed that his body would be buried at the cheapest possible rate, in fact, like that of a pauper. A shabby one-horse vehicle carried his remains to the *fosse commune* or common grave, and the cost of the funeral was only six francs or less than five shillings — that being the charge for the cheapest kind of funeral under the French system, where the undertaker's business is a State monopoly.

Men who have followed the hounds have at times desired to be buried in their hunting-dress, but they no longer enjoy a monopoly in this matter. A Welsh lady, who was well known as an eccentric in the vicinity of Llanrug, was recently buried there in accordance with the provisions of her will, which proved to be in keeping with the local estimate of her character. She wished to be buried in her hunting-suit, her shoes and her carriages were to be burnt on the day of her funeral, and all her horses—six in number—varying in value from £60 to £80 a head, were to be shot on the day following the funeral. The remainder of her real and personal property to the value of £90,000 was left to her 'dear husband'—a former farm-labourer on her estate, with whom some years before she had, on her own suggestion, contracted a marriage—provided that he strictly and literally carried out all the orders expressed in her will.

A horror of being buried alive so haunted Mr R——, an American, that on his death recently, he left minute instructions in his will to render such a fate impossible in his case. His body was not to be fastened up in his coffin until thirty days after his funeral, and the vault in which his body was laid was to be kept lighted and its doors left unlocked. Provision was also made to employ two men—trusted employees of the deceased—to guard the entrance, one by day and the other by night.

Tantalising conditions tacked on to legacies appear to have a special charm for some testators. An individual of this sort invited 400 intimate friends to his funeral at eight o'clock on a winter's morning. They were not previously informed, however, that every lady who attended was to have £340, and every gentleman £200 under a provision of the will, and so only twenty-nine presented themselves.

A Yorkshire gentleman left his property to be divided among those of his descendants who were not less than six feet four inches in height; and a Vienna banker made a bequest to his nephew with the stipulation that 'he shall

never, on any occasion, read a newspaper, his favourite occupation.'

The two sons of a certain Mr Henry Budd were doubtless astonished to find that their inheritance of two family estates was made conditional on their never wearing a moustache, to which personal adornment their father had a pet aversion.

While it is easy to surmise the intention of the testator in some of these arbitrary stipulations, others appear to be wholly due to pure caprice. A Russian, who died at Odessa last year, left four millions of roubles to his four nieces, but demanded that, previous to receiving the money, they should work for fifteen months either as chambermaids, washerwomen, or farm-servants; this in his opinion being a salutary discipline, likely to chasten any foolish pride they might be tempted to foster in their minds.

A Brooklyn resident left seventy-one pair of trousers which were to be sold by auction—the executors being required to see that no purchaser of one pair should be allowed to bid for another. A few days after the sale it transpired that one of the purchasers had accidentally discovered ten hundred dollar bills sewn in the waistband, and each of the other purchasers on examining his bargain found himself in equal luck.

One Peter Campbell left a large sum to his son Roger on condition of his abstaining from tobacco. Dr W. F. Cumming, on the other hand, left £600 to the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, in order to provide poor patients, male and female, with snuff and tobacco, giving the following reason for his unusual bequest: 'I know how to feel for the suffering of those who, in addition to the irksomeness of pain and the tedium of confinement, have to endure the privation of what long habit has rendered in a great degree a necessary of life.'

There is, probably, no phase of humour good or ill, and no sentiment grateful or spiteful which has not been illustrated in testamentary documents. Mr William Dunlop devised a legacy to Parson Chevassie 'as a small token of my gratitude for the service he has done the family in taking a sister no man of taste would have,' and to another sister he left an estate because she married a minister 'whom she henpecks.'

William Darley left a shilling to his wife for 'picking my pocket of sixty guineas.' A regular and appreciative reader of a certain journal showed her gratitude in the singular but none the less acceptable legacy of £2000 to the editor who had supplied her with 'many hours of pleasant reading.'

Money is so generally welcome that it is hardly conceivable that a legacy in hard cash should ever be refused. Occasionally, however, owing to the absurdity or hardness of the conditions attached to them, substantial bequests of this kind have been refused. A sum of £200 was left to, and refused by, a gentleman because it was stipulated that he should first walk down the King's Road, Brighton, dressed in female attire.

A maiden lady over fifty, with a strong aversion to all theatrical amusements, was scandalised by being put down for a legacy in the will of a facetious friend, who tacked on the condition that within six months of the testator's death the legatee should obtain an engagement at a London theatre and perform there one whole week.

A wife who henpecks her husband does not always come off so well as in the case already given. A Sussex publican took an odd revenge on a nagging wife whose sharp tongue had given him many a bad quarter of an hour while he lived. On his death she found that to receive any benefit from his will she must walk barefooted to the market-place each time the anniversary of his death repeated itself. Holding a candle in her hand, she was there to read a paper confessing her unseemly behaviour to her husband during his life, and stating that had her tongue been shorter her husband's days would in all probability have been longer. By refusing to comply with these terms she had to be satisfied with £20 a year 'to keep her off the parish.'

The restrictions imposed on widows and other legatees with regard to matrimony are often arbitrary, and sometimes smack of cruelty. A husband, in one case reported recently, left his widow an annual income of £1000, which was to be reduced to £800 in the event of the lady marrying again. Another reduction of £200 was to be made on the birth of the first child of the second marriage, and every additional child was to involve the further loss of £100 a year.

An eccentric uncle bequeathed all his property to six nephews and six nieces on the condition that 'every one of the nephews marries a woman named Antonie, and that every one of the nieces marries a man named Anton.' They are further required to give the Christian name Antonie or Anton to each first-born child according as it happens to be a boy or a girl. The marriage of each nephew and niece is to be celebrated on one of the St Anthony's Days, either January 17th, May 10th, or June 13th, and if, in any instance, this last provision is not complied with before July 1896, half the legacy is in that case thereby forfeited.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Our readers will possibly remember that some months ago an experimental boring at Shakespeare's Cliff, near Dover, proved the presence of coal in that locality, and justified the anticipation which had been formed by geologists, that the great coalfield of Belgium would be found continued on our southern coast. Kent has often been called the 'Garden of England,' so beautiful are its external features, and its inhabitants will find it difficult to realise that beneath its surface lie the necessary elements to convert it into a 'black country.' But they will presently see that this experimental stage has been passed, and the practical one entered upon. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate has been formed, its capital (£200,000) subscribed, a contract entered into for sinking two shafts, and machinery provided for winding 2500 tons per day. These works are to be completed

within the next sixteen months, and we shall then learn the probable extent of the coal beneath the Dover downs. We may feel confident that there will be many who will not be enthusiastic with regard to the success of the enterprise.

For six years a committee, under the auspices of the Society of Antiquaries, has been doing good work in the excavation of the Roman city of Silchester, about ten miles to the south-west of Reading (Berkshire), and their last year's labour has been the most prolific of any, the results having been recently exhibited at the society's rooms in London. About half the area of this British Pompeii, as it has been called, has now been thoroughly examined, and many more years' work will be required before the city has yielded up all its secrets. The committee claim that the exploration of Silchester is the beginning of the history of the civil occupation of Britain by the Romans, and they do so with some justice. One of the most recent finds is a block of wood through which pass two large and perfect lead pipes, with a channel for another pipe in front. There is no doubt whatever that this arrangement is part of a force-pump described by Vitruvius, and is the first example of Roman hydraulic apparatus discovered in this country. We may mention that in order to carry on these most interesting and important researches at Silchester, an expenditure of at least £500 per annum is necessary: it is a work worthy of generous support.

Relics of Roman London are continually being found in the course of excavating for building operations; and quite recently, in Bond Street, a number of water-pipes were unearthed which two thousand years ago were drilled out of solid blocks of bath-stone, and are still in good condition. Beside these fine pipes, which have an internal diameter of ten inches, were found some of the original water-pipes laid by the New River Company. These are simply burnt-out willow trunks, and although they are still intact, are far inferior to the Roman pipes of a date so long anterior to them.

Some four years ago astonishment was excited at the sale by the Admiralty of the *Foudroyant*. The good ship which carried Nelson's flag in 1799, and with which the names of Hardy, Sydney Smith, Warren, and Abercromby were associated, was regarded as a piece of useless lumber, and was sold for the value of the fire-wood she would make. Then one or two gentlemen, with Mr Wheatly Cobb at their head, declared that this should not be; and by dipping pretty deeply into their pockets purchased the old battleship at about three times the price for which the Admiralty sold her. The ship has been refitted in such a manner that were Nelson to see her now he would find no change, such as he would undoubtedly detect in her sister ship *The Victory*. She is fully rigged, and will carry the greater part of her original armament of eighty-eight guns, the refitting having been carried out, under careful supervision, at Erith, on the Thames. In a short time, when the work will be completed, Englishmen will have the opportunity of seeing a line-of-battle ship under sail, a most beautiful object to look upon, and one which will call up many memories of doings which laid the foundation of Britain's proud position of ruler of the seas. Such a sight has not before been possible for nearly a century.

The number of lamp accidents in London have gradually increased from nineteen in the year 1866 to no fewer than four hundred and seventy-three in the year 1895, and it would seem almost certain that unless the legislature steps in, the increase will go on in the same ratio. In all these cases fires have occurred, and in some life has been lost; but according to the evidence of the insurance offices, quite as many small fires occur from lamp accidents, which only come to light through claims for compensation being made—it is fair, therefore, to multiply the figures above given by two. The London County Council, who have been holding an inquiry into this important question, have collected much evidence as to the dangerous character of the cheap lamps used chiefly in poor households. Many of these are made in Germany; but the Germans are far too astute to use them themselves, and the accidents in that country are, therefore, far less than they are in our own. There is no question that the sale of such lamps (those with glass containers are the worst) should be entirely prohibited. It is also recommended that the flash-point of the oil used should be raised from 73 degrees Fahr. to 120 degrees. There are now many excellent safety-lamps made; and with these accident is next to impossible, for if they fall the flame is instantly extinguished. It is of course impossible to prevent persons using dangerous lamps already in their possession, but steps could be taken to insure that no more shall be sold. It is now recommended that the Secretary of State should have power from time to time to issue an order declaring that 'after a certain date it shall be unlawful to make, expose, or offer for sale any lamp or other appliance intended to be used for the burning of mineral oil for purposes of illumination unless it be constructed in accordance with prescribed specifications,' under a penalty of, say £5.

We described in these columns some months ago a process of making guns of leather, which were designed more especially for mountain warfare; but the latest idea is to employ wood-pulp for these weapons, which, on account of its toughness and elasticity, is well calculated to withstand a heavy discharge. The gun has a steel core, and the paper-pulp is moulded round it; a jacketing of wire bound with bars of brass completing the structure. As to the paper-pulp itself, a long-fibred variety is selected, and it is mixed with litharge, wax, tallow, and white-lead, to add to its hardness.

A new use for wood-pulp has been found in the production of artificial silk; and there will shortly be established in Lancashire a factory to begin what in this country at least is quite a new industry, but which has been practised in France for some time with great success. It is even said that the French artificial silk is so like the real article that much of it has

been sold in this country, neither seller nor buyer suspecting that it did not find its origin in the cocoon of the silkworm. By certain chemical processes the pulp is reduced to a syrupy condition, and while in this state is forced through glass tubes having tiny apertures, and as the liquid threads become solid they are wound off on bobbins for the weaver. Wood-silk can be sold at a far lower price than the natural article, and great things are expected from the establishment of the new industry.

The sulphur industry of Sicily is, according to a recent report by the U.S. consul at Catania, in a very unprosperous condition, owing to over-production and low prices. Unfortunately the production cannot very well be reduced, for unless the mines are worked the water in them quickly accumulates, and they are ruined. The demand for sulphur has naturally declined since the powder factories have relinquished 'black' powder in favour of more modern explosives, and the report of great sulphur deposits having been found at Louisiana has also had its share in adding to this Sicilian depression. The mining in Sicily is still carried on by primitive methods, as may be judged when it is stated that the fusing operation has to be postponed until after harvesting the crops, so great is the amount of sulphurous acid which is allowed to escape into the atmosphere.

At the Shoe and Leather Fair recently held in London, a very wonderful sight was the model factory, in which by modern machinery the raw materials were worked up into boots at marvellous speed. From start to finish the hands of the workmen had little to do beyond passing the leather in its various stages through the machines, each machine accomplishing in a few seconds what would cost half-an-hour's hand labour under the old system. The machinery is chiefly of American design, and although it is so complex in design as to defy description, it works all but automatically. The Americans are not only ahead of this country in machine design, but also in the manufacture of leather. This is proved by the curious fact that American bullocks are brought here to be killed, but their hides go back to the States to be made into leather for the English market. Time was, when it took three whole years for a bullock's hide to be converted into leather. Now it is affirmed that the animal may be grazing on Saturday, and its hide turned into serviceable leather by the following Tuesday! The product is probably not so good as that made in the old-fashioned way, but it is not bad.

Mr James Macdonald, of Dundas Street, Edinburgh, has introduced a patent safety oil blast lamp, which will be invaluable to plumbers, coppersmiths, braziers, electrical engineers, and other workers with metals. Its principal purpose is for soldering and making what are called wiped joints, without the danger and dirt inseparable from the use of coal and chauffer. Naphtha or benzoline is used in the lamp, and the liquid is vaporised and applied in the form of a smokeless and intensely hot tongue of flame, by means of a foot bellows. This new tool will be especially valued for plumbers' work on roofs, where the presence of a fire for heating ladle and irons is fraught with so much danger. It may be remembered that only a few years ago the roof of Canterbury Cathedral was partly destroyed by fire, the accident being caused by a plumber's chauffer.

The ravages of the May-beetle, or Cockchafer as it is generally called, are not unknown in this country, where in its mature, winged condition it does mischief to the trees, or in its larval stage it feeds voraciously upon roots of various kinds. But in France its numbers are so much greater that a regular campaign is waged against the creature, and it is destroyed wholesale. This periodical war against the cockchafer is the only way of keeping it in check; and so much is its importance recognised, that in many districts the children are allowed to attend school an hour late, so that they may take part in the hunt. In the district of Meaux, last year, more than thirty-four tons of cockchafers were slain, the product of fifty-one parishes; and in 1892 one hundred and twenty tons were collected in one hundred and twenty-four parishes. The villagers earn about one halfpenny for every pound of cockchafers they collect, and the bodies of the insects are mixed with quicklime and turned into a valuable manure.

From experiments which we have recently seen, we should judge that the Röntgen X-rays will afford a very valuable aid to naturalists in the study of small animal structures, especially those of fishes. The skeleton is pictured with marvellous accuracy of detail without dissection, and in many cases the forms of various organs can be traced. Thus, in the case of those fishes which are furnished with an air-bladder, to enable them to rise or sink in the water, this organ is invariably most distinctly shown. The dissection of a fish and the setting up of its skeleton is a work of art of which few naturalists are capable, and this new and wonderful method of picturing hidden things will often render such work unnecessary.

During the French Revolution of 1798, the coinage became to some extent degraded, and 'white' sous were issued, coins of a peculiar golden yellow colour, the exact composition of which was a mystery; they were probably made of any mixture of metals which were readily available. Mr Hartley, F.R.S., has recently analysed one of these 'white' sous, and the method he adopted was a most ingenious one, and may possibly have many other applications, for it has the peculiar merit of not robbing or in the slightest way injuring the object under examination. By means of an induction coil the operator obtains a spark discharge direct from the coin or other metallic object to be examined, and photographs the spectrum shown by the spark. By afterwards comparing this photograph with a series of quantitative spectra, in which solutions of known strength yield spectra with a certain number of lines of definite length and strength, the relative proportions of the metals forming an alloy can be measured. In the case of the 'white' sou, it was found, omitting fractions, to consist of copper 72, lead 14, zinc 13, and iron 1 per cent. The author of this

refined method of analysis points out that it will be useful in determining the composition of antique jewellery as well as coins.

Mr W. Mills, of Forest Hill, London, has invented a means of producing iron and steel which is said to possess many advantageous features. Briefly, the process consists in preparing the iron in a state of atomic division, and then mixing it with as much carbon as may be necessary to produce the grade of metal required, afterwards fusing the mixture in a crucible. Iron and steel made by this process form with aluminium and other metals alloys which are quite different from those obtained with ordinary iron and steel, the difference being due to the absence of occluded oxides of carbon. If alloyed with from 8 to 10 per cent. of aluminium, the metal does not rust, nor is it corroded by smokeless powder if it be employed for gunnery purposes. This new iron is less costly to make than ordinary pig-iron, it is very tough, and, unlike ordinary cast-iron, is malleable, and it can be converted into the finest grades of tool steel.

The excitement attending the introduction of self-propelled vehicles for common roads shows no sign of abatement, and two important exhibitions where the auto-cars can be seen in action have been opened—one at the Crystal Palace, and the other at the Imperial Institute, London. At the Royal Agricultural Society's next meeting at Manchester, under the presidency of the Duke of York, two prizes of £100 and two of £50 will be offered for motor cars for light and heavy loads. In awarding these prizes the judges will be guided by the adaptability of the vehicles to public convenience, the ease with which they can be handled with regard to starting, reversing, and stopping, economy in working, and strength, simplicity, and lightness.

A curious method of instantaneously producing aërated, or soda water, as it is commonly termed, was shown at the last conversazione of the Royal Society by Messrs Read, Campbell & Co. The apparatus consists of a soda-water bottle with a special form of stopper. The bottle having been filled with water, an 'aërator'—which consists of a little ball of sheet-steel charged with liquid carbonic acid—is inserted into its neck, and the act of closing the stopper pierces the ball and sets free the gas, which is at once dissolved in the water. It is obvious that any other liquid can be aërated in the same ingenious way.

'The electrical aërial torpedo' is the title given to a new death-dealing device which has been invented by an American engineer; but on examination it does not seem to be quite as terrible as it sounds. Its principal part is a small gas balloon, capable of lifting a weight of 40 pounds to a height of 1000 feet. This balloon has attached to it a spark-producer which can be made to explode the gas at any predetermined time. The balloon carries with it a charge of dynamite or other explosive which will ignite by percussion on falling from a height. The manner in which this engine of destruction is employed is as follows: The place which is to be operated upon, a fort or other building, is approached as nearly as possible, and the balloon filled from a compressed-gas cylinder. The direction and velocity of the wind is next ascertained, and the time device set accordingly, so that when the balloon has travelled a certain distance it will suddenly collapse, and the explosive charge will drop on the object desired. All things considered, it would probably drop on something else.

Mr Andrew W. Tuer has written an interesting early chapter in the history of our national education, which he has enshrined in two sumptuous volumes, bound in vellum, and characteristically illustrated, entitled *The History of the Hornbook*. Thanks to the press, some one hundred and fifty-five hornbooks have been unearthed, of which there are three in the British Museum and eleven in South Kensington Museum. The hornbook was a small alphabet book, or board of oak, of varying dimensions, on which were printed the alphabet, nine digits, and sometimes the Lord's Prayer. It had a handle, and a thin sheet of horn in front to keep it from soiling, and the back was sometimes ornamented with a rude sketch of St George and the Dragon. A narrow frame or border of brass kept the horn in position on the board. An alphabet tablet came to be known as a hornbook whether protected by horn or not. The earliest record of hornbooks occurs about 1450; they well-nigh disappeared at the end of the eighteenth century, although there are still persons living who have used them. Whilst some have been picked up for a trifle, the Bateman hornbook fetched £65 at an auction. It consists of a thin board of oak, with leather stamped with an equestrian portrait of Charles I. The front paper, with alphabet and Lord's Prayer, is in black letter, protected by a piece of transparent horn, secured by tacks. Mr Tuer lately bought a black-letter example, found under the flooring of a house near Bristol, for £6, 10s. The cruciform shape is scarcest. In Scotland the hornbook was called the 'A B Brod,' and Burns has a reference to it in the title of his poem, 'Death and Dr Hornbook.' Specimens of the hornbook and of A B C boards are recessed in the covers of the book.

## A LITTLE MISTAKE.

By Walter Nathan.

It is well known that in legal matters lawyers often commit the most egregious blunders, and at least three Judges and one Lord Chancellor have had their wills disputed. Only recently an eminent Q.C., an ornament of the Chancery Bar, left a will so very abstruse in its construction that his family, all being on the most friendly terms, called in three of his late confrères to determine how the provisions of the will should be carried out. Their decision in the matter is worthy of being transcribed:

(*Private and Confidential.*)

'London, 15*th March* 189-.

'Dear Mrs ———, We regret that, after considerable deliberation, we are quite unable to

arrive at a conclusion as to the manner our late friend wished to bequeath his estate, and can only suggest that probate be paid according to the demands of the Legacy and Succession Duty Department, and that the estate be then apportioned by you in the manner in which you believe your late husband desired: taking for your guide in the matter his various conversations with you on the subject, and altogether ignoring the provisions of the will. —With kind regards, yours sincerely,

(Signed) { A. B. C.'

A striking example of the proverb, 'A man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client!' That doctors commit mistakes as well as lawyers is not so generally known, although cases from time to time find their way into the newspapers. Dr Carpenter, who may be said to have introduced the scientific study of human physiology into England, burnt himself to death, while attempting to take a Turkish bath in his own room by enveloping himself in a blanket and sitting over a spirit-lamp. However, when a man poisons himself, it is his own peculiar business which is involved; but when he takes to poisoning others, not with any malicious intent, but simply in error, a natural apprehension may well pervade the public mind. Protection in the matter is extremely simple, as the following narrative will show.

About eight o'clock on a June evening, a victoria, drawn by a pair of high-stepping bay horses, drove up to a celebrated chemist's shop in Bond Street, and an elegantly dressed lady of about twenty-five years of age descended from the carriage. She walked hurriedly through the shop into the dispensing department, and throwing a piece of paper on the counter, said:

'Please make up this prescription and send it at once. I would wait and take it myself, but I am just going out to dinner; it is very important.'

The assistant bowed, took up the prescription, and then seemed to hesitate.

'Well,' said the lady, who seemed of a highly nervous, irritable disposition, 'well, what is the matter?'

'I am afraid, madam,' returned the assistant, 'that I cannot dispense this prescription.'

'Oh, nonsense,' replied the lady; 'that is what they said at —— in Mayfair, so I brought it on here. I suppose Dr Blank knows what he prescribes.'

'Doubtless, madam; but although Dr Blank is one of the most eminent of his profession, I dare not make up this prescription, as the strength at which the drug is here ordered is not allowed by the British Pharmacopœia.'

'Oh, nonsense,' repeated the lady, commencing to patter on the floor with her small foot; 'this is monstrous. Here is my husband waiting for medicine of the utmost importance to his condition, and two chemists' assistants think they know better what is good for him than one of the leading men of the College of Physicians. Give me the prescription, and I will get it prepared elsewhere.'

The assistant was loth to part with the paper.

'If you will allow me, madam,' he said, 'I will take a cab to Dr Blank's, and if he confirms the prescription, I will then prepare it.'

'No, I will not,' returned the lady, who was now in a state of extreme irritation, 'I will not; my husband is in a serious condition, and I shall be late for dinner. I have already lost half an hour, and I cannot have further delay.' With that she snatched up the prescription, and hurried out.

The assistant was seriously perturbed. The mistake in the prescription was a grave one, so grave indeed that the administration of a single dose would probably prove fatal within two hours. It was possible that some young or inexperienced assistant at some small chemist's, overawed by the great name of the physician, and by the lady's imperious manner, and elegant attire and equipage, would be found to dispense it. Then trouble would ensue, which might be stopped now. Thinking thus, the assistant told his fellow-worker in the dispensary that he would go to Dr Blank's, and hurrying into Bond Street, jumped into the first passing hansom, and in five minutes was ringing the bell of the doctor's house in Harley Street. The footman who opened the door said Dr Blank was out.

'Where was he?'

Really the footman did not know. 'Very important was it?'

Ah! well, then, he (the footman) must inquire. This he leisurely proceeded to do, and the chemist's assistant, who was of an imaginative turn, amused himself by picturing meanwhile the death of the patient, the professional ruin of himself, the Mayfair chemist, and the great physician, the grief and self-reproach of the lady, who, despite her wayward, irritable, and careless demeanour, was evidently fond of her husband; and he had already arrived at the coroner's jury's verdict of manslaughter, when the footman returned with the intelligence that his master was dining in Maida Vale. The cab soon whirled the errant knight of the pestle and mortar into the Edgeware Road, and drew up at one of the large houses which lie on the right-hand side of Maida Vale, immediately after passing the Canal. Dinner was evidently in full progress, and the footman showed the assistant into an ante-room with no very good grace. Here another wait occurred, which preyed on the already irritated nerves of our friend, even more than the previous one at Harley Street. At last the door opened, and the doctor entered. He was a dapper little man, about five feet five in height, with a pale, thin face, and hair and moustache the colour of tow. His clear, steel-blue gray eyes saved his appearance from being insignificant. He looked inquiringly at the assistant, who, bowing, said:

'I am a dispenser, sir, at Messrs ——. At about eight o'clock this evening a lady, Mrs ——, presented a prescription, signed by you, in which Potassi Arsenica was ordered in three drachm doses.'

'Good God!' cried the physician; 'is it possible?'

'There can be no doubt of it,' replied the assistant, 'as the prescription was refused by another chemist.'

The doctor walked hurriedly up and down the room.

'Can it have been altered?' he muttered.

'I looked carefully for that, but there was not the slightest sign of an erasure. No, sir,' continued the assistant; 'I am afraid it is a little mistake on your part. I only fear that it may be made up and administered, and therefore went at once to your house, and learning where you were, came on here.'

'Quite right, quite right,' said the doctor; 'have you a cab waiting? That's well. I'll go with you at once to the patient.'

It took but a few minutes for the doctor to make his excuses, and return ready for departure, and the cab once more in motion, turned towards the neighbourhood of Eaton Square. The house at which it now pulled up betokened far greater wealth than either of the other two at which it had stopped since chartered in Bond Street; but an air of quietude, peculiar to residences in which lie invalids in very critical condition, pervaded the place. The street door was opened noiselessly by a footman before the occupants of the cab were fairly on the doorstep, and the doctor was shown into a room on the ground-floor which answered the purposes of a library as much as such rooms usually do in London houses.

'Send me Nurse Moore,' said the doctor.

'Nurse Moore is out for exercise,' replied the footman. 'Nurse Norris is on duty, I happen to know, for she took the new medicine which I carried up not five minutes ago.'

Dr Blank was a little man, and little men are usually quick in their motion; but never did man, little or big, fly up the stairs at the same rate as he did before the last words were out of the footman's mouth. The assistant followed, but had only reached the first floor when the doctor entered the bedroom on the second. Nurse Norris was standing by the bed measuring a dose of medicine from a bottle. She was a tall, dark young woman of twenty-five, very pleasant-looking, and apparently pursuing her vocation with care, as she did not even look up when the doctor entered.

'None of that, nurse!' exclaimed the doctor.

'I beg pardon, sir?' said the nurse, now aroused to the sense of some incongruity in the physician's manner, which became intensified when a strange young man, very much out of breath, almost fell into the room from the passage.

'I should say how is the patient? A very warm night, and likely to render him uncomfortable,' continued the doctor, with his soul in his eyes, and his eyes on the bottle.

'I think I am a little better, doctor,' said a weak voice from the bed, on which lay a man of about thirty with the peculiarly emaciated and drawn look which invariably follows a prolonged or very severe illness, 'a little easier.'

'That's right,' said the doctor, feeling the invalid's pulse, 'that's right; yes, a marked improvement.' Then, having completed a rather lengthy examination, he turned to the nurse. 'A decided improvement, nurse; for to-night we will discontinue all drugs; give nothing except his usual nourishment until I come again. Dr W—— will return to-morrow, and when we have a local practitioner once more in attendance you will take your instructions from him; in the meantime give no medicine. Indeed I will take it with me.' And without noticing the hurt and resentful look of the nurse, the doctor pounced on the bottle and transferred it to his coat pocket.

On that particular June evening the assistant at Messrs —— had been gravely cogitating whether he would be justified in wedding the girl of his choice, who was too delicate to be able to add to the common purse, on a salary of £100 a year, and had decided in the negative. Six months after, a quiet but very happy wedding party returned to a very flourishing chemist's shop in the neighbourhood of Cavendish Square, which bore the name of the assistant over the front as its proprietor. And if you have ever occasion to consult the great physician, you may be sure that, whatsoever his opinion of your case may be, he will add, as he hands you your prescription: 'Be sure you have it made up at a good chemist's. Mr —— is an extremely careful dispenser, and in addition personally analyses every drug which goes into his place. Thank you. Good-morning.'

## EVENING MYSTERY.

A LONELY landscape; far in distant skies
A stormy sunset paints its sullen hues;
And low the shadow-haunted valley lies
Bathed in the sweat of dews.

Gaunt trees with strange weird outlines blur the sky;
No sign of life is visible anywhere
Save a disbanded flock of sheep who lie
In fitful slumber there.

A chill white vapour rises from the ground,
And steals like some grim host of sheeted dead
Along the awe-struck vale; there is no sound
To break the silence dread.

Behind low clouds, in dim ethereal space
The scared young moon withdraws in pale affright;
What is the mystery she dare not face
That holds in spell the night?

CHARLES H. BARSTOW.

**** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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# JAN PENGELLY.

By JAMES PATEY.

## CHAPTER I.

Four men sat one night in the little old-fashioned parlour of the 'Tregartha Arms,' a low-ceilinged room, odorous of fish and tobacco-smoke. Specimens of copper ore were ranged along the mantel-shelf, and above it hung the glazed presentment of a frigate, worked in faded worsteds—the only other embellishment of the walls being the pictorial sailing-bill of a line of steamers calling at Falmouth.

Two candles in brass candlesticks stood on the scarred mahogany table, and sufficiently lighted the room. The youngest of the men was seated writing at one end of the table, the other three facing him. He was a man of thirty, well built, and somewhat handsome. There was determination in his face, and in his large bold writing, and a characteristic touch of vigour in the swift thrust with which he sheathed his pencil, and the final snap of his pocket-book.

'Well, gentlemen,' he said, leaning over the table, 'to-morrow I shall carefully write out my report for the syndicate, but you already know my decision. I am strongly of opinion that with more modern machinery and economy in working, Wheal Tregartha may yet be made a paying property. I am sorry, Captain Trefusis, that you cannot confirm my report. I am a stranger to Cornish mines, and my experience has been gathered elsewhere. It would give me great satisfaction to have my judgment endorsed by a local expert like yourself, but since you so strongly differ from me, I must make the most of my unsupported opinion.'

Trefusis, the mining captain, a tall, dark, black-bearded man, blew a cloud of smoke, and answered slowly: 'Wheal Tregartha has not paid a dividend for ten years, Mr Cameron, and never will again. What's the use of throwing good money after bad?'

'There's a curse on the mine,' broke in Edwards, an older man, with a bronzed face and silver earrings; 'Tregartha pit has never prospered since they ancient bones was found in the old workings. Doctor Bolitho scraped they bones, and measured them. "These be men's bones," says he, "but they'm never the bones of Cornishmen;" and he packed 'em in a fish-basket and sent 'em up to Saint Somebody's Hospital in London, and iver since then the copper failed, and bad luck came; and now there's moans in the mine—*moans!* (his prolongation of the vowel was peculiarly dismal), and folks zay 'tis the watter in some cave when the tide comes in; but I b'lieve 'tis the moans of the sperrits a-searching for they bones.' He would have continued his lugubrious talk, but an admonitory kick from the boot of Trefusis under the table silenced him.

Roskree, the third miner, who, like Edwards, spoke with a strong Cornish accent, observed sententiously: 'There isn't a man in Cornwall who knaws more about copper than Cap'n Josiah Trefusis here, and 'tis no use zaying that bad is good.'

Then Trefusis spoke again, taking a lump of ore from his pocket, and pushing it somewhat rudely across the table: 'Look at that, Mr Cameron, that's the best we've found. In these days, when copper's to be had all the world over, will such stuff pay for the digging, and smelting, and bringing to market?'

Cameron civilly examined the ore, and replied: 'I do not attach much importance to this or any particular sample; but I think it probable that a much richer lode exists,

not far from the working whence this was taken.'

Trefusis, starting to his feet and speaking loudly and aggressively, said: 'I daresay, Mr Cameron, your friends will raise the new capital on your report. It is easier to pour money down a Cornish mine than to get money out of it; in the old brisk days of mining speculation, we had a saying here that "fools' money is as plentiful as pilchards." For myself, I am simply a miner, and mind my own business. I know nothing of the ways of your stock-jobbing syndicates!'

The speech was intentionally rude, and a momentary flush of anger mounted to the cheek of Cameron; but he calmed himself, and replied good-humouredly: 'Well, Captain Trefusis, we need not quarrel. I am much indebted to you for your assistance in my three days' investigation. The inspection of a disused mine is a difficult and somewhat dangerous task, and I shall not neglect to acknowledge your services in my report. Personally, I am much obliged to you, and to our friends here; and now, gentlemen, I wish you all good-night;' and shaking hands with each, he left the room.

The three men smoked in quiet for a few minutes, and Roskree broke the silence: 'He's a smart man, that Cameron, and he knaws his business. My days! but he was within a few yards of our lode this morning! I expected every minute he'd drive into it with his pick.'

'If he had,' said Trefusis fiercely, 'I'd have driven into him with mine!' and he brought his hand down upon the table with such violence that his pipe was broken to atoms; and smiling grimly at his own vehemence, he gathered the fragments and ashes in his broad palm, and flung them contemptuously into the fireplace, as though he were disposing of the objectionable Cameron.

'Hush! don't 'ee talk so,' whispered Edwards; and Roskree, glancing cautiously towards the door, said, 'I think us had better get outdoors;' and shouting a good-night to the landlord as they passed through the outer room, they went out into the little village street.

It was a lovely night, and warm even for the spring of this southern coast. The white cottages gleamed luminous in the moonlight; a quivering radiance fell across the waters of the little cove, and the outlines of the cliffs were dimly visible; while far away, at the end of the ghostly headland, shone the great twin-lights of the Lizard.

There was a sound of voices abroad, the talk of neighbours across the low hedges and little garden gates, with whisperings and occasional laughter; a tranquil hour dedicated to gossip and sweethearting, and sacred to the evening pipe.

Edwards and Roskree exchanged frequent greetings with acquaintances, right and left, as they walked down towards the beach, but Trefusis strode silently on. The fishing-boats were drawn up in a row on the sand, and seating themselves on the side of a boat, the three men smoked and watched the silver fringe of the advancing tide.

The mining captain was in a sorry temper. He and his two companions alone knew of the existence of a rich lode of copper that would retrieve the fortunes of the Tregartha mine, and he had hoped to keep the secret till he had contrived to buy up many of the shares at a minimum price; but this new project to raise fresh capital, and resume the working, had quite upset his calculations. In a few weeks his secret might be everbody's information.

'Curse the fellow and his syndicate!' he cried bitterly; 'our game's half spoilt, mates. In six months I'd have got half Wheal Tregartha in my own hands: as it is, the mine will soon be opened again. We have short notice now to scrape up whatever loose shares we can.'

'You promised, cap'n, that you would give us each a tidy bit for helping 'ee,' said Edwards dubiously. 'Surely you won't rin word now?'

'I promised you shares, and shares you shall have; haven't I already given you forty apiece?'

'They didn't cost 'ee much,' said Roskree; 'old Bolitho said he was glad enough to turn the rummage out of his bureau.'

'There's more to be had equally cheap, if we hold our tongues a bit longer,' replied Trefusis; 'old Parson Trevennick holds a lot.'

'I think us might leave the old parson alone,' said Edwards; 'he's poor enough, by all accounts.'

'And whose poorer than yourself, Dick Edwards?' asked Trefusis. 'Haven't you got sense enough to hold tight to the one bit of luck that was ever put in your way?'

'Parson Trevennick was very good to me when my little maid was bad,' broke in Roskree, 'and so was Miss Trevennick; and if this business was going to make 'em suffer, rather than hold my tongue I'd putt a shillin' in the hand of every town-crier in Cornwall, and cry the new lode through the county.'

'You never had shillings enough for that job, Roskree,' rejoined Trefusis, 'and never will, if you don't show more sense. I didn't think you were such a soft fool!'

'Not exactly a fule,' answered Roskree, 'but I'm trying to be a durned rogue, and I baint half cut out for the character.'

'Well, well,' said Trefusis soothingly, 'I won't middle with the parson; and after all, I can only buy what other folks will sell; and buying and selling is no crime, Roskree. But don't despise the shares, men; although they cost little, they are worth a good deal.'

'Ees, us knaw that,' replied Roskree contentedly: 'the shares be really worth a pretty penny.'

'There's a brave heap of money yet in Wheal Tregartha,' added Edwards.

A moment later, to their utter dismay, a tall figure sprang up from the shadow of the next boat, and walked across the sand. 'Who's that?' shouted Trefusis: and the three leapt to their feet, and hastened after the retreating form.

'It's all right,' cried Roskree, who was foremost to the others; ''tis only Jan Pengelly;' and Edwards, hurrying up, repeated, in a tone of relief, 'All right, 'tis only Jan!'

Tall and lithe, with a mass of red hair, and clear-cut features, Jan Pengelly had the restless, over-eager look of one denied the full endowment of reason. His handsome face was not lacking in a certain wistful intelligence; but in spite of his twenty years it was a child's mind that looked out from his blue eyes, and he had all a child's simplicity and irresponsibility, with much of a child's swift intuition. In the idiom of the west country, Jan was 'half-mazed.' His fisherman's jersey was much mended, and he wore an old cap of otter-skin; and there was a touch of the picturesque in his bearing and gesture.

'What be 'ee down on the beach by yourself this time o' night for, Jan?' asked Edwards, overtaking him.

The answer came in a clear ringing voice: 'I was just watching the tide, and the moon, and the glory of the watter—'tis a brave, beautiful night!'

'Have 'ee been fishing to-day, Jan?' inquired Roskree.

'No,' replied Jan; 'I've been doing a bit of gardening up to the rectory, and clipping the hedges. And I've found a rare lot of purty stones, and heaped them up at the end of the garden for ferns to graw between; and Miss Trevennick's been mortal pleased with me all day.'

By this time they had reached the houses, and Edwards and Roskree said good-night and turned homewards, leaving the other two to continue their way to the farther end of the village.

'Jan,' said Trefusis, taking his arm as they walked together, 'did you hear anything said when you were lying down there in the boat?'

'Ees, I heard the words of all of 'ee,' was the reply.

'And what did you hear, Jan?'

'I heard 'ee talk about Parson Trevennick, and I heard old Edwards say, "There's a brave heap o' money in Wheal Tregartha;" but I reckon old Edwards is a fule. Ees, I heard the words of all of 'ee; but 'tis no odds to me.'

They had come to the captain's dwelling, and turning to the other, Trefusis said: 'Wait here a minute, Jan; I've got something to show you.' He entered the house, and re-appeared in a few moments with a leather case in his hand.

Looking fiercely in the lad's face, he said: 'Promise me, Jan, that you won't tell anybody what you heard Edwards, Roskree, and me talking about on the beach.'

Jan answered, ''Tis no business of mine. I won't tell anybody.'

Opening the case with a spring, the captain asked, 'Do 'ee know what these be, Jan?'

'Pistols!' cried the lad, shrinking back; 'putt 'em away, cap'n, do 'ee!'

Trefusis took out one of the weapons—it was beautifully made, and glittered in the moonlight—and with his face close to Jan's, he whispered hoarsely, 'Promise me, solemn!'

'I promise 'ee, solemn,' gasped Jan.

'When I was in Peru,' said the miner, 'among a rough lot of men that weren't exactly Methodists, I carried these pistols day and night; and look here, my lad, if you say one single word to any living soul, as sure as your name's Jan Pengelly, I'll shoot 'ee like a dog!'

'I won't say wan word to a living sawl. I promise 'ee, solemn!' cried the terrified lad.

Trefusis returned the pistol to its case, and closing it, said, in a milder tone: 'And Jan, my boy, if you hold your tongue, and mind your own business, some fine day, perhaps, I'll give 'ee one of these pistols for yourself, to shoot the sea-birds.'

'No, no, cap'n,' protested Jan, 'I couldn't touch 'em, and I couldn't bear to shoot the say-birds; I stale their eggs, I knaw, but I wouldn't hurt a feather of 'em.'

So Captain Trefusis went into his house with his mind full of fear and suspicion of Jan Pengelly, and Jan went home to the widow's cottage, where he lodged, with the threat of the captain hissing in his ears, and the vision of the little glittering pistol haunting him.

## POVERTY'S PLEASURES.

Is it not 'A.K.H.B.' who, in one of his charming 'Recreations,' deals gently and tenderly with the gradual abandonment of the high ambitions of youth? He notes how the aspiring lad, who keeps the Woolsack before his eyes as goal, is very well content, a few decades later, to have a modest practice at the Bar; or how the undergraduate who sees himself in imagination occupying Lambeth Palace at the very least, thinks himself fortunate at forty to be presented to a vicarage in Wales, with an income of two hundred a year.

Many of us fixed, during childhood—comparative childhood at least—the annual income which we considered would suffice us through life, and which we felt every confidence in being provided with by Providence. Few of us perhaps limited our requirements to the same modest scale as those of the poet, who

> Often wished that he had clear
> For life six hundred pounds a year,

even when he hastens to add

> A handsome house to lodge a friend,
> A river at my garden's end.

I remember that for many years I fixed five hundred pounds as the amount of annual income wherewith I could content myself. The means by which it was to be acquired occupied a very limited place in my forecast of the future. I suppose I had the universal Micawber trust in 'something turning up.'

In those days, and indeed in days comparatively recent, there was a formidable list of accessories, without which life did not seem to be worth mentioning. I doubt if I have any greater cause for self-gratulation than the fact that as my prospect, or rather my hope, of income has faded and died, my long list of apparent necessaries has diminished in like proportion. Nay, more, Poverty herself, who in

the distance appeared forlorn and empty-handed, has brought with her pleasures which affluence never carries.

Time was that I envied with bitter, coveting envy those who rode, drove, and cycled; I decline to speak or write that up-to-date but altogether hideous word, to 'bike'—hideous as the curved back and widespreading elbows of too many 'bikers,' and suggesting to one's mind nothing so much as a Cockney and his bread. But now they pass unheeded by; rubber-wheeled dogcart, swift and silent; light-footed, dainty-headed hack, with dancing steps; nor—unless, indeed, the rider be a dainty being of the gentle sex, with veiled, half-glancing eyes, and rosy, breeze-fanned cheeks—unless, I say, such a one be the occupant of the saddle, I pay no envious heed to cyclists, wheelists—or if they so desire to be called—'bikists,' glide they never so swiftly.

With not one of them would I exchange my bemired boots, my tough ashen stick, and my knapsack; for from what an endless host of anxieties am I not free. Driving tours: riding tours; to sit day after day for four or five hours, with cramped legs and uneasy back, or stretched asunder in a saddle, while with measured pace you cover thirty or forty miles of carefully selected roads, your mind revolving a thousand cares. What power to charm will the finest scenery possess if the road threaten your springs, or a few hundred yards be newly stoned? Is your steed lively? The Fates will not need a traction-engine or a pot-shot to overthrow both yourself and your plans. Does he seem more than usually sluggish after leaving last night's halt? The thought suggests itself that while you were comfortably discussing your dinner, and eulogising the hotel cook's talent for *entrées* and sweets, or deciphering brasses, and admiring mouldings in that delightful fourteenth-century church, your gallant grey, bay, or roan was being defrauded of his hard-earned supper by an ostler of indifferent moral perceptions. These be some of the pleasures of those who trust in the legs of a horse.

And where is the member of the Cyclists' Touring Club, who cannot, if he will, 'a tale unfold' of toil and disaster; of roads stony and steep; of thorn-pierced tyres, and broken saddle-springs, the disaster always occurring with wonderful precision at the farthest possible point from the nearest 'consul,' and where the village blacksmith knows not the cyclist nor his ways? And what does the devotee of the wheel, after all, see of the country, though he may fly through four or five counties in the day? Why, the veriest skirts of it only; the fringes of the district which are known to thousands of his fraternity. He skims on and on, at his ten or twelve miles an hour; he sleeps at one town, lunches fifty miles down the road, and has covered a hundred miles or more for his day's work. He visits the prescribed 'lions' of his path only. What does he see of the people and their local customs? what does he note of the changes of dialect from county to county? He sees the scenery to advantage, you say. Yes, but if there is a choice of roads before him, he eagerly chooses the flat one, which is probably the least picturesque; and what does he see of shady by-lanes, field-paths, and remote hamlets? No, the cyclist may know the high-roads of half England, but he does not know the country.

But with the man to whom horse-flesh and 'latest makes' are inaccessible luxuries, and who trusts to nature and easy-fitting boots, it is different. His modest four miles an hour carries him half-way across a county in a day, and still leaves him time and vigour for one or two deviations from the road. His pace does not whirl him superciliously past the slow-footed, gazing country-folk. He can linger for a few moments to chat to the farmer, crossing the road to his fields; can stop and question the children who, pouring at noon out of school, stare wonderingly at the sunburnt man, with the schoolboy's satchel on his shoulder; or walk half a mile with the wagoner, and admire the grooming of his horses; or with the drover behind his flock—but this is, I admit, a somewhat dusty pleasure.

Oh, it is a supreme moment, one fit to have appeared in Mr Barry Pain's famous mirror, when in the fresh crispness of an early autumn morning, with a gray, billowy sky, and a gently-rising barometer, one shoulders the knapsack, seizes the homely ash stick, and 'takes the road.' Old and tried friends both stick and satchel; the former guiltless of ornament, save on the handle the dark natural polish begotten of years of contact with a caressing hand; and below, two or three roughly-cut dates and mountain names—English names only, as yet. What consideration has gone to the packing of the satchel, before the happy medium between one's needs on the one hand, and one's burden-bearing capacity on the other, has been hit. Shaving materials have been refused admission, a razor being a heavy thing for its size; besides, the cost of being shaved in a country town or village never exceeds twopence per diem—I have often been shaved for one penny—and the charge includes the barber's conversation, and your barber—I decline to relinquish the word for 'hairdresser,' as desired by certain of my friends—your country barber is a man of wide local information, and affable manners in imparting it.

A week's unalloyed pleasure lies before me as I tramp away over the firm clean roads, where the dust is laid as yet by the heavy dew. I have no unalterable course, no anxious fears as to the state of the roads; I am even fairly indifferent to the weather. In this much-maligned country it seldom rains all day; to the man of indoor habits it sometimes appears to do so, because the rain frequently falls when he wishes to go out, but that misfortune can hardly be laid to the door of the weather. He—the man—should alter his arrangements; it is palpably absurd to expect nature to take the role of the old man with his donkey, and attempt to suit thirty millions of people. But, out of doors, rain is not so bad as it looks; and if you are caught in a shower, and no inn, or farmhouse, or cottage is handy for shelter, there is usually a tree—the heaviest rain takes a long time to come through a fine elm in full leaf—or a high overhanging hedge or a haystack. The latter, however, is more of

a shield from wind than from rain. What a luxury it is on a cloudless March day, when the wind comes like a razor from the north-east, to gain the south side of the rick in a field corner. It is warmer than a feather-bed. Pity that the crowning luxury of a pipe must not follow the bread-and-cheese lunch, but that is out of the question; a powder-magazine would be as suitable a place.

Pleasanter than the lea-side of a rick, when twelve miles or more have been covered, and the unclouded sun is riding high, will be the cool parlour of some village inn, where I can linger lazily over home-baked bread, and cheese, and cool ruddy ale, and enjoy a guiltless and digestive whiff. Then, as the afternoon draws on, the march is resumed with somewhat slackened pace, and an ever-increasing readiness to pause and give due meed of admiration to any striking 'bit,' or to lean over the gates of cottage gardens and compliment neatly-capped old ladies on their stocks and asters.

And what possible power could a driving-tour possess of giving that happy anticipation of dinner which is felt as the day's goal draws near. And, the inn found, the dinner ordered and eaten, and the town inspected, if enough daylight remains for the purpose, what luxurious ease is mine as I settle myself in a corner of the leather divan in the cosy bar—that is, supposing principles permit this relaxation.

Mine do. 'Be it a weakness,' I must still admit that I can spend an evening hour very happily in such quarters. Settled in a corner, with 'something' before me—it is not necessary to particularise—and a clay pipe, about half the length of the time-honoured 'yard,' I can watch with keen interest the steady dropping in of the convivial citizens for their evening glass and chat. It is strange, indeed, if here one cannot add to one's store of local knowledge and 'table-talk.' If the oldest inhabitant is not present in person, there will be some one who is intimate with him—perhaps a son—who can retail his store of recollections. The landlord will listen to accounts of a day's walk with most gratifying interest; pedestrians are comparatively rare nowadays; tourists number tens of thousands, but they use the all-attractive wheel. So that the cyclist, once the object of curious attention wherever he rode, now scarcely causes a glance or a comment; the 'tramp,' knapsack on back, and stick in hand, excites far more remark.

How imposing and substantial the remittances which those men of might, the editors, sometimes send us, appear to the impecunious one! How they would dwindle and shrink—or seem to—if the income was suddenly doubled or trebled! It being what it is, what a fillip their arrival gives us. Instead of being mere 'drops in the bucket' of our means, they are charmingly out of proportion to our weekly, monthly, quarterly 'rentes.' Nothing like a minute income for enhancing the pleasure of the unexpected.

If only the editor was more liberal of his columns, I might enlarge on the conventionalities from the grasp of which poverty frees us—the functions some of us are spared for lack of a dress-coat. But it is needless; my suppressed instances will suggest themselves to every fellow-pauper, who will smile with me at the sneer of those who may choose to insinuate that

The face of wealth in poverty we wear.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

By P. L. M'Dermott.

### CHAPTER V.—BEYOND RECALL.

The light frankness of young Farmley's manner and character, and his old-time relations with Mary Dalton as a playmate before he became a lover, dispensed perhaps with that need of observance which her position imposed upon another. When he first met the ladies at Herne Bay, holding out both hands to them, with the warmth of boyish sympathy, he did not hesitate for a moment to declare that he had followed them on learning, when he came home, where they had gone.

This frankness made any awkwardness of reserve impossible on either side, and he went to their lodgings to tea. There he related how, on reaching South Africa and going on to the Transvaal, he found everything so different from what his imagination had pictured, that the impulse to come home again at once possessed him. He did not yield to it at once, ingenuously confessing, with a half-shamed laugh, that he remained longer only for sake of appearance, and that he was convinced from the first hour of setting foot in Johannesburg that he had made a fool of himself. All this disarmed criticism; and he said that he would remain where he was until his father found some fresh work for him and summoned him back for it.

It was impossible to appear more harmless and undesigning than he showed himself for the next two or three days—meeting mother and daughter often (as was unavoidable in so small a place), but by no means intruding. Nevertheless, Mrs Dalton would rather he had not come there, and it was the uneasiness of of this thought that had prompted the postscript to Dr Maitland.

One advantage Farmley had derived, or seemed to have derived, from his brief foreign travel, appealed insensibly to Mary Dalton's approval. Without in the least losing the delicacy of his feminine face, he appeared to have lost a certain 'about-townish' air which had belonged to him before going away. Mary was quite unconscious of thinking about him; but she did make some mental comparisons, and began to open her mind to the insidious and dangerous opinion that, removed from the associations and influences of London, an improved identity began to assert itself in the young man.

It was at this critical stage that, walking one afternoon on the esplanade with her mother, Mary Dalton noticed herself several times regarded with apparent interest by a woman who, with some children, occupied one of the seats. The girl drew her mother's attention to the circumstance, but Mrs Dalton did not know the woman. Afterwards, when they

took a seat, and young Farmley returned from boating, Mary Dalton asked him if he knew the stranger.

The young man regarded the woman (who was some fifty yards away) for a second or two.

'I know the children,' he answered, 'and I suppose she is their mother. One of the little ones looks as if she had been ill. They are from Croham.'

Well, Croham was rather outside the sphere of Mary Dalton's home interests, and she dismissed the visitors from her thoughts. But later in the evening, when she was walking alone, Mary noticed the woman again, observing her as before; and now another idea came to her mind that awakened a new interest. If the child had been ill, and they came from Croham, they might know Dr Maitland.

So it happened, that the desire to talk about him to a stranger, led Mary to introduce herself to Mrs Brock, and to listen, after fifteen minutes' conversation, with surprise and pleasure to the story that Dr Maitland had heard. The result could not be otherwise than as the poor doctor had dimly feared—a warming of the girl's generous heart to a young fellow who concealed his good qualities even from those most intimate with him.

In the soft hour of sunset, when all the watering-place were sitting on the esplanade, Mr Frederick Farmley was perched on a boulder on the beach, with a large cigar in his teeth, apparently fishing with a string in a pool left by the retiring tide. The cigar seemed to be giving him trouble, either on account of its size or its refusal to smoke, and it occupied a good deal of his attention.

'How absurd! mamma,' said Mary Dalton, who had been watching him with amusement unusual to her of late. 'Look at Freddie Farmley trying to manage a big cigar. I suppose he brought that from South Africa. A cigarette, I fancy, is more according to his capacity.'

The young man seemed to be struck by some consideration of the same nature, for he took the cigar from his mouth, examined it gravely for a minute, and then, holding it up in apparent irresolution, cast it into the water. Mary smiled at the dénouement.

'I wonder what he can be fishing for, mamma? Might I go and see?'

'If you take care not to get your feet damp,' assented her mother with some reluctance, which she did not show.

He was smoking a cigarette now, with more satisfaction, and when the girl approached, he looked up without much appearance of interest.

'What are you trying to catch?' she asked.

'You will catch wet feet if you give another step forward,' he replied. 'Come round behind me; here is another stone which you can sit upon. I am trying to catch a young fish that its parents left behind in this little pool on their last tidal visit to these shores.'

'The fish is too wise to be caught by a bit of string,' said Mary.

'It isn't an attractive bait, I admit; but there's no calculating on the foolishness of a young fish, especially in failing light. However, the enterprise is beginning to look a failure. Shall we go back?' he said, casting away the string.

She rose to accompany him, and when they reached the esplanade, he suggested a walk to the end along the beach.

'I was talking to Mrs Brock this evening, Freddie,' she said presently, in a low tone, 'and I heard something about you that surprised me.'

'It must have been something good, if that was the effect,' he answered, laughing.

'It was something good—something very generous,' she said, more warmly.

He seemed to divine her allusion, and turning quickly, betrayed genuine vexation. This did not pass unnoticed by the girl, and it added to her better opinion of him.

'It seems to annoy you to be found out, Freddie. I shall never speak of it again. But I couldn't help saying how—how glad it made me to learn it.' She said it very winsomely, and he was softened.

'Why glad, Mary?'

'You wrong yourself, by letting people think you are incapable of generous acts.'

After a pause he answered: 'Perhaps I do; but is it always—or ever—worth while to trouble about what people think? My experience, small as it is, goes to show that things of that sort mostly right themselves—I mean misapprehensions; and when they don't, it doesn't much matter.'

'But every one has some particular friends whom it is not right to mislead?'

'I—don't know, Mary,' he replied, with some hesitation; 'perhaps yes, and perhaps no. I will not deny, however, that I am pleased that—any discovery concerning me has made you glad. We have known each other a good while.'

There was no insinuation whatever in the manner of this speech, but Mary Dalton did not answer it, because it did nevertheless convey an insinuation that disturbed her.

'Talking about misapprehensions,' he resumed presently, after lighting another cigarette, 'if I chose, Mary, I could tell you something about one that would surprise you still more.'

'Concerning yourself?'

'Concerning me.' He halted, and touched her arm with his finger in a grave way very odd to him. 'Concerning me—and concerning your uncle. I confess it surprised me also.'

The girl did not know what to say. She glanced timidly at his face, and saw that he was quite serious. She felt, without clearly realising it, that she was on the brink of a discovery of great consequence to herself. Uncertain and nervous, she took refuge in instinct.

'Shall we go back to mamma?'

'I think so,' he answered quietly.

And during the walk back he said not another word on that topic, until they were approaching where Mrs Dalton sat.

'Mary,' he then inquired, 'does your aunt know of that matter you learned from Mrs Brock?'

'No.'

'Then promise me not to tell her.'

'I have already promised never again to speak of it, Freddie.'

He inclined his head to express his satisfaction with the assurance; and on Mary Dalton seating herself beside her mother, Farmley took the place on the other side of Mrs Dalton.

The conversation was commonplace, and Mrs Dalton was not long in noticing that it was mostly confined to herself and young Farmley. An unusual pensiveness had settled upon her daughter, and her silence was the more remarkable because she was attentive to everything that was said. Mrs Dalton was predisposed to be anxious, and she uneasily speculated as to whether anything serious had passed during the walk to the end of the esplanade.

Her anxiety made itself visible in a direction that had the result of adding to it.

'I suppose your father, Mr Farmley, has not yet found work for you? Why do you not go back to the bank?'

'I shouldn't care to go back to the bank,' he said, turning towards her as though the subject interested him. 'Banks as a rule are sorry drudgery. But father (I had a long letter from him this morning) has found a very desirable place, which he thinks I am fitted for—with only two drawbacks. The post is the secretaryship of a company.'

'Indeed? I am glad to hear of it. I am sure you would rather be at business, after your holiday.'

'You are quite right, Mrs Dalton; I am tired of idleness, and I am fond of work, when it is congenial. I confess I like very much the idea of this secretaryship.'

'And when do you go to commence your duties?' she inquired, with rising hope.

'The duties are waiting, if I succeed in getting the post. As I have said, there are drawbacks.'

For a moment he looked embarrassed, but soon shook it off. Mary Dalton had noticed the embarrassment, and the same instinct, shy rather than apprehensive, that had moved her before, impelled her now to interpose with the suggestion that the air was getting cool and her mother ought to come in. Mrs Dalton rose, and they walked towards their lodgings.

'The drawbacks are not serious, I hope,' the lady remarked. She was eager to convince herself that the young man was likely soon to go away.

Farmley laughed.

'That will be just as it happens,' he answered. 'One of them is my youth; but this, with a certain guarantee of stability, is not insuperable. It is the guarantee that is the main drawback.'

'A money guarantee?'

'Oh, not at all. Anything in that line, of course, my father could arrange at once. My late trip to Africa is a little against me. They want a—a visible guarantee,' he said, hesitating at the choice of words, 'that a flight like that is not likely to happen again.'

'In other words,' replied Mrs Dalton courageously, 'you will have to marry and settle down?'

'That's it, Mrs Dalton,' he said, with a slightly embarrassed laugh.

They were now at the door of the ladies' lodgings, and as it was too late to be asked in, he said good-night. Mary Dalton's face was coloured with a shy tinge as he turned away. She was conscious of the point to which matters were tending, and was impatient to shut herself in her own room.

## THE CASE OF THE TRAWLER AND THE LINE FISHERMEN.

By W. Anderson Smith.

No part of the Scottish coast has been more before the public of late than that great bight on the north-east of Scotland called the Moray Firth. The press has teemed with paragraphs and articles thereanent, to the no small confusion of the lieges, who, as a rule, know little about a question they look upon as a storm in a teapot. Why has this particular indentation caused so much stir, and what is the character of a region of water that has made it the cynosure of neighbouring eyes? From time immemorial the district has been noted for the courage and skill of its line fishermen, who in small boats pursued the white-fishery with growing success. For the last century, since the fisheries were specially stimulated by an appreciative Government, a large amount of money has been spent around its shores. Not only has the Fishery Department—now the Fishery Board—expended money on some fifteen harbours, but the various burghs alongside have shown great enterprise and faith in their own future as fishery centres; while the proprietors—instance Lady Gordon Cathcart at Buckie—have displayed equal readiness to give freely for the stimulation of this great and important industry. A glance at the map in which railways are indicated will further show that quite a rivalry has existed in order to obtain a share in the transit of the great harvest of the sea from this firth; for some twenty termini or stations impinge upon its shores, and gather to the great centres of population the results of the fishermen's labour. These facts in themselves would make this great bight a national object of care and attention, more especially seeing that the fishing industry is undoubtedly that on which the north of Scotland mainly depends, and must continue to depend.

But a great change has come over the industry, and no part of the coast has suffered more from it than this. The introduction of beam-trawling was at first mainly confined to the English coast, where the waters are shallower and more workable. The vessels were also sailing-vessels, of comparatively small burden. The depression in the shipping-trade, however, threw a great number of steam-tugs idle for a time, and these having supplied themselves with beam-trawls, set about sweeping the shallow English seas; until the steady increase of the fleet, and the valuable pecuniary results for a time, gradually made the new departure less and less valuable. Deeper waters had to be attacked, more distant areas had to

be prospected, and soon the depths of the northern Scottish seas were scoured as persistingly as had been the southern waters, now rendered unprofitable. Then Scottish capitalists entered in. A fleet hailed from Granton, and paid good dividends. The commercial instincts of Aberdeen were aroused, and the granite city first made a bold bid for the marketing of the products of the English fleet, now working freely off its coasts. It soon became, through its admirable arrangements, one of the greatest centres, and one of the most important fish-markets, in the kingdom. It could not long look on, however. Money rapidly gathered into the new and profitable industry, much of it at first said to have been from the agricultural community, who were glad of any prospect of return for money doing little good in their own depressed industry. The fleet increased rapidly, and the firth so close at hand was the natural ground for their operations. But here they came in contact with a fishing community equally progressive, equally energetic and capable, and who had invested enormous sums and the skill of a lifetime, as well as the transmitted knowledge of generations, in a totally different, and in most respects antagonistic system of fishing.

The grievance of the towns and fishing-villages of the Moray Firth may be said to be the same as that of all old systems in face of the new and more scientific. It has been compared with the complaint of the weavers against the great factories; and were it only this, while we might sympathise with and commiserate the smaller people, no modern Government could well propose to interfere in their behalf. If it were merely improved machinery against hand-labour, the fight would have to be left to the usual cruel arbitrament, the survival of the fittest. It is certain that both the trawlers and the line-fishers cannot have the fish, and if both are to continue to work over the same ground, some *modus vivendi* must be discovered to enable them to do so without serious friction. The difficulty of this is increased by the fact of steam being the motive-power in the trawling-vessels, while the ordinary line-boats are sailers. This enables the less honourable among the trawlers to evade their just responsibilities, and frequently to do direct injury to the fishing-gear of the ordinary fishermen without acknowledgment or capture. The consequent friction between the two classes is thus augmented, and the reckless conduct of a few is visited upon the many. The difference in invested capital between the two classes is also much overstated as a rule. If we take the capital invested in the boats and gear of a great line-fishing centre such as Buckie, it is probably equal to that of Aberdeen tied up in trawlers. For the cost of the improved line-boats, with the necessary equipment, now ranges from seven to nine hundred pounds, and they are manned by a body of seamen that any country might be proud of, and should secure by all reasonable protection. These boats are mainly manned and handled by those who own them; while the capitalists who own the trawling-vessels, with only one or two real seamen on board, are seldom interested in them beyond the financial returns. The liners are also the mainstay of numerous comfortable fishing-villages, where the standard of life has been steadily rising, and the conditions are more wholesome, both for the individuals and the country, than those of the more important centres. These are all reasons advanced in favour of the line-boats, by those who look upon the question from a national point of view, and are desirous of preventing that exodus into populous haunts on the part of the fishing population, that has been so much deprecated on the part of the agriculturists.

For the most part these are at present looked upon as merely sentimental reasons, and have no real weight with the modernist, demanding cheap and plentiful production, and regardless of consequences, which are expected to 'adjust themselves' in the long run, whoever may go to the wall in the meantime. The trawlers produce cheap fish in quantity at the least cost of labour and material, and the community is the gainer thereby, say the advocates of the new and wholesale method of capture. There is doubtless much to be said for this view, and the further fact that it is easier and cheaper to construct a few great self-supporting harbours, than to erect a crowd of small boat-harbours along the coast, appeals to any Government continually called upon for aid in this direction. Still the destruction of a large, scattered, wholesome, coast population cannot be looked forward to with equanimity; and the passing of the fishing industry into the hands of a comparatively few capitalists, employing few reliable seamen, can only be justified on grounds of unquestionable public utility.

I will leave aside the objection that the trawlers are accustomed to sweep the seas on Sundays, when the conscience of the ordinary toiler of the sea will not permit him to labour. In these days this is looked upon by many as also a purely sentimental objection. The main question for the utilitarian is, does the nation as a whole benefit by this new system? And is the population along the Moray Firth meantime to be permanently injured, with the probability that they will be ultimately summoned back again to the old work when too late, the fisheries having been vitally injured along with themselves?

To give an idea of the population interested, it may be enough to say that of the 25,000 fishermen of the East coast, upwards of 14,000 are credited to the district closed, between Duncansbay Head and Rattray Head; that they own considerably more than half the boats, of considerably more than half the tonnage, representing upwards of £650,000, of the one and a half million invested in boats and gear, on the East coast. They are further credited in the official returns with the capture of more than one-third of all the fish taken on that coast. But as these hardy men land their fish-catch everywhere, it is difficult to follow their movements, or to decide to whom the various captures properly appertain.

This region of line and drift-net fishermen, then, complain that the interloping beam-trawling fleet is destroying their finest fishing-grounds; that they do this by churning up the bottom so as to destroy the spawning beds, clearing

away the fish food, as well as the 'food of the fish food;' and that they continue the competition ashore, by throwing quantities of inferior, rough-handled fish on the market, to the destruction of legitimate trade and the creation of starvation prices. They further complain that multitudes of immature, unsaleable fish are captured in the beam-trawl, that would otherwise be left to mature and restock the ground. These are all serious allegations and demand close examination, more especially in the light of the acknowledged clearance of the English seas by the trawling fleet, now seeking fresh fields. It is impossible to deny that a certain amount of injury is done in the shallower and more confined waters inshore, by the traversing of beam-trawls continually. This is quite compatible with a *per contra* in the shape of injurious fish—such as the angler—taken in vast numbers, to the advantage of the commercial fishes; and also of great numbers of the predatory white-fish removed from feeding on the herring roe in the season. It cannot be denied also that the turbot and other similar flat-fish are mainly captured by the trawl. A very considerable number of immature and unmarketable fish are likewise unfortunately destroyed by the liners. I am of opinion, however, that the balance of evidence is against beam-trawling inshore, and that the trawlers would not be unwilling to acknowledge this, and accept the result, if they had any assurance that all would be treated alike. But so long as reckless skippers will take great risks for great hauls over virgin ground that has been protected, others will feel forced to follow suit. There is a danger of allowing our sympathies with true fishermen to prevent us from doing justice to these more mechanical toilers. This has been the cause of a certain revulsion of feeling in opposition to the expanding demands of the liners. The three-mile limit seems reasonable to a landsman; and the thirteen miles now demanded appeals to outsiders as a violent leap. How much more the whole Moray Firth, with its ninety miles across from Head to Head! Yet thirteen miles off-shore is but a small matter, and only about an hour's run to sea for a good boat, such as most trawling-vessels are. At the same time it leaves a plentiful acreage of sea-bottom to act as a nursery, as well as a fishing-ground for the older men unable to go the long runs now made to sea by even the medium-sized line-boats.

The call for the closing of the Moray Firth accordingly represents a struggle for a great principle, as well as the desire to accentuate a noted fact. It is the greatest and most valuable fishing-ground, in one workable area, on the Scottish coast. It is a recognised spawning-ground for some of the most useful commercial fishes, as well as a great herring-fishery. Around its margin the railways have fought for the fish traffic, and harbours and piers have been constructed by every possible authority; from the gigantic but hopeless failure at Wick, to the latest fiasco at Balantore. As a fact, it remains the most important fishery coast of Scotland; as a protesting centre, it represents the struggle of a scattered population of liners and drift-net fishermen against the dominion of machinery and the evil of centralisation—in fact, against revolution in a trade that loves not revolution, and is of too delicate an organisation for rough experiments. I, for one, should be sorry to see this splendid race of civilised Vikings losing their birthright, and becoming unable to traverse the whale-bath successfully. It may be that they ask too much; but they cannot get too much, for their deserts are great! The trawlers are undoubtedly not an unmitigated evil even within limited areas; but the fishermen of the Moray Firth are unquestionably an admitted blessing to a nation. The Moray Firth as now closed should be easily patrolled, and so long as this is the case, the utmost care should be taken to secure, as far as possible, the well-being of a race of which the country has every reason to be proud.

## MICHAEL DARCY'S HEIRESS.

'Now for it,' I said to myself, as I undid the twine binding my precious volumes together, and prepared to examine them more carefully than I had had time to do since I unearthed them from the little, dark, second-hand book-shop that afternoon. There was nothing remarkable about them; no rare editions of well-known classics, no long-forgotten books, valuable from their very obscurity; merely a few bound volumes of old magazines, and a couple of the novels which had delighted me as a boy, and which from old association were more precious in their original type and polished leather binding than in the spruce modern editions. Best of all was a copy of Dickens's *Master Humphrey's Clock*, with the woodcuts that cannot now be reproduced. As I turned them over, I became a boy again, sitting in the old apple-tree at the end of the garden at home, devouring the thin, paper-covered instalments of the stories; laughing and sometimes crying over them, as the present day schoolboys, well crammed and carefully examined students of literature as they are, are too critical to do. I adjusted my reading-lamp, drew my chair closer to the fire, and forgetting alike the cup of coffee at my side and the patient whose unusual symptoms had worried me all day, I lost myself in the company of Nell and her grandfather, Mrs Jarley, Miss Brass, and the Marchioness, seeing them with the boy's eyes, and adding to the pen and pencil sketches a roundness and completeness of detail drawn from my imagination of fifty years ago, and utterly lacking to my reading of later life.

When I had gone more than half through the second volume, I came upon a large sheet of thin paper, covered with neat, cramped writing. I took it out and looked at it. A moment's inspection showed me that it was a will, written throughout in the handwriting of the testator, Michael Darcy, and dated two years before. It left interest in the farm of Carrignalea, with stock and implements, to testator's brother, Patrick Darcy, who was also named residuary legatee, while the sum of three thousand pounds in railway stock and other investments was bequeathed to 'my late wife's niece, Anastasia Ffrench.' It was, as far as I could judge, and I have had some experience in matters of the kind, properly executed, signed, and witnessed.

It was odd to find an important document of this sort hidden away between the leaves of a book. Had Patrick Darcy and Anastasia Ffrench been left without their inheritance in consequence, I wondered. And a picture rose up in my mind of a helpless elderly woman ending her days in poverty, because the paper which would have secured her independence was not to be found.

What an old fool I was to be sure. For all I knew, Michael Darcy might be still alive, and live to make half-a-dozen fresh wills. Or even if he were dead, the chances were that this was an old will, revoked by the existence of a later one, and of no more account than any other slip of paper used to mark a book. Why had I not thought of so obvious an explanation before? I would make some inquiries about the matter next day, however; it would be easy to find out all about Michael Darcy of Carrignalea. Meantime, the will could remain between the leaves of *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

But the morrow found me flying along by express train to the bedside of my only son, who had met with a dangerous accident. And for many weeks I could think of nothing but him, and of the best means of snatching him from the extended arms of death. And when, by God's mercy, he was once more as safe from those clutches as any one of us can ever be, Michael Darcy, his will, heirs, and executors, had faded out of my mind as completely as if they had never entered it, and the will was resting undisturbed in its hiding-place among my books.

Some twelve months later, I went in the regular course of my practice to visit an old friend, who was suffering from an acute attack of pneumonia. She was an elderly lady, living alone some two or three miles outside the city. Her servants were faithful and attached, but in the absence of relatives I thought it better to insist on the services of a trained nurse. I therefore gave Mrs Power's maid a note addressed to the matron of a nursing institution in the city, asking her to send me, if possible, one of two nurses whom I named; or, if this was out of her power, to send some one on whom she could thoroughly rely. On my return next morning, I found, not indeed one of my old friends, but a bright, capable-looking young woman, whose manner of answering my questions and taking my directions impressed me favourably. She told me that she had not long returned from her course of training in one of the London hospitals, and that this was the first serious case of which she had had sole charge. As the case, though serious enough, was a simple one, I had no hesitation in leaving the nursing of it in her hands, and a few days' observation showed me that even had it been far more complicated I should have been fully justified in so doing. She was an excellent nurse, alert and watchful, knowing exactly what to do, and doing it with the quiet ease that comes of long practice. As the patient grew better, and I had time to notice less important details, I perceived that Sister Anna, besides being an excellent nurse, was a very attractive young woman. She had pretty brown hair with golden lights in it, waving and rippling all over a well-shaped, well-set head; her eyes were dark brown, and her complexion, though pale, clear and healthy-looking. She was fairly tall, and very well built, with a look of strength and vitality pleasant to see. Her voice was low-toned and pleasant, while her choice of words and manner of speaking showed her to be an educated woman. Mrs Power was delighted with her, and spoke much of the pleasure she felt in having so intelligent and sympathetic a companion. Altogether, I thought I had reason to congratulate myself and my professional brethren on the addition to the nursing staff at our disposal.

Late one October afternoon, after a hard day's work, I drove down to Lisfallan to visit my patient, whom I had not seen for two or three days. I found Mrs Power alone in the little morning room where she usually sat, although Sister Anna's knitting-basket and web of crimson fleece gave token of her recent presence.

'Where is the sister?' I asked, during a pause in the gossip with my old friend which succeeded our brief professional interview.

'Look out of the window,' was the reply.

I went over to the deep bay-window, which formed one end of the room, and looking across the long garden, stretching behind the house, beheld Sister Anna, her prim cap laid aside, her pretty head showing above the soft gray shawl in which she had wrapped herself; and walking by her side a tall figure which I did not at first recognise. This was Laurence, Mrs Power's nephew. He was clerk in a bank, and hoped soon to be made manager of a country branch.

The young people were by this time coming up the steps leading from the garden, and presently they entered the room. Sister Anna came forward to speak to me, a pink flush on her usually pale cheek, a new light in her pretty brown eyes. Laurence Moore stood behind her, an expression of supreme content on his handsome face, while Mrs Power looked on, quiet and keen-eyed. I wondered if she were quite satisfied at the turn affairs seemed to be taking.

Sister Anna went over to her patient and made some change for the better in the arrangement of her wraps and cushions. She then seated herself in her usual low chair at the opposite side of the fire. After a few minutes' more talk I went away, Laurence Moore accompanying me to the door with an additional touch of *empressement* in his always pleasant manner.

'I wonder if he looks on me in the light of a parent or guardian to be propitiated,' I said to myself with some amusement, as I settled myself comfortably in the brougham. 'I think I shall refuse my consent—whatever may be its value. That girl is a capital nurse, much too good to be monopolised by any one man.'

About ten days later, on my next visit, I was more pleased than surprised to be introduced to Sister Anna in the character of Mrs Power's future niece, although I did mingle some selfish regrets with my congratulations.

'Oh,' said Sister Anna, laughing, 'I am not going to desert my post yet a while. It is only to be an engagement for a long time to

come, and must not be spoken of. I think I can promise not to let any thought of the future interfere with my work in the present, Dr Moran. I will put Laurence out of my head when once I enter a sick-room.'

'I am afraid it has to be a long engagement,' said Mrs Power. 'They cannot think of marrying until Laurence is a manager, and even then it would be wiser to wait until he has saved something. You know mine is but a life income, so that beyond some plate or an outfit of table linen I can do nothing to help.'

Sister Anna made it clear that she did not mind waiting. Then the conversation drifted to the subject of a former talk about artificial hearts made of india-rubber, which were warranted, according to Sister Anna, 'never to ache.'

'Come, Anna; you cannot know much about heartaches, at any rate.'

'Indeed, I had many a one the time of my uncle's death,' she answered. 'I do not know what I should have done, had I not been compelled to rouse myself and work.'

'Did your uncle know you would have to work?' asked Mrs Power.

'No; he thought that he had provided for me. In fact, I am sure that he did so; but the will could never be found, so everything went to his brother.'

'His brother?' But why did not you, his niece, come in for your share?'

'Don't you see, although I called him uncle, I was only his wife's niece, and in reality no relation whatever. My aunt was living when I first came to them, so long ago that I can scarcely remember it; but she died soon after, and then my uncle and I took care of each other. The old house was a pleasant place: it did not look like a farmhouse, for there were trees about it, and an old orchard and garden. I took care of the garden. I wanted to manage the dairy, too, but uncle said the work would be too heavy for me—we had a good many cows—so there was a regular dairymaid, who never allowed me to interfere. I found it hard to get cream for uncle's tea sometimes; and I had to steal it when I wanted to make a hot cake,' she added, laughing.

'How did you employ yourself?' asked Mrs Power.

'Oh, I had the house to attend to, and the poultry-yard, as well as the garden. And then I used to read a good deal: uncle had quite a collection of books. He had been buying them all his life, chiefly second-hand ones. We used to get catalogues of second-hand books from the London dealers, and sent for those we fancied most. It was like putting into a lottery. I believe some of the books were valuable. There was an old copy of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, with pictures in it, that used to delight me when I was a child: pictures of Nell, and Quilp, and Dick Swiveller. I used to think how nice it would be if uncle and I could go wandering about the world like Nell and her grandfather; having the farm to come back to when we were tired, of course.'

The words 'his wife's niece' had somehow seemed familiar to me, but it was not until the allusion to *Master Humphrey's Clock* had supplied another link in the chain, that there flashed into my mind the remembrance of the will hidden in the old copy at home: Michael Darcy's will, with its bequest to 'my wife's niece, Anastasia Ffrench.' I could hardly keep the excitement out of my voice as link after link in the chain of evidence was supplied, in answer to my questions. I found that her real name was Anastasia, now cut down to Anna Ffrench; that her uncle's name was Michael Darcy, and his farm was known as Carrignalea. In reply to my query as to her reasons for believing that her uncle had made a will in her favour, she said:

'After my poor uncle got the paralytic stroke of which he died, he made several attempts to speak; and as far as we could understand, his words were always about money, and about having "made it all right for Annie." Besides, our old servant always declared that about a week before his illness he had called her and another woman, who was accidentally in the house, into the sitting-room, and made them witness a paper, which he said was a will. When they had finished signing, he said, half to himself: "Now, my mind is at rest about Annie."'

'Why did he not get the will properly drawn up by a solicitor?'

'He was fond of reading law-books, and knew something about law himself. He has sometimes made wills for other people, and I never heard that there was anything wrong about them.'

'And the will could not be found?'

'The will could not be found. We hunted everywhere for it in vain, and then Patrick Darcy said he did not believe it had ever existed, and that old Margaret had invented the whole story. The other woman had left the neighbourhood by that time. Patrick Darcy offered to give me some money, but I refused to take a gift from him. I knew one of the nurses in the sisterhood here at Marshport; she had been nursing a lady in our neighbourhood the winter before: so I wrote to her, and she got me taken as a probationer. I was there for six months, and then I went to London to be trained. I intended to revolutionise the whole art of nursing, but now Laurence has spoiled all my plans.'

There was no doubt that this was the heiress of the will in my possession: the question was, Did the three thousand pounds still exist, or had the heir-at-law made away with it?

'What kind of man is this Patrick Darcy?' I asked.

'A hard man. Very close about money. He is a good deal younger than my uncle.'

'Is he married?'

'No, he never married; his one idea is to save money. I don't know what will become of it when he dies, for he has no one of his own.'

This was satisfactory; and I took my leave as soon as I could, feeling a little ashamed of my apparently motiveless curiosity, which, I could see, surprised my old friend somewhat.

The first thing I did on reaching home was to take *Master Humphrey* from the book-shelves,

and make sure that the will was quite safe. Next morning I took it to my own solicitor, who assured me that it was a valid will, properly executed. He also promised to make inquiries about Patrick Darcy. And these inquiries proved satisfactory; for, in a few days, he informed me that Patrick Darcy was a well-to-do man, and a mark for a far larger sum than the one due to Anastasia Ffrench.

A day or two later, therefore, I presented myself again at Mrs Power's.

'I have brought you a wedding-present, my dear,' I said to Sister Anna, handing her the three volumes of *Master Humphrey*.

'Of course,' I added, seeing the look of surprise that Mrs Power could not entirely conceal, 'you shall have the orthodox bracelet or claret-jug later on: this is only a preliminary.'

'Indeed, Dr Moran,' said Sister Anna, 'I don't think anything could give me greater pleasure than this: it is just like the copy of *Master Humphrey* we had at home. Why, I do believe it is the actual book. Here is the very pencil-mark that poor uncle was so angry with me for making. Where did you get this, Dr Moran? Was it from Patrick Darcy?'

'I bought it, my dear, at a second-hand book-shop, a year or two ago. It was only the other day I discovered that you had an interest in it. Turn to the picture of Barnaby and his raven. I think you will find something there that concerns you.'

She turned the pages with a practised hand, until she reached the one she sought.

'Oh!' she exclaimed, 'here is my uncle's writing. How strange it seems to find it here.'

'Read it,' I said.

She glanced quickly over it, the colour fading out of her cheek as she did so. 'It is the will,' she gasped—'my uncle's will.'

Mrs Power was by her side in a moment.

'Nonsense, Annie; how could your uncle's will have found its way into Dr Moran's book? Here, let me see it.' And she took the paper from the girl's passive hand.

Anastasia Ffrench looked at me questioningly.

'Yes, my dear,' I said, 'it is all right; I have shown the will to my solicitor, and he says that you will have no difficulty in making good your claim to the money your uncle intended for you.'

'But I do not understand,' said Mrs Power. 'How did the will come into your possession, Dr Moran?'

'When I bought these books, with some others, I found the will lying as you see, between the leaves. I thought that it was probably a discarded will, invalidated by the existence of a later one. I meant, however, to make some inquiries about it; but, before I had time to do so, I received the news of Philip's accident, which put all minor matters out of my head for a long time. I forgot all about the will, until it was recalled to my mind a few days ago by the sound of the name Anastasia Ffrench. You must forgive me for my carelessness, my dear; it is owing to me that you did not come into possession of your money a year ago.'

'I am more grateful to you, if possible, for having forgotten the will last year, than for having remembered it now. Had you made its existence known a year ago, I would not, in all probability, be here to-day.'

'I did not think of that aspect of the case. Then you would have given up nursing had you known that you need not do so as a means of livelihood?'

'Certainly not; but I should in that case have done volunteer work, and so never have known Mrs Power.'

'Nor Laurence,' supplemented that lady. 'I think he has the strongest motive of all for being grateful to Dr Moran. But what has become of this money now? Annie's uncle has been dead three years.'

'The money is perfectly safe, and probably well invested. Mr Patrick Darcy is, by all accounts, not at all the man to let money lie idle.'

'And can Annie get it back?'

'Certainly; there will be little or no difficulty about that. So you may begin to see about your trousseau at once, Miss Annie. I suppose the marriage need not be delayed now,' I said, turning to Mrs Power.

'Certainly not. Three thousand pounds will make all the difference between a foolish marriage and a prudent one. Don't you think you could be ready in six weeks, Annie?'

'I do not know about that, said Annie, 'but I am certain Laurence could not. Had we not better say six months, Mrs Power?'

As a matter of fact, however, the marriage took place the following spring. Laurence was manager of a country branch of his bank by that time, so that the young people had to make their home in a small seaport town some thirty miles from Marshport.

My wedding-present to Sister Anna did not, after all, consist of either bracelet or claret-jug, but of a small collection of books, some of them her old favourites, others specimens of more modern literature. I have not yet seen her home; but she writes me word that *Master Humphrey's Clock* stands in the middle of the book-shelves, more prized almost for having belonged to Michael Darcy than for having been for so long the safe resting-place of his missing will.

## DRAUGHTS: A POPULAR INDOOR GAME.

As recreation should play an important part in every wisely-ordered life, it is gratifying to observe the growing popularity of certain games. Happily, in these days there are pastimes to suit persons of all ages and conditions. Among outdoor games golf, football, and cycling have made the most notable advancement. In fact, in some circles these have become a sort of fetich. But while the devotees of these exhilarating pursuits have been increasing by leaps and bounds, pastimes, which make a greater demand on the intellectual powers, have been receiving more and more attention. Whist is as popular as it is delightful; chess numbers its followers by thousands; and draughts, which forms the subject of this

article, can boast of its tens of thousands of ardent and more or less advanced students. There are flourishing draughts clubs in all the big towns in Britain, and in most of those in the United States and Australia. In the numerous mechanics' institutes and recreation rooms throughout the country, draughts players have admirable facilities for improving their knowledge of the intricacies of the pastime. Scores of weekly newspapers set apart a considerable portion of their space for problems, games, and news-notes. Not only that, but there are several monthly magazines devoted exclusively to the game.

Draughts is a ubiquitous recreation. It is loved by high and low, rich and poor. The workman, after the labours of the day, solaces himself with a pipe and a game; and the sailor, between his watches, beguiles in a similar way many an otherwise tedious hour. The great Bismarck is very fond of the pastime, and he is said to possess the finest board in the world. The pieces and squares are of gold and silver, with a diamond in the middle of each silver square and a ruby in the centre of each draughts-'man.' But the costliness of the implements does not necessarily imply first-class play or increased enjoyment, and it may safely be assumed that the pleasure of the country yokel is not lessened one whit by the fact that he only plays with a home-made board and bits of cork as pieces. In this connection, draughts is not unlike angling. How often have we known the daintily-dressed city man with elaborate and expensive tackle whip a stream all day to little purpose, while a country lad with the rudest appliances would kill a few pounds of excellent fish. In an analogous manner many a good draughts player has acquired his skill by the use of the commonest kind of board and pieces. As a matter of fact, we have seen many a fine game played with potato chips on a sheet of paper. With the view of assisting some charitable institution, games are sometimes contested with living pieces—that is, boys or girls in fancy costumes act as the 'men.' A match of this kind took place at Nottingham a few months ago.

Draughts in some shape or form is doubtless a very ancient pastime. Indeed, the safest thing to say about it is that its origin is lost in the mists of antiquity. Representations of persons playing at a game resembling draughts are frequently found on ancient Egyptian monuments at least three thousand years old. The Greeks had a similar game, from whom possibly it passed to the Romans. At least the old Roman game of *latrunculi* seems to have been a kind of draughts—though it is doubtful if the game as now played is very ancient. The game was popular and well known in France and Spain in the seventeenth century, and was probably played there and in England centuries before that. That it was from France the game came into many of the other countries is evident from the fact that the French name—*jeu de dames*—passed with it. *Dam* or *damme* was once the regular English name for one of the pieces; in Germany the game is still called *damespiel;* in Holland the board is *dambord,* and in Scotland (as will be remembered by readers of Dean Ramsay's anecdotes) *dambrod* still survives. In the United States the less usual name of *chequers,* spelt *checkers,* is employed. Polish, Spanish, Italian, and Turkish draughts are varieties of the same game. The Polish game, which has several peculiarities, was introduced to Paris in 1723, and was at first played on a board of a hundred squares, with forty men.

Draughts is very easily learned, but it is by no means an easy game. In a few minutes one can understand the moves, but years of assiduous study and practice are required before the subtilties of this profound intellectual pastime can be mastered. The great Scottish player, James Wyllie, who is seventy-seven years of age, and who is known throughout the English-speaking world as 'the Herd Laddie'—a soubriquet which has stuck to him since 1832, when his master, a Biggar cattle-dealer, introduced him, a boy of fourteen, to the Edinburgh 'cracks'—has played the game incessantly since boyhood, and he affirmed recently that he is still discovering new and beautiful lines of play. Wyllie is the high-priest of draughts, just as Tom Morris is the high-priest of golf, in virtue of years, brilliant performances, and recognised worth of character. Considering his age he plays a remarkably fine game. One has sorrowfully to admit, however, that he is past his best, as his great match last year with Ferrie showed. All the same, his record as a match-player will probably never be excelled. Wyllie is short in stature with a big bald head, bright eyes, and round ruddy face. For many years, when travelling from town to town for the purpose of playing exhibition games, he wore a woollen cravat and a Kilmarnock bonnet. He now appears in club rooms with a neat collar and a natty smoking-cap. While on his way to a draughts players' 'howf,' it is recorded that he was caught in a heavy shower of rain, and got his umbrella thoroughly soaked. By the time he finished play, the watery clouds had rolled past and the sun was shining brightly. As soon as he got outside he put up his umbrella. A friend who was with him said: 'Man, Jamie, it's no rainin' the noo.'—'No,' replied Wyllie, 'but my umbrella's wat.' Wyllie has travelled extensively, having made long tours in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where he met all classes of players. Walking is his only physical exercise, and a few miles daily are sufficient to keep him in good health. He neither smokes nor drinks.

Another grand old man of draughts is Robert Martins—a Scotsman by adoption, but an Englishman by birth. He is the junior of Wyllie by a few years, and he is also an ex-champion of the world. In personal appearance he is the reverse of the 'Herd Laddie,' being tall, pale-faced, and long-headed. He is courteous in manner, and very cautious in expressing an opinion about a knotty point in a game, always prefacing his remarks by 'I think,' or 'I'm not sure.' He and Wyllie have played no fewer than six championship matches, the net result of which is that Wyllie is three games ahead, while Martins's pocket is the gainer by twenty pounds. The last important match Martins engaged in took place in Glasgow

nine years ago, when C. F. Barker of Boston defeated him by three wins to one with forty-five drawn games. For many years Wyllie and Martins have acted as peripatetic instructors to the ambitious draughts players of England and Scotland. Their services are constantly in request, and proud, indeed, is the budding champion when he manages to draw a game with either of the veterans. Skill at draughts is not usually associated with the musical faculty, but Martins, and another celebrated player, James Moir, are notable exceptions. The former is a skilful violinist, while the latter possesses a rich, well-trained tenor voice.

The champion of the world (until beaten by Jordan in Glasgow, on June 19) was James Ferrie, born at Greenock of Irish parents in 1857. He has played draughts since boyhood, and when only eighteen years of age, he carried off the championship of the Greenock Wellington Draughts Club. Next year he won the first prize in the Glasgow Central Club handicap, and he has contested numerous matches and has never been defeated until this year in a set encounter, his most important victories having been over Reed of America, Bryden of Glasgow, and Wyllie. He met the last-named gladiator in Glasgow last year. The match attracted a great deal of attention, and was perhaps the most important contest of the kind ever played. It was in truth the meeting of a man in his prime, with one whose intellectual vigour, great as it had been, had now begun to show signs of decay. From the very first the issue was never in doubt, and when the 88th game ended in a draw, it was mutually agreed to terminate the match, the score then being —Ferrie, 13 wins; Wyllie, 6 wins; drawn, 69. All the openings were tried, and many beautiful lines of play disclosed. An interesting fact in connection with the encounter was that Wyllie only secured one game with the white pieces, while Ferrie's wins comprised seven with the black and six with the white men. Ferrie, who is a joiner, is a singularly unassuming person. In helping to remove the difficulties of a beginner he is always ready to oblige.

In addition to these worthies there is a number of younger and just as brilliant players in Scotland. In R. Jordan, Edinburgh (champion of the world for 1896), R. Stewart (champion of Scotland for 1894 and 1895), and G. Buchanan, the 'Land o' Cakes' can boast of three youthful checkerists whose equals are not to be found in Christendom. Buchanan is known as 'the Glasgow prodigy,' and is not yet out of his teens. There are several very able players in England, notably Jordan, Richmond, Beattie, Gardner, Jewitt, Christie, and Birkenshaw, but the best of them are no match for an equal number of Scottish 'cracks.' Two international matches have already taken place—one in Glasgow and the other in London—and both ended in victories for the northern players. In America there are three first-class men—C. A. Freeman, C. F. Barker, and J. P. Reed.

The literature of the game is very extensive. Probably no other pastime can boast of so many explanatory handbooks. The first treatise of which we have any record was published in Spain by Torquemada in the sixteenth century. A century later the works of Canalejas and Garcez appeared, the former in 1650 and the latter in 1685. Canalejas was an enthusiast, and in his introduction he said: 'Draughts may be likened to the game of life, seeing that we have at one time the pieces, diverse in their values, figuring on the board, but eventually, whether queens or pawns, swept without distinction from their brief authority, and entombed upon an equality in the sepulchre; it is also a lively image of war, when the least error or a neglected stratagem occasions the loss of the battle.' A French manual was published in 1668 under the title of *Jeu de Dames*. The compiler was Pierre Mallet, mathematician to the king of France, who was so confident in his own powers that he challenged in quaintly humorous terms any Christian or barbarian champion to play him a match for a dozen pistoles. The pioneer of British draughts literature was William Payne, a teacher of mathematics, who published a treatise in 1756. The special feature of this work is the dedication, which was composed by the great Dr Johnson, who was particularly fond of the game.

Payne was followed by Joshua Sturges, who issued his *Guide to the Game of Draughts* in 1800. Sturges (a revised edition of whose work was published last December) placed the game on a thoroughly scientific basis, and greatly improved and extended the play of his predecessors. Scotsmen now stepped into the arena, and for many years monopolised attention by the number and brilliancy of their productions. A Glasgow man, J. Sinclair, set the ball a-rolling, to use a football simile, in 1832; John Drummond, who was never beaten in a match, gave it a vigorous kick with his first edition in 1838; and W. Hay kept it moving smartly with his volume, which appeared in the same year. In 1848 the great Andrew Anderson, one of the finest players the world has seen, who had the best of a series of matches with Wyllie, published his first edition at Lanark, followed four years later by his celebrated 'second edition,' a work for which as much as twenty-five shillings have been given. This book, after being corrected and amplified by R. M'Culloch, is recognised as the standard work to-day. Among the later contributors to the literature of the game may be mentioned Spayth, Barker, Robertson, Bowen, Hill, Lees, and Kear.

Beginners often imagine that experts employ some mysterious mathematical rule, but there is no secret or royal road to a mastery of draughts. In this connection the old darkey's description of how he trained mules may be quoted: 'Rules, sah! golly da ain't 'zactly no rules for a mule, sah. Dah's such a heap o' variety in the critters; for a rule dat would work wif dis animal ain't worf a cent wif that yeller cuss! Dah's so many sudden turns an' tantrums 'bout a Kentucky mule that a rule wouldn't work no better nor a last year's almanac! The principal thing, sah, is to keep away from his hoofs—hang on to patience and perseverance, an' always keep yo' eye peeled an' yo' intellec' a-workin'.' While it is true that great draughts players, like great chess players,

are born, not made, considerable skill may be acquired by studying the best works and practising with first-class players. It has been asserted that all the moves are to be found in the books. This is not so. No doubt thousands of variations have been published, but there are numerous bypaths which have never been adequately explored. Keen analysts are constantly discovering new moves, but many of these they very excusably keep to themselves for use in match play.

It has occasionally been stated that chess is a more scientific game than draughts. This view is not supported by those who play both pastimes equally well. Undoubtedly the end games in draughts are far more subtile than those in chess. There is, for instance, no ending in chess which excels in beauty and ingenuity the 'first position' in draughts. Moreover, after a premature move has been made, the player has more opportunities of recovering himself in chess than in draughts. Continuing the comparison, it must be admitted that chess permits of more scope for the imagination, while draughts demands greater accuracy. Chess may be likened to a regiment of cavalry, and draughts to a battalion of infantry. Generally speaking, the former will attract the individual with an impetuous temperament, while the latter will fascinate the person with a more calculating and logical mind. All the same, the impulsive man and the plodder are to be found among the devotees of each recreation.

While draughts is a keen intellectual exercise, perhaps too much has been made of it as a discipliner of the mind. It is certainly not so efficacious in this respect as mathematics. But it distinctly fosters such admirable virtues as foresight, caution, patience, and concentration. A few words of admonition, however, must be given. To some people the game has a fatal fascination. Its constant practice produces a species of mental intoxication, which causes a distaste to the duties of daily life. The pastime should be absolutely subsidiary to one's every-day occupation. Indeed, it would be well if business men made it a rule never to play until after working-hours. He was a truly wise man, a real sage, who declared: 'I do not live to play, but play in order that I may live, and return with greater zest to the labours of life.'

## THE RETURN OF THE REJECTED—HOW EDITORS SEND BACK MANUSCRIPTS.

It has happened to all of us, I suppose, at some period of our career, to have been rejected, to have had our best efforts returned 'with thanks,' and the fruit of our labour cast back upon our hands—occasionally with the added bitterness of insufficient postage. Vainly do we try to extract consolation from the reflection that to professional jealousy solely must be ascribed the oft-repeated return of our most cherished manuscript. In the privacy of our innermost hearts we sorrowfully perceive that this theory, although 'grateful and comforting,' is, albeit, a trifle 'thin.' After all, editors make their living by accepting good manuscripts; and the conviction that to this must be ascribed the non-acceptance of our loftiest endeavours for the public enlightenment, slowly dawns upon us. But this conclusion is the result of a riper experience. Nothing will convince the embryo 'author' that the rejection of his able treatise, in 42 pages, foolscap, on the 'Conchological Aspect of the Glacial Epoch' by the editor of *Comical Chips* had anything to do with its unsuitability to the requirements of that popular and enterprising periodical. 'Unsuitability, forsooth! Nothing of the sort!' is his indignant exclamation when this is mildly suggested. Professional jealousy, pure and simple, is, he is convinced, the sole explanation.

And what are the reasons for the return of our manuscript? Apart from the mere failure, from a literary point of view, of the quality of the manuscript submitted, there are many reasons why so much is returned to its despairing progenitors. These are chiefly (1) unsuitability to the requirements of the magazine to which it is offered, (2) excessive length of treatment, (3) illegibility of handwriting (*N.B.* always get your manuscript type-written, it pays), and (4) want of general interest in the subject treated, a plethora of manuscripts, or the subject has just been discussed, and so on *ad infinitum*.

I have often wondered if there lives a man who can truthfully say that the first article that he wrote—his maiden effort—was accepted by the first editor to whom it was submitted, and printed, without modification, as written. I am, of course, referring only to an outside contribution, and not to an article written to order. If so, I should like to meet him, to grasp him by the hand, and, on behalf of my brother tyros, ask him 'how it's done?' Probably I should privately entertain, at the same time, very strong doubts of that young man's veracity.

It is astonishing to observe the sameness which editors display in the composition of the forms of rejection which accompany the return of one's manuscript. It is, perhaps, rather difficult to display any striking originality in expressing in a few words, and with a decent amount of courtesy, that your manuscript is unsuitable, that they don't want it, and are accordingly returning it. Some do so 'with thanks,' others 'with regrets.' The *Cornhill* is especially lavish in this respect, the editor returning a manuscript of mine 'with compliments *and* thanks.' Others enter into elaborate and graceful explanations to the effect that 'pressure on their space compels them to return the accompanying manuscript, for the offer of which they are much obliged.' This is the form used by the *Daily Graphic*. I have two from *Chambers*. In one, the 'editor of *Chambers's Journal* regrets his inability to avail himself of the kindly offered contribution,' to which is appended in pencil the words 'with many thanks,' and, in the second, this is varied by 'with compliments.' The editor of the

*Westminster Gazette*, on a beautifully lithographed sheet of note-paper, 'presents his compliments to . . . . and regrets that he is unable to use the accompanying manuscript, which accordingly he returns with many thanks.' Others, however, are brutally frank, and curtly decline to have anything to do with it, returning your manuscript mangled and dirty, after many weeks' detention, without a word. The editor of *The Pall Mall Magazine* 'regrets that the accompanying manuscript is unsuitable to its pages, and therefore returns it with thanks.' Here we have a model form of rejection—cause and effect expressed in the fewest possible words. Accompanying the return of an article from *The English Illustrated Magazine* is a notification that 'the editor regrets that he is unable to use the enclosed contribution and therefore returns it with many thanks.' For brevity, that supplied by *The Sketch* must be awarded the palm—'The editor regrets to be compelled to decline the enclosed.' From the *Strand Magazine* comes an intimation that 'the editor presents his compliments to the writer of the enclosed contribution, and regrets that want of space prevents him from making use of it.' There is not much originality in *Longmans*, except that it differs from most of the other forms in being lithographed instead of printed—'The editor of *Longman's Magazine* much regrets that he is unable to make use of the enclosed manuscript. He therefore returns it with thanks.' Another briefly expressed rejection is that of *The Globe*, in which we learn that 'the editor is much obliged for the offer of the manuscript now returned, but regrets to say that he is unable to accept it.' A noble effort is made by the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* to somewhat soften the blow. On a type-written form a member of the staff says: 'I regret that we are unable to use the manuscript which you have been kind enough to submit. In returning your manuscript I am instructed to express the thanks of the editors for having been permitted to examine it.' On the back of this form are printed thirteen hints to would-be contributors, by the due observance of which their chances of meeting with acceptance for their work are much enhanced. Under the circumstances I can hardly do better than conclude with the following extracts therefrom:

(1) 'The rejection of a manuscript does not necessarily imply an opinion unfavourable to the literary quality of the work, but only means that the manuscripts returned do not meet any existing needs of *The Cosmopolitan*, however well they may be adapted to the wants of other periodicals.'

(2) 'Manuscripts should never be rolled, but folded flat.'

(3) 'It is desirable that material for illustration accompany articles which from their character demand illustration in the magazine.'

(4) 'Type-writing is always preferable to handwriting.'

In conclusion, the receipt of a form to the effect that the editor of *Chambers's Journal* 'has much pleasure' in accepting this article for publication, has deprived me of what might have been one more example to add to this list of the 'return of the rejected.'

## THE LARK'S FLIGHT.

. . . 'The crime was a murder of brutal violence. The execution took place after the old custom in Scotland on the spot where the crime had been committed, a lonely stretch of grass-land, some distance outside the city of Glasgow. The criminals were Irish navvies, members of a large gang employed in the neighbourhood, and as there were rumours of a rescue, a detachment of cavalry, supplemented by field-pieces, surrounded the scaffold. The men were being brought in a cart to the place of execution, and when they reached the turn of the road, where they could first see the black cross beam, with its empty halters upon it, the doomed men cast an eager, fascinated gaze. . . . Around it a wide space was kept clear by the military; the cannon was placed in position, out flashed the swords of the dragoons, beneath and around on every side was the crowd. . . . The season was early May, the day was fine, the wheat-fields were clothing themselves in the green of the young crop, and around the scaffold, standing on a sunny mound, a wide space was kept clear. When the men appeared beneath the beam, each under his own halter, there was a dead silence—every one was gazing too intently to whisper to his neighbour even. Just then, out of the grassy space at the foot of the scaffold, in the dead silence audible to all, a lark rose from the side of its nest and went singing upward in its happy flight. Oh heaven! how did that song translate itself into dying ears?' . . . (From an essay by Alexander Smith, of Glasgow.)

Under the gallows tree
The lark springs up from the dewy grass
Where the feet of the doomed to their last goal pass;
Away from earth with its care and sin
As a soul which the Blessed land doth win.
Beneath, the shame and the mute despair
And the last lorn look on a world so fair.
But a burst of song from the azure height
Where the lark soars singing in happy flight
Comes down as an Eden voice from afar,
To spirits shut out by the flaming bar
Under the gallows tree.

Under the gallows tree
Comes a choking sob as the wild notes ring.
The dying behold a far-off Spring;
They are children again at the cabin door,
Watching the lark from the heather soar;
They hear it sing o'er the fields of May
And their mother's voice—was it yesterday?
For the years have vanished away with a bound,
The years with their sinful, sorrowful round.
Oh, life was sweet in those days of old;
It has ended now as a tale that is told
Under the gallows tree.

Under the gallows tree,
As the joy of song on the silence breaks,
A passion of late repentance wakes;
The hot tears gush from eyes long dry,
And a muttered prayer-word seeks the sky.
Hath it travelled upward by way of the light?
Hath it pierced to the throne of the Infinite?
Who knoweth? A moment, and all is done—
On each dead face falleth the bright May sun.
They have passed to a world whence comes no sign,
While the lark sings on, and the dewdrops shine
Under the gallows tree.

Mary Gorges.

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## 'HANSARD.'

It is a curious circumstance that of all the legislatures in the world, ours, the progenitor of them all, is the only one that has not got an official corps of reporters to record its debates and proceedings. We have, it is true, a publication styled 'The Parliamentary Debates,' or, as it is popularly known, 'Hansard;' but that is only a sort of semi-official report. It is not a report taken by shorthand-writers employed, as in other legislatures, direct by the State and printed at the public expense. The reporting and publication of 'The Parliamentary Debates' is the work of a private contractor who receives from Parliament a subsidy for each volume produced during the session.

'Hansard,' which from one point of view is a monument to the verbosity of our legislators, is from another point of view—and that, certainly, the more important—most invaluable to the historian. It forms a continuous and unbroken record of our Parliamentary institutions from the Conquest to the present day in close on five hundred volumes. The first thirty-six volumes, known as 'The Parliamentary History' (which were mainly compiled by William Cobbett), contain all that can be collected of the history of our legislature from 1066 until 1803. It was not until the second session of the second Imperial Parliament—that is, the second Parliament after the Union with Ireland, held in the year 1803—when the hostility of Parliament to the publications of its proceedings was well-nigh exhausted—that Mr T. C. Hansard appeared on the scene with the ingenious idea of compiling a report of the debates and proceedings of the two Houses of Parliament, mainly from the various newspapers of the time, and publishing it in volumes, under the title of 'Hansard's Debates.'

For fifty-four years 'Hansard's Debates' were produced entirely at the expense of Mr T. C. Hansard—the first, who died in 1833—and his son, Mr T. C. Hansard; but though Parliament contributed nothing to the undertaking, the subscriptions for the volumes from members of Parliament, newspapers, clubs, and public institutions made it a financial success. In 1857, when the sessional subscription was fixed at five guineas, at which it now stands, the Treasury, on the representations of some of the statesmen of the day, directed the Controller of the Stationery Office to subscribe for one hundred and twenty copies for distribution among the public departments and the colonial legislatures. This first subsidy by Parliament to 'Hansard's Debate,' continued until 1877, when on account of many complaints that the report was inadequate to the requirements of the House of Commons, the Treasury entered into an agreement with Mr Hansard, whereby in consideration of a grant in aid of £3000, he undertook to publish a more extended report. Mr Hansard then, for the first time, engaged a staff of reporters to supplement the debates compiled as hitherto from various newspapers by reporting the proceedings of the House on Private Bills, in Committee on Public Bills, in Committee of Supply, and debates after midnight, which, chiefly because of their uninteresting character, are briefly reported by the public press, and were as a consequence insufficiently recorded in 'Hansard' under the old arrangements. In 1880 the grant in aid was increased to £4000, but the sessions became so long, and the sittings so protracted, that the publication of the debates for a fixed sum per session was attended with considerable risk to Mr Hansard—the debates made nine volumes in 1881, and ten volumes in 1882—and therefore the Treasury in 1882 agreed to provide a subsidy of £500 for each volume of the debates of not less than nine hundred and sixty pages, provided the total number of volumes published each session exceeded five. This arrangement continued until 1890, when Mr Hansard sold his good-will as the publisher of 'Hansard's Debates' to a Company which undertook to bring out the Debates, without any subsidy

from the Government, relying on sales and advertisements for a profit, but the undertaking quickly came to grief. Since then, the work has been done by two other contractors, and the volumes published under the title of 'The Parliamentary Debates'—the old name of 'Hansard' having disappeared with the Company. Under the new arrangement, at present in existence, Messrs Waterlow, the Government printers, are the publishers, and the report is furnished by the reporting-staff of the *Times*, whose splendid Parliamentary reports formed the chief source from which, under the old arrangements, 'Hansard's Debates' were compiled.

It seems, indeed, almost incredible that a great and rich nation like ours should have left to chance, until 1877—not twenty years ago—the reporting of the proceedings of its Parliament, the most important factor in the making of its history, simply because its Treasury grudged the expenditure of a few thousand pounds per annum on the work. The features of the existing arrangements for the production of 'The Parliamentary Debates' are that Cabinet Ministers, other members of the Government, and the chief leaders of the Opposition are reported *verbatim*, and in the first person, or fully in the third person, according to the importance of their speeches; and that, as regards the speeches of private, or unofficial members, about two-thirds is, as a rule, given in the third person, the stipulation of the contract being that no member must be reported at less than one-third. The reporting staff of the *Times*, who, as we have said, supply the 'copy' to Messrs Waterlow, the publishers, turn out two separate and distinct reports—one for the *Times* and the other for 'The Parliamentary Debates,' so that the report is not possibly open to the charge of party bias, if there are any people so ignorant of journalistic ethics as to still retain the notion, which had some vogue in the early days of reporting, and which now at least is utterly without foundation, that reporters 'cook' their reports of speeches (or that they are 'cooked' in the newspaper offices) to suit the political views of the journals in which they appear. Three days after the delivery of a speech in either House of Parliament, a proof is sent to the member. He is allowed to make verbal corrections, but no correction involving the alteration of what had actually been said is allowed by the editor of the Debates. An asterisk (*) placed before the name of a member indicates that he has read and passed the proof of his speech.

The *Congressional Record* of the United States is conducted on an entirely different system. Every word spoken in both Houses of Congress is not only reported by the official stenographers and published in the *Congressional Record*, but the latter is also a receptacle into which senators and representatives throw speeches which they never deliver, or indeed anything else they like. Every member also seems to have a hand in editing it. We frequently read that 'Mr Smith withholds his remarks for revision,' or that 'Mr Smith here asked permission of the House to hand his manuscripts to the reporters.' Mr Smith had previously read aloud a small part of his speech to the House. There is a time limit to speeches in Congress; and consequently incidents like the following are frequently to be found in the *Record*.

MR SPEAKER—The time of the gentleman from Ohio has expired.

MR MOREY—Very good, Mr Speaker; then I will avail myself of the privilege of extending my remarks in the *Record*.

And he did, to the extent of several columns, including by way of quotation an entire article from the *Forum*. Formerly undelivered speeches might be printed in the *Record* as a matter of course, but 'the gentleman from Nebraska' having used this privilege to print and circulate a poem—'a little thing of his own,' which extended to close on twenty pages—the right was restrained. Now a member of Congress has to read at least a portion of his speech, and then ask permission of the Senate or the House 'to extend his remarks in the *Record*,' which, however, is rarely if ever refused.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

### CHAPTER V. (*continued*).

As Mrs Dalton always retired early, the girl was soon left alone, and her head was laid on the pillow, not to sleep, but to think. She felt what was coming—coming next day, perhaps; and what answer was she prepared to give? We must not be severe. She was young, and the first impression made upon her was made by Frederick Farmley. This impression, fixed to some extent by a sort of limited promise, had been too recent to have been obliterated by anything that had passed during his absence; and there was certainly much to revive and strengthen it since his return. The other lover was the trouble. But she was under no engagement to him, expressed or implied. On his declaration, not knowing her own feelings, she had postponed an answer. This was a little deceptive, but it was true all the same. Her honour was clear in regard to Maitland. But why should the girl silently argue with herself in this way, except to justify what she felt would happen if Freddie Farmley asked her to be his wife? Farmley was not to be compared to Dr Maitland—she was sensible enough to admit so much; but still——

In the adjoining room, Mrs Dalton's thoughts had been following the course of her daughter's. The reader knows the strong reasons she had for her choice between the two suitors. One of them she had confessed to Mary when they were going home from the funeral, and to Mrs Dalton's mind it would be ungenerous to press it again. But the other—the decision of the vicar, a few days before his death, to practically so cut off Mary in his will that she should be unlikely to become the wife of Farmley—it was her duty to make known to the girl now. Mrs Dalton also felt what was coming, and that it would be wrong to postpone the communication. She was not sure that Farmley had not already spoken; but this she would soon learn.

Mary Dalton was a little startled when her mother came into her room.

'Dear mamma,' she said, sitting up, 'can you not sleep?'

'Not until I have told you something, Mary. I will lie with you for a while.'

'Yes, mamma.'

'Mary, did Freddie Farmley speak to you this evening—I mean, ask you to be his wife?'

'Indeed, no!' was the prompt reply. 'Nothing of the kind was—was ever so distantly hinted at.'

'Then I am sure he is going to ask you, Mary.'

Mary said nothing. She was almost sure of it herself.

'And before he can do so, Mary, I am bound to tell you fairly a thing you have not heard of before.'

'If it is about Freddie, mamma'——

'Yes, about him.'

'Then, although I promised him never to speak of it again, I think it right to tell you a discovery I made.'

She told her mother the story of the Brocks. Mrs Dalton was a very honest woman, and did not conceal her surprise.

'It certainly makes one think better of him, Mary—not that I ever thought ill of him. He seemed rather wanting in worthy qualities than possessing bad ones. And I don't want to prejudice you now, but to tell you the bare truth, as Mr Fairfield or Mr Everard can also tell it. A short time before your uncle died, Mary, he made a new will, by which nothing came to you until my death. He was afraid of your becoming the wife of Seth Farmley's son. It could only have been a very powerful motive that impelled your uncle to do such a thing, knowing how affectionately he loved you.'

She had to stop, for the girl suddenly turned her face to the pillow, sobbing bitterly. It took two or three minutes to compose her, and in her anxiety to do so, the fond mother suffered her affection to outrun a little her discretion.

'You have not heard all, Mary,' she urged—though in truth it was the sudden memory of her uncle's love for her that had overwhelmed the girl, rather than anything else—'you have not heard all. Your uncle destroyed the second will before he died. Nobody knows why, but he certainly destroyed it—doubtless for some good reason. I thought,' she added, suddenly realising with a troubled mind that she had told the story very badly, 'I thought I ought to tell you, before—before he can say anything to you.'

The mother was almost like to sob now, feeling that she had miserably failed in the effect she had aimed at. For a minute or two Mary made no reply, and when she did speak, it was not difficult to see the direction her thoughts were taking.

'Have you—has Mr Fairfield—no idea at all why uncle changed his decision, mamma?'

'We know nothing.'

'Nor why he did that, at first?'

'I do not know, indeed,' she replied, though she suspected the distrust of the vicar had reference to Farmley's father. Of this, also, she knew very little. She knew nothing at all of the connection of Seth Farmley with her husband's ruin.

'Mamma,' said the girl, after another interval of thought, startling her mother a little by the unexpected decision of character she displayed, 'uncle would not have destroyed that will without cause. Neither would he have made it without cause. What the cause of the first act was, mamma, it may be in no one's power now to find out. But if—if Freddie Farmley—asks me the question you spoke of—mamma, if he does, before I answer him, one way or another, I shall want to know why uncle destroyed the will. I owe that to dear uncle, do I not?'

Mrs Dalton, with a grateful and much relieved heart, folded her daughter to her bosom. Her own weak indiscretion in suggesting justification for the act was remedied by the surprising clearness and decision of Mary. Mrs Dalton was not a person of strong character or mental power herself, and from this moment she looked up to her daughter as one capable of judging for herself. And she retired to her bed, comforted by the conviction that Mary might be trusted to judge wisely.

But when, next morning, soon after breakfast, Frederick Farmley called, matters took a sudden turn of the most unexpected character.

'I should not have intruded so early,' he apologised, 'only I have another letter from my father, and I must run up to London to-day.'

The expression 'another letter' pointed to the previous one, and without the evidence of the embarrassed colour on the young man's face, the purport of his present call was clear.

Mrs Dalton asked him to take a seat, and glanced at her daughter. The latter rose and was going from the room, when Farmley interposed.

'Would Mary remain for a minute or two, Mrs Dalton?'

The girl resumed her seat.

'Something happened the day of my landing in England,' he said awkwardly, 'which I want to mention. I received a letter at Southampton, on the steamship, which was waiting for me. I have not mentioned it to any one since, and never intended to do so. I thought that I ought not to do so—though of course I have been quite unable to understand its meaning.'

This was not a very intelligible speech, but he seemed confused and embarrassed, giving the impression that he would rather have avoided the communication. As he hesitated now, Mrs Dalton made the remark that doubtless the writer of the letter could clear up any obscurity in its meaning.

'That is just it, Mrs Dalton,' he replied quickly, as though she had helped him out of his embarrassment by the suggestion. 'The writer of the letter was—was dead when I received it.'

Both ladies started with the perception of a new significance in the matter.

'Of course, that was why I resolved never to speak of the letter to any person. But

something tells me,' he continued, with anxious diffidence, 'that I ought to do so now, as there appears to have been some misunderstanding, and this misunderstanding might still continue in the minds of others. The letter was from Mr Dalton.'

It was an anxious moment to Mrs Dalton. She knew not what she feared, but was conscious of being afraid of some revelation. As he seemed to wait for her permission or request to proceed, she said, after a pause: 'If you think that what you refer to, Mr Farmley, concerns Mary or me in any way, tell us what it is.'

On this permission he drew a letter-case from his pocket and took out a folded paper.

'I know,' he said, with a deprecating drop in his tone, 'that I have never done anything to deserve a high opinion of me. But it would appear from this that, for some reason unknown to me, Mr Dalton had conceived a violent animosity—no,' he quickly corrected himself, 'not that—he was incapable of it—but I will say, a strong distrust towards me. He did something (I do not know what) in consequence. On reflection, he found reason to think he had been wrong. You who knew Mr Dalton will readily understand how quickly he undid what he had done under misapprehension. It was just like him,' added the young man with feeling, 'not to be satisfied with that, until he had written a letter to me confessing his error and expressing his regret. I was on the way home at the time, and the letter was the first thing I received on landing.'

The story was related so unaffectedly, and with so much indication of tenderness for the good vicar's memory, that the listeners were moved. They knew what the vicar had done, and undone. Farmley modestly showed no curiosity to learn what it was. He was only anxious that, whatever the impression which had influenced the late vicar, it might not still by chance survive.

Farmley opened the letter and handed it to Mrs Dalton. Dimly through the rising tears she glanced at the familiar vicarage address printed in blue at the top of the sheet, and the date '4th July'—the eve of his death. The letter contained only two sentences, but they were pregnant with influence now.

'All my life I have been preaching against misjudgment, and I have fallen into the same error myself, with consequences that might have been sad for one I love dearly. What I did, under the influence of that error, I have undone; as it was you I misjudged, I ask you to forgive me, as I shall do again in person when I see you.'

Mrs Dalton handed the letter to her daughter, and when Mary had glanced over the words, she gave it back to Farmley. How full of significance the lines were to those two! Their eyes met, with a mutual consciousness, but they did not speak.

'That was all I wanted to do,' said the young man. 'I do not know—and as Mr Dalton is gone, I shall never seek to know—what his mistake was. I only ask that if those who survive know it, and have shared it, they will be as just as he was.'

'We know—but we have not shared it,' said Mrs Dalton, bowing her head. She felt that all was over now. The bright generous sparkle in her daughter's eyes told her all was over, and it was not in her power to resist any longer.

'We have not shared it, Freddie,' Mary exclaimed, rising with high colour, and coming to him. 'No—and—thank God, poor uncle had—had time to be just to you!'

'Then there is no longer any need for this to exist,' said Farmley, with an air of suppressed emotion. He had the letter in his hand, and, striking a match, set fire to the paper and flung it in the grate.

Mrs Dalton now rose, with a remark about getting her bonnet to go out, and went up to her room. Farmley's eyes were fixed on the letter until it was quite in ashes, when he turned to the girl, who was still standing close to him. Without saying a word, he drew her in his arms and kissed her.

'Now,' he whispered, 'now, Mary, I can go in for work with a light heart and a firm anchorage, and be—a man!'

The girl never lived who would not feel a sense of pride from such a tribute to her influence. Mary Dalton's arm went up to his shoulder, and she put her cheek beside it, on his bosom.

In a few minutes she went up to dress for going out. The mother required little telling as to what had taken place. She did not feel as happy as she might have been; but she was satisfied that nothing else was possible, and consented with gentle grace.

It was excusable enough for Farmley to be reluctant to leave Mary Dalton this morning, and he therefore telegraphed to his father that he would come up later in the afternoon.

'I have added two or three words, Mary,' he said, when he came out of the telegraph office, 'that will reconcile him to the delay. Can you guess what the words were about?'

After luncheon, Mrs Dalton remained within to write letters, and the lovers wandered over the Downs towards the old church of Reculver. Amongst other letters, she had to write one to Mr Fairfield, informing him of her daughter's engagement. In a long postscript, Mrs Dalton narrated the circumstances of the letter to Farmley, which, he would see, put an aspect on matters which Mrs Dalton could not resist. At five o'clock Frederick Farmley started for London.

Mary Dalton and her mother were now alone, for the first time since morning. Mrs Dalton was putting away her writing materials, and her daughter sat at a window pensively gazing out on the sea. There was some small trouble shadowing her eyes in the reaction that was setting in after the excitement of the morning. Mrs Dalton waited some minutes for her to speak, but the girl seemed to have forgotten her presence.

'I have written to Mr Fairfield,' the mother observed.

Mary woke up.

'Mr Fairfield? Of course, mamma; he is a trustee.'

'Just so, Mary; it was necessary. And besides, such a matter ought to be made known at once.'

Mary turned her face to the window again without speaking.

'Everybody will soon know it, Mary. I should have written first of all to Dr Maitland, only'——

'Only what, mamma?' Mary asked with pink face.

'He was here this afternoon, and I told him.'

'Here? Dr Maitland here?'

'Yes; he came down.' Then, after a pause, a tear ran down Mrs Dalton's cheek. 'I am so sorry for him!' she said.

## FANCY FIDDLE FIGURES.

By J. Cuthbert Hadden.

The man who has been bitten by the violin-collecting mania, and has but limited means to indulge his whim, is assuredly in a bad way. The stamp-collector and the bibliomaniac, and the deluded individual who sets his heart upon old china and Chippendale furniture, have each his particular dangers and temptations; but the collector of old violins has his pathway beset with perils and pitfalls which are his and his alone. A violin may cost anything from five shillings to two thousand pounds, and to one who has nothing more than his ear and his eye to guide him the speculation is as risky as a speculation in horses, or in diamonds, or in the 'latest odds.' Even if he goes to the experts in order to decide on the merits of an intended purchase, the only thing he can be absolutely sure of is the fee he will be charged; and in the end he may come to realise that it would have been better for him to leave the violin altogether out of account, and limit his desires to, say, the couple of meerschaums which Dr Holmes called for as a concession to contentment.

Of course it all comes of the craze for the 'old masters,' and of that fine romance of mystery which surrounds the violin itself as a musical instrument. For when you come to think of it, it is a curious and a bewildering circumstance that, in a world and in an age where progress is one of the laws of existence, the violin should be to-day not only as to form and all essential details exactly what it was some three hundred years ago, but that it is even now a less perfect instrument than it was when the old masters were warming their glue-pots, and mixing their vaunted varnish and chipping out their blocks of wood in the little Italian town of Cremona, now two centuries back. Mr Gladstone has said somewhere that to perfect that wonder of travel, the locomotive, has not required the expenditure of more mental strength and application than to perfect the violin. But then you can put the locomotive into the march of progress: the violin you can't. In this respect it stands alone among musical instruments. Flutes have been improved, new types of clarionet have been evolved, the harpsichord and the spinet have given place to the pianoforte, organs have come to be controlled by electricity—everything, in short, in the way of musical instruments has tended towards advance and improvement, while the construction of the violin is numbered—at any rate by the enthusiasts who run the fiddle prices into four figures—amongst the arts which have been and are not. The experience of centuries and the ingenuity of many generations of skilled mechanics have been altogether unavailing; and violinists to-day are content to starve themselves that they may give hundreds, nay, even thousands, for instruments which did not produce tens when they first left the workshops at Cremona.

To the uninitiated in such matters, this craze, this lavish expenditure of gold for what appears to be in no way different from the factory fiddles which they turn out at the rate of about a hundred per day—to the uninitiated this is but the insanity of unreasoning enthusiasm. But the uninitiated require to be enlightened on the subject. The great questions of course are: Why is an old violin better (presumably) than a new one? and why are violins not now made equal to the masterpieces of the old Italian school? Unless the general reader get something like an intelligent answer to these questions, one may as well keep his record of fancy fiddle figures to himself, for the result of the revelation would only be to support the opinion of Carlyle as to the number of fools at large.

Now, although the subject involves a multitude of debatable details, the main facts of the case are generally admitted. It is true we sometimes hear it said that new instruments can be made every whit as good as those of the Cremona school—that nothing but prejudice prevents the recognition of this fact. But nobody seriously believes the assertion; and indeed it is a sufficient refutation to point to the circumstance that all our eminent violinists want to have old instruments in preference to the best new ones that money can buy; and, moreover, that many of them pay fabulous prices in order to satisfy their ambition. None of these great players are wealthy men, and it is against our notions of common-sense to suppose that they would part with such extraordinary sums as they have been known to pay merely out of compliment to a sentimental prejudice. The mind of man, controlling the pockets of man, is not built that way.

No; an old violin—especially a violin of the Cremona school—must, if a good instrument to begin with, always be better than a new one. And for the following, among other reasons. First, the wood, probably of an uniquely-superior quality to begin with, has been mellowed by age. Time has dried up its vegetable juices, and the frame, lighter than it was when new, vibrates almost at a touch. Then a violin requires to be played upon a good deal in order to bring out its tone: the constant vibration set up by the strings tends to shake into hollows the pores of the wood, and expel the particles of dried sap in dust. Further, there is the question of the varnish, a question which, in the case of the old Italian instruments, brings us in contact with an unsolved and apparently unsolvable mystery. For more than a century now this varnish has been lost, and all attempts to reproduce it

have utterly failed. Some authorities contend that it was drawn partly from a tree which has now quite disappeared, a tree which died from the extraction of its resin, and being worthless as regards its timber, was not replanted. The fact has certainly been proved that such a tree did at one time exist in Northern Italy, but its use by the Cremona violin makers is, of course, a mere conjecture. What we know with absolute certainty is this, that the Italian makers had at their command a varnish no longer in existence, which has, in itself, added very considerably to the value and tone-quality of their best instruments. And then, last of all, there is the magnificent workmanship of the old Italian violins. That alone, to be sure, would not have been sufficient to create a craze for these instruments, for as regards the mere details of construction, they have been copied with mathematical accuracy by modern makers. But when you put wood and age, and use and varnish, and workmanship, all together into one artistic whole, then you have in these old instruments a practically unparalleled creation, whose worth is sufficiently attested by the price which men are willing to pay for it.

Of all the old Italian masters, Stradivarius stands pre-eminently supreme, both as to the quality of his instruments and the prices at present obtained for them. Mention Stradivarius to the veriest scraper of cat-gut, and you will throw him into an ecstasy of delight bordering almost on frenzy. And yet it is not so long since this incomparable genius 'came to his own.' It fills one with a kind of pathetic wonder to hear of the old man having to get back from England some instruments sent there on sale because he could not find purchasers for them at the low figure of £5, while a violin from his hands can now command the sum of £2000. Of Stradivarius, indeed, it may truly be said that he has made his fortune after his death. It is generally computed that he made between six hundred and seven hundred violins during his long life, and his price for an instrument is believed never to have exceeded £5. Nowadays it would be a very poor violin of Stradivarius make that did not run into three figures, whilst the finest specimens always touch the four.

So far, the 'record' price for a Stradivarius is the high figure just named, £2000. That fabulous sum was obtained for an instrument which is even now almost as fresh as when it left the hands of its maker exactly one hundred and eighty years ago. It has had a wonderful, even a romantic history, this priceless treasure; Stradivarius thought so much of it himself, that not only did he refuse to sell it, but he would allow no stranger to touch it, and when he died in 1737, at the ripe old age of ninety-three, he made a special bequest of it to his sons. In 1760 the latter parted with it to the Count de Salabue, who never played it, but kept it spotless, like some rare jewel, till his death about 1827. The count's heirs sold it to a certain Luigi Tarisio, an eccentric collector, who, beginning life as a carpenter, was found to have left a fortune of £12,000, when his body was one day discovered among a confused heap of some two hundred and fifty Cremonas which he had gathered together in the course of a thirty years' search.

Tarisio's collection would, of course, have become the object of ambition with violin enthusiasts all over the world, but Vuillaume, the high-priest of the art of fiddle-making in France, got scent of it, and purchased the whole two hundred and fifty instruments before any one else had a chance. When Vuillaume came upon the 'Salabue' Stradivarius, he too went into raptures over it. Indeed, such was his enthusiasm that he refused to part with the instrument at any price; and when the Franco-German war was going on in 1870 he had the treasure buried in a damp-proof, air-tight box for safety! Vuillaume went the way of all flesh, and then the violin passed into the hands of M. Alard, who gave £1000 for it. Alard, again, died in 1888, and two years later the violin world was astonished to hear that the 'Salabue' Stradivarius, now somewhat irreverently called 'The Messiah,' had been bought by Mr R. Crawford of Trinity, Edinburgh, for the unprecedented sum of £2000. The very high figure is, of course, accounted for to a great extent by the marvellous state of preservation of this instrument. As Mr Haweis expresses it, it is as though the ivory Minerva of Phidias that stood once in the Parthenon, should be discovered hidden away with the utmost care in some deep, dry, and hermetically sealed sepulchre of the East, and brought over scathless to be set up amidst the Elgin fragments, the only perfect relic of them all. So stands this matchless violin amongst its brethren. The thick, rich, red-brown varnish looks as fresh as if it had been put on but yesterday, for neither varnish nor wood has been rubbed, as in the case of every other known specimen of Stradivarius workmanship. The form and outline of the instrument are also incomparable for grace and beauty; while the tone, for strength, roundness, sweetness, and delicacy, is practically unmatched. We have not the slightest doubt that if this violin were to change hands again, its former price, phenomenal as that was, would be considerably exceeded.

The celebrated instrument known as the 'Betts' Strad. comes nearest to Mr Crawford's in the matter of price. This violin has also a remarkable history, though not exactly in the same way as the other. It takes its name from a London musicseller who, about sixty years ago, gave a stranger a guinea for it over the counter. Betts retained the treasure in his own family for a number of years, and after his death it passed through the hands of various collectors, until Mr George Hart, the well-known dealer, ultimately acquired it for eight hundred guineas. This was in 1878. Eight years later, Mr Hart sold the instrument to the Count de Campo Felice of Paris, and recently it has again changed hands, the price this time being a little under £2000.

The violin known as the 'Emperor' Strad., of date 1715, was the gem of a wonderful collection gathered together by Mr Gillott, the eminent pen-maker. Mr Gillott had bought it from another English collector, Mr Andrew

Fountaine, who had acquired it in Brussels about 1832. Nothing seems to be known of its history previous to this, but its subsequent adventures have been deemed of such importance as to merit a volume all to themselves. Its present value is set down at £1000, although it brought only £290 when sold with the rest of the Gillott instruments in 1872. It is what is known as a 'Red Strad.,' a term which to the connoisseur means 'the vision of a treasure of Cremonese art, covered with a transparent ruby varnish, such as has never been seen on anything else in this world.' Under the thin skin of the beautiful gum the lights are alive—golden and diamond flashes shooting through the crimson film over every particle of the wood, until each slender, fibrous thread appears to the delighted eye a centre of radiation, and all the surface soft as velvet to the touch. See how the enthusiast can write when he touches the Cremona varnish! This violin is now in the possession of Mr George Haddock, of Newlay Hall, Leeds. Some years ago Signor Piatti, our king of 'cello players, made a special journey to Mr Haddock's residence merely to set eyes upon the masterpiece.

The violin known as the 'Tuscan' Strad. is another excellent example of the rise in prices within recent years. In 1690 Stradivarius made four splendid instruments for the Grand-duke of Tuscany. About a century later one of these suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. What has been shown to be the same instrument turned up in 1794, in the hands of a musician named Mosell, in Florence. Mosell sold the violin for £25 to an Englishman named Ker; the latter brought it to England, and it remained in the possession of his descendants until his grandson sold it in 1876 to Mr Ricardo for £240. In 1888 Messrs Hill acquired it for £1000, and soon afterwards it was sold to its present owner, who is said to have declined £2000 for it.

A good deal might be said against the practice of hoarding up these priceless treasures, on the part of wealthy amateurs, who cannot be said to put the instruments to their legitimate use. Stradivarius never intended his violins to lie mute and inglorious in the cases of selfish collectors; and one has a certain sympathy with the suggestion which has often been made that a sumptuary enactment should be passed, compelling every amateur who cannot or will not use a valuable instrument for the public benefit, to give it up to some one who can and will. The notion may be realised by-and-by—in Utopia. Meanwhile, it is comforting to know that there are not a few famous Strad. and other old Italian instruments in the hands of leading players who give up their lives to the service of the public. Sarasate has a couple of instruments of Strad. make. One of these was presented to him by the Court of Spain; the other he bought from Gaud of Paris for £1000. Joachim is the lucky possessor of four Strads. They are all more or less valuable instruments, but the most costly of the four is the one presented to him by public subscription on the occasion of his artistic jubilee. This instrument cost £1200. It was purchased from Lady Lindsay; and it is interesting, as once more showing the gradual rise in prices, to note that Lady Lindsay bought the instrument for less than £600, while the person from whom she purchased it paid only £180. Another Strad., which was bought for £1250, was presented to Herr Waldemar Meyer. This instrument was purchased for £500 by its former owner, who thus cleared a profit of £750 by the transaction. Lady Hallé plays upon the Strad. which belonged to Ernst, the noted virtuoso. What she paid for it is not absolutely certain, but Ernst's widow sold it for about £500, and its value is now generally set down at £1000. Of course the value of all these Stradivarius instruments is considerably enhanced by what may be called their 'pedigree.' If they have an interesting history, the purchaser will certainly have to pay something for that history; while again, if they have been used by a noted artist or artists, the circumstance will assuredly mean a substantial addition to the sum which might otherwise be set down as their value. And it may just be added that a Stradivarius violin which does not fall under one or other of these conditions has probably no existence.

The great rival of Stradivarius nowadays is Guarnerius del Jesu, with whom the highest art of violin-making may be said to have died. If a fiddler cannot get a Strad., the next object of his ambition is a Guarnerius. Some few players, indeed, have shown a preference for instruments of the latter make, but the tone is not so easily produced, being more unyielding, and thus requiring more force and pressure to bring it out. Besides, the form has seldom that tender grace so characteristic of the work of Stradivarius. The virtues of the Guarnerius instruments were longer in being recognised than were those of the Stradivarius make. When at last they did receive attention it was mainly because Paganini achieved his marvellous successes on a Guarnerius violin—an instrument for which, by the way, the municipal authorities of Genoa, to whom it was bequeathed by the master, are said to have refused the sum of £10,000. Paganini would probably have played as well on a factory fiddle as on any other, for his *forte* was more trick than tone; but the violin world saw in his phenomenal feats of technique a compliment to his instrument, and it was not long before the Guarnerius violins were selling at long prices.

There are some splendid specimens of Guarnerius work now in the hands of players and collectors. M. Ysaye, the famous Belgian violinist, has an instrument which was bought in a London auction-room in 1876 for six hundred guineas. Mr Maurice Sons, the leader of the Scottish Orchestra, has one, but the price paid for it has not been disclosed. Mr Josef Ludwig and Mr Schiever also use Guarnerius violins. The late Mr Carrodus had a pair of very fine Guarnerius instruments. The best one cost him £700 when he bought it some thirteen years ago, and just before his death he declared that he would not take £1000 for it. The instrument had belonged at one time to Paganini, who lost it in one of his many gambling escapades. Mr Carrodus' second Guarnerius has been sold since his death for

£370. In 1846 this instrument became the property of Mr Alexander Mackenzie, of Edinburgh, and afterwards of his son, Sir A. C. Mackenzie. The latter sold it in 1882 for £400, and in 1893 Mr Carrodus bought it for £350. The prices of the Guarnerius instruments are steadily rising. In 1860 Vuillaume sold an instrument of this make to Ferdinand David for £240, which changed hands not so long ago at the sum of £800. The 'Leduc' Guarnerius, formerly in the Bennett collection, was sold lately to Signor Nicolini, the husband of Madame Patti, for £1500; and somebody was recently advertising an instrument in the *Times* for £1400.

Now and again a lucky hit used to be made in the way of violin 'finds.' A London dealer picked up an instrument in Paris some twenty-three years ago—'the price whatever Monsieur cares to give.' Monsieur cared to give as much as made the seller conclude that he was crazed, and then came home, touched up the instrument, and sold it for £450! That identical violin was to be heard quite recently in the orchestra of a well-known musical society in St James' Hall. The late Charles Reade, who was a keen enthusiast, made many bargains in his time. On one occasion, he gave a Parisian dealer £24 for a Guarnerius which was presently sold in England for £160. But the days of such lucky hits are gone. The great 'hunt' for Strads. is over, and of the two hundred or so genuine instruments in existence, the pedigree is as well known and as clearly defined as that of a prize animal.

## JAN PENGELLY.

### CHAPTER II.

One morning, Jan Pengelly stood in the hall of Tregartha rectory, waiting to see the rector.

'Old Parson Trevennick,' as he was familiarly called (and he did not resent the appellation), was an enthusiastic naturalist, and the leading spirit of the Cornish Ornithological Society. His *magnum opus*, 'Bird Life on our Western Shores,' had brought him much honour, but no pecuniary profit. By nature he was more a scientist than a theologian, half his heart being with his parish, and half in his beloved pursuit. He could have preached for ever on the text, 'And God created every winged fowl after his kind.'

The rectory was a veritable museum; glass cases of owls and hawks, and other 'fearful wild fowl,' lined the walls of dining-room and study; the very bedrooms contained rare feathered specimens; while the stuffed sea-birds in the hall almost rivalled in numbers the living multitude on the rocks beneath the cliff, that abruptly terminated the rectory garden. A faint odour of the chemical preservatives of feather and fur pervaded the whole house, so that old Lady Polperro was wont to declare that whenever she dined at the rectory the very soup smelt of camphor!

For many years the collection had been restricted to the natural history of his native county; but when the decline of the mining industry led to the exodus of Cornish miners to all parts of the world, an occasional tribute of curious bird or beetle, snake-skin or rare antler, would reach the old parson from the far corners of the earth, till the rectory became rich in outlandish treasure.

'Good-morning, Jan!' called Miss Trevennick, in her sweet low voice, as she entered from the library. His name was rightly *John*, but it was natural to fall into the vernacular in addressing him.

Jan made a respectful obeisance. Miss Trevennick was a divinity to Jan. He treasured her words and little deeds of goodness as a miser treasures gold. She was enshrined in the one vivid memory he retained of his early childhood. When Jan was a little fellow, and Rose Trevennick herself but a school-girl, she had one day met a crowd of rough lads, with the innate brutality of boyhood, baiting the poor half-witted child with shrieks and terrifying antics, and with flashing eyes she had stood between the lad and his tormentors, striking and shaming them to desist, while he clung pathetically to her skirts; and from that day the flame of Jan's devotion had waxed ever stronger, till he was now come to the verge of manhood, with a feeling of vague adoration for the rector's daughter, to whose skirts he still figuratively clung.

'I want to see the maister, if you please, Miss Rose,' said Jan; 'I want to show 'en this beautiful egg,' and he carefully produced from his cap a large green egg, with curious brown markings. 'Do 'ee mind the old doctor that was biding at Porthgunnock last summer? He shawed me the birds on the rocks under Trevasse Head, and he said there was only two or dree of they birds left in Cornwall, and in a few years there widden' be wan the world; and he said if I found an egg, and minded 'en till he comed again, he'd give me a guinea for 'en. If 'tis worth a guinea to a strange doctor man, 'tis surely worth a guinea to parson, and I want maister to see 'en. Isn't it a purty egg, Miss Rose? 'Tisn't a bit like a gull's, or a guillemot's, or a kittiwake's; 'tis surely a brave, curious egg.'

Miss Trevennick examined the egg with evident admiration; she had caught something of her father's enthusiasm for such things. Then with a little sigh she placed it carefully again in Jan's hand, and led him out into the garden.

'I want you to understand something, Jan,' she said, looking fixedly at him—Jan nodded. 'We are poorer than we used to be, much poorer, and my father is no longer able to buy the birds' eggs from you; he will not have money for such things.' Jan looked bewildered. 'We are poorer now because the Tregartha mine is not working'—Jan nodded again. 'So, Jan, you must please keep this egg till the doctor comes again, and he will buy it. I am quite sure it is worth the guinea.'

'I won't sell 'en, I'll give 'en to maister!' cried Jan, with animation; 'I won't take a penny for 'en, 'tis maister's! I tell 'ee, Miss Rose,' he continued excitedly, 'my rope was

short, and I could see two eggs, and couldn't reach 'em; and I swinged myself out clear of the cliff, and drapped into the watter, and climbed up the slippery rock, and reached and reached, and just got wan egg, and I swimmed back round Trevasse Head against a cruel nasty tide, and I've brought the egg for maister! I've brought 'en scores of eggs for money—this wan's for love!'

There was no resisting such vehemence of generosity, so, with a smile, Miss Trevennick led the way back to the house.

When they entered the library, the rector, divested of his coat, was seated on the edge of a huge packing-case. He was a tall old man, with long silvery hair, and a look of immediate trouble on a face that was otherwise singularly boyish.

'Rose, my dear,' he said, 'I find I must repack this box entirely; there are a few books that I cannot bear to part with, and they are all at the bottom. However, I believe the remainder will be sufficient for our present purpose, as many are indeed valuable editions; and I learn from this month's *Bibliophile* that there are several wealthy American buyers in London this season, and prices are running generally high.'

Never an economist, and with infantile notions of finance, the rector had been yearly growing poorer, through the failure of the mines in which his little capital was invested; and the recent bankruptcy of the farmer who rented the glebe, and who was two years in arrear, coinciding with receipt of a heavy account from a London taxidermist, abruptly brought home to the worthy old gentleman that he was urgently in want of cash; and in desperation he had resolved to meet the difficulty by selling a portion of his library. The selection and packing of these books was a painful task; there was a pang for each volume as he laid it in the box; he handled the books with a lingering caress, and many were taken again from the packing-case and replaced on the shelves as too precious for the sacrifice.

'Father,' said Miss Trevennick, tenderly laying her hand upon his arm, 'Jan here has a surprise for you—a little present.' And Jan, beaming with pleasure, again produced the egg.

'It's a gwennak's egg!' cried the rector excitedly, 'a veritable gwennak's egg! The bird is very rare, and is fast becoming extinct. Jan, my good fellow, this is indeed a prize!' and for the moment, all the trouble fled from his face as he eagerly examined the treasure.

Jan, flushed with pride, recounted his adventure. A momentary look of misgiving crossed the rector's brow as he turned to his daughter. 'Rose, my dear, I am afraid, as Dr Warrener discovered the habitat of the bird, and to some extent commissioned Jan in the quest, he is honourably bound to give the doctor the first refusal of this egg.'

Jan dimly understood, and vehemently objected. 'I tell 'ee, sir, there was two eggs—wan slipped away from my finger-tips. If the doctor wants t'other egg, let 'en swing like a spider from Trevassse Cliff, with his feet nowhere, and the black rocks waiting for 'en!'

Without further protest, the gwennak's egg was tenderly placed upon a safe shelf; and the rector availed himself of Jan's strength to haul the case of books nearer the window. The grief came back to the old man's face as he again fondled the beloved volumes; and Rose, turning to the window with brimming eyes, murmured, 'Poor father, poor old father!'

Only the day before, the rector had received a letter from a stranger in Plymouth, offering to buy, at a fair price, any shares in Wheal Tregartha he might have to dispose of; and the honest old gentleman had replied that it was well understood that the shares were of no value in the market, and he could not sell to another what he knew to be worthless.

Jan Pengelly left the rectory with his poor mind strangely bewildered. He vaguely understood the altered circumstances of the Trevennicks, and in a dim fashion he connected their losses with the failure of the Tregartha mine; had not people of the village, for lack of work at the mines, been sold out of house and home, and gone abroad to seek a living? But Parson Trevennick did not dig the copper, nor sell the copper—the problem was too much for Jan; his brain was in a whirl, and he instinctively turned his steps to the beach that he might sit by the sea and slowly think the matter out.

Is there elsewhere in the world a stretch of sea-shore so wildly beautiful as this southern coast of Cornwall, with its white sands, its glorious cliffs, the wonderful greens and purples of its translucent waters?

Rising perpendicularly from the sandy beach, to the west of Trevasse Head, stands the Warrior's Rock, a huge pile of multi-coloured serpentine, washed and worn by the tides and storms of the ages to some remote resemblance to a helmeted man. To the top of this fantastic rock it was the delight of Jan to climb; and in days of idleness he would spend hours on the summit. It was to the solitude of this airy perch that he now repaired; but for once he was blind to the changing hues of sea and sky, and deaf to the breaking wash of the waves beneath him, and the multitudinous cries of the wheeling sea-birds. His mind was sorely troubled. He remembered the whispered talk of the three miners that night on Tregartha beach, the mention of the parson, and the words of the old man Edwards: 'There's a brave heap of money yet in Wheal Tregartha.' It dawned upon him that all this concerned Parson Trevennick, and that he ought to be told about it. But the threat of Captain Trefusis rang in his ears, and he shuddered at the memory of that murderous little pistol glittering in the moonlight. Whatever real significance lay in the threat, the terror was actual enough to Jan.

Then he thought of the sweet face of Miss Trevennick; he had seen the tears in her eyes that morning. Had she not always been good to him? Did she not save him from the pixies of Carn Garu—the wicked pixies that used to torment him so, and had one night chased him all the way from Tregartha Church to the very door of the rectory—did she not teach him the Bible verse that had ever since charmed them away?

The tide crept slowly in, and made an islet of the rock; and as slowly turned and receded, leaving a wonderful floor of spotless sand; and

heedless of the hours, Jan sat there in troubled meditation.

If Trefusis shot him, they would bury him in Tregartha Churchyard, two miles inland; and he doubted if he could rest so far away from the water.

'Tis no odds to me,' he repeatedly murmured, but his simple heart rejected this formula of selfishness; and through the mists of doubt he gradually saw his duty plain enough.

Whenever he had to cross the moor in the gathering darkness, when the granite rocks took ghostly shapes as he hurried along, and he heard the dreadful flap, flap of goblin wings behind him, he would call aloud in the gloom: 'I will not be afraid of the terror that flieth by night!' and walked home unscathed.

The words of his 'Bible charm' came to him in his perplexity. 'I will not be afraid!' he cried; 'pixies or bullets, 'tis all the same—I will not be afraid of the terror!'

It was a hard fight that Jan Pengelly fought there on the rock, with weapons that were none of the keenest—a fight with the fear of death; but when at length he scrambled down to the beach, his face was happy enough, and he strode home with a sharp sense of appetite, and whistled to himself as he climbed the path that led past the coastguard station to the village.

When he entered his lodging, the widow's little girl of twelve, whose interest in Jan was quite maternal, was sitting at the spread table, and greeted him in a tone of severe reproach: 'Jan Pengelly, you 'm very late to your tea; wherever have 'ee been?'

## 'THE BALTIC.'

A LARGE, dingy, red-brick building, situated in Threadneedle Street where it joins Bishopsgate Street, attracts the attention of the passer-by who is not a city man. Looking above the handsome granite doorway, at the west end of the building, he sees the words 'The Baltic' standing out in bold relief. Concluding that the building must be a commercial Exchange, he naturally connects it with tar and timber, or other products of North Russia. Seized by an uncontrollable curiosity, or a laudable thirst for information, he passes through the large swing-doors at the entrance, and finds himself in a vestibule where there are several people waiting—so he ascertains—to see members. For he soon discovers that within the sacred precincts of the room only members are admitted. An official in blue and gold keeps jealous guard over the inner doors, and sees that no intruder passes through. A stranger attempting to effect an entrance is quickly discovered by this lynx-eyed individual, and politely ordered back.

Presently our friend with the inquiring turn of mind hears one of the callers give a name to the doorkeeper, who shouts it through a small aperture to another official inside. Peering through this aperture, he sees the latter official standing on a platform, and in front of him, an alarming-looking funnel-shaped object on a swivel. Through this object, which is nothing more than a megaphone or speaking-trumpet, the official intones in a loud, penetrating voice the name which has been passed on to him. In answer to the summons, a member hurries into the vestibule, and enters into conversation with the caller, or if the interview is likely to be prolonged, he takes him into a small anteroom, leading off the vestibule, which is provided for the purpose. We will assume that our hypothetical visitor suddenly remembers hearing his friend Mr Snooks who, he knows, is 'something in the city,' mention 'The Baltic' by name. Perhaps Mr Snooks is a member and can take him inside? At any rate, he will see.

'Will you call out Mr Snooks, please,' he timidly tells the blue-and-gold official. 'Which Snooks, sir?' the latter inquires; 'there are several in the room.' 'Josiah Snooks' is the reply, and forthwith the name of Josiah Snooks is bellowed through the megaphone. Mr Snooks soon appears, and upon learning his friend's wish, takes him inside, enters his name in the visitors' book, and shows him round.

He finds himself in a spacious room, with a low roof supported by Corinthian pillars. Pillars indeed are everywhere, the whole appearance of the building, both externally and internally, being suggestive of a patchwork arrangement which, he learns, is the result of certain structural alterations effected within recent years, with the object of increasing the space available for members. The wall on his left contains a succession of handsome mirrors, also a large clock and a wind-dial, which, he afterwards discovers, are specially useful as well as evidently ornamental. Ranged along this wall is a leather-covered Sybaritic settee, whose continuity is broken only by the large fireplace in the centre, also suggestive of comfort. He is told that when business is slack, members loll and take their ease on this seat, chatting—not always 'shop'—or reading the daily papers and periodicals, a liberal supply of which is provided. He finds at the western end of the room an alcove, with a table in the centre, upon which are the principal illustrated papers and several foreign journals—French, German, Greek, and Italian; the corresponding portion of the opposite side forming the Secretary's office. At the eastern end, just outside the private entrance to the building, he sees on the left a luncheon room and refreshment bar, where the members fortify the inner man against the wear and tear of their afternoon 'contracts,' or search for 'contracts.'

After passing, at the right hand corner, a pulpit-like structure, in which yet another leather-lunged official shouts out the names of members who are wanted by fellow-members, he discovers a telegraph office, outside of which is a succession of pigeon-holes containing inland and foreign telegram forms. Lower down, he finds a very complete telephonic system, embracing nine felt-walled cells, which effectually deaden all sound to and from the speaker, after he has been 'switched on' by the attendant in the telephone-box. Pursuing his explorations, he comes across a variety of foreign telegrams from the leading grain centres of the world, and these give him the first clue to the

nature of the business transacted within the building. His attention is next attracted by one of the Exchange Company's tape machines, where he may see an anxious speculator eagerly noting the fluctuations of the stock markets in which he is interested. Close by is a door leading down a flight of steps to the underground apartments, which consist of a lavatory, well looked after by attendants, and an inner room where newspaper files are carefully preserved. He learns that there are also other subterranean rooms, in one of which the Committee of Management meet for their deliberations. A casual glance during his peregrinations up-stairs has revealed to him the fact that the comfort of members in the matter of writing-tables, books of reference, and so forth, is attended to in a way which leaves little to be desired.

Assuming that the room is well filled, which it invariably is at noon and between four and five in the afternoon, the hum of voices which arises from the silk-hatted, keen-faced throng is suggestive of a huge beehive. Between four and five, the sound increases in volume, until just before five, when the doors of the building are closed for the day, it reaches its maximum, and so does the volume of smoke, for cigars and cigarettes are permitted after 4.30 P.M. Daring spirits have introduced, in summer, straw-hats into that conservative institution, but no one has yet had the temerity to light up a 'briar-root.' An unwritten law tabooing pipes is in existence, and the stony glare of the staid old members, to be followed, possibly, by a report to a shocked Committee, would probably meet the daring innovator, and annihilate the innovation. Ere our supposed visitor has found himself once more outside the building, a wiser, and possibly not a sadder man, he will have learned that the 'Baltic' is the great emporium in London for foreign grain, with ramifications, however, which embrace other trades of smaller dimensions.

But whence the name of 'The Baltic?' Like 'Lloyd's,' it is derived from the name of a coffee-house close at hand in Threadneedle Street, which flourished in the seventeenth century. Being frequented originally by Russian merchants chiefly engaged in the Baltic trade, the name of this coffee-house was sufficiently appropriate. The Russian merchants were followed by Greeks, always keen traders in grain. The business aspect of the Baltic Coffee-house as a place of resort for merchants assumed in course of time proportions which far outweighed its social importance, and it became necessary for its frequenters to cast about for a meeting-place which should afford them the necessary facilities for the further development of their rapidly expanding commercial relations with one another. The historic South Sea House, then untenanted—the headquarters of the huge national gamble with which its name is associated—was fixed upon, and in the year 1857, 'The Baltic,' as it is now known, first saw the light.

South Sea House is the property of 'The Baltic' Company, Limited, who receive a rental of £8000 a year from 'The Baltic' Committee, a body of leading men elected annually by the members of the room to manage their affairs for them. The Company is in a very flourishing condition, its £100 shares being worth about £700—as may well be the case in view of the annual dividend of 30 per cent. which they yield.

Candidates for admission to membership of 'The Baltic' must be proposed and seconded by two members, and their names are exhibited in a prominent position in the room for a certain period, before they are finally admitted as members by the Committee of Management. The entrance fee is £21 for principals, and £10, 10s. for their clerks; and the annual subscription is £10, 10s. for the former, and £7, 7s. for the latter. The total membership, including about one hundred and forty country and retired members, now stands at something between one thousand four hundred and one thousand five hundred. Notwithstanding the high rental paid 'The Baltic' Company, and the other heavy incidental expenses, the revenue account always shows a fair balance on the right side, the credit balance for last year being £870.

The business transacted on the floor of 'The Baltic' is of a sufficiently varied character. Besides cargoes of grain daily changing hands, a vast quantity of tonnage is annually chartered, and very important transactions in linseed, cottonseed, rapeseed, oils, tallow, &c. take place. Grain merchants and grain brokers; shipowners and shipbrokers; seed merchants and seed brokers; seed crushers and oil refiners all rub shoulders with one another. Wheat, of course, is the chief market of all, and its power is such that it often exerts an indirect influence over articles which have to all appearance only the remotest connection with it. Often the price of wheat affects, not only that of maize and of barley, &c., but also to a more or less appreciable extent that of linseed and cottonseed, owing to the cake products of these articles being used for feeding purposes. And the freight markets are directly influenced by the state of the grain markets; when the latter are brisk, chartering proceeds with a swing; and conversely, when grain is stagnant, there is little demand for tonnage, and rates of freight generally fall. The various branches of business on 'The Baltic' are therefore interlaced in a remarkable manner, notwithstanding their apparent diversity.

Occasionally speculation is rife in a particular article; but during recent years the speculative spirit has been largely dormant. Prices have ruled so low that 'bear' sellers have fought shy of going 'short' to any considerable extent, whilst there has been an absence of the 'bull' element, in view of the downward trend of prices generally. A good many years ago, tallow was an article which formed the subject of extensive gambling, but it now occupies a comparatively subordinate position in the affairs of the Exchange. Auction sales of this article take place every Friday in a small room in South Sea House, and members are duly apprised of them by an official ringing a bell at noon, followed by the announcement in stentorian tones: 'Tallow sales are about to commence, gentlemen.'

Huge operations having as their object the 'rigging of the market' are unknown on 'The Baltic.' 'Wheat corners' and 'maize rings,' names of dire portent on the other side of the Atlantic, are never attempted here; in view, indeed, of the increase in the number of exporting countries, and in the quantities of their exports, operations of this description would be altogether too Herculean a task to undertake, unless under circumstances which are unlikely to arise. But Brother Jonathan nevertheless too often rules the English grain markets with a rod of iron. For wheat and maize markets on this side follow America very closely; and any large rise or fall in New York or Chicago is at once reflected in prices here. Needless to say, the fluctuations in America are due very frequently to the most unscrupulous tactics on the part of 'shorts' and 'longs,' who manipulate the markets, and send prices up or down according to the strength of the opposing cliques. The English consumer thus has sometimes to pay for the so-called cuteness of Yankee operators. When grain markets are brisk on 'The Baltic,' the arrival of the American cablegram giving the opening prices of wheat and maize in New York and Chicago is awaited with, occasionally, feverish anxiety, and prices close better or worse according to the news from 'the other side.' The great influence thus exerted by New York and Chicago is of course primarily due to the dependence of this country on America for wheat and maize, a condition of affairs which will probably undergo a gradual change as other grain-exporting countries, more particularly perhaps the Argentine Republic, develop their rapidly expanding resources and export trade. At present South Russia ranks next to America in importance as a grain-exporting centre; Australian wheat is now a factor to be reckoned with; and India is always ready to export wheat when prices encourage shipments. Calcutta and Bombay still rule the linseed market, although their supremacy is being yearly more and more disputed by La Plata, whose exports generally, owing to a fertile soil, cheap labour, and a paper currency, have increased enormously in recent years. Cottonseed is entirely in the hands of Egypt, and she shares — but it is the lion's share — the bean trade with Morocco and Smyrna.

By a tacit understanding, for the sake of convenience, each trade has its own particular corner of the room, where those members who are engaged in it meet and transact business. Near the entrance to the room is the freight market, where current rates from Odessa, from the Danube, from Alexandria, from the River Plate, are discussed, and where expressions such as 'laydays,' 'cancelling dates,' 'deadweight capacity' are heard all around. In the centre of the room, linseed is the prevailing topic, and one can learn the price of 'spot Calcutta' or 'May-June Plate.' The same brokers will tell one the current value of 'November-January cottonseed,' or of 'July-August brown Cawnpore rapeseed.' At the farther end of the room, wheat and feeding stuffs reign supreme. The prices of 'No. 1 Californian' wheat on passage; June-July 'Plate' maize; May-June 'Azof' barley; and March-April 'Libau' oats become familiar to the ear. One learns that the months refer to the periods during which the produce must be shipped; that the mysterious expression which sounds like 'siff' means c. i. f.—say cost, insurance, and freight; that 'rye terms' are more favourable to a buyer than 'tale quale;' that produce is often sold before it is shipped, and sometimes before it is grown; that f. a. q. means 'fair average quality,' being a guarantee which obviates the necessity of showing samples, the display of which in the room is indeed forbidden.

Produce valued at many thousands of pounds daily changes ownership, without the production of a single document binding the bargain, until the contract notes are drawn out and signed. Confidence in mutual integrity after the conclusion of a bargain forms the basis of this apparently loose system, and any one abusing this confidence, say by repudiating a bargain, would be reported to the Committee, and upon conviction would be instantly relieved of his membership. Any disputes arising out of contracts are settled by arbitration, each side appointing an arbitrator; should the arbitrators fail to agree, an umpire is called in, whose decision is final. In this way disputes are settled quickly, inexpensively, and satisfactorily by practical men, a method infinitely preferable to setting in motion the cumbrous and expensive machinery of the law-courts.

'The Baltic' affords the opportunities so important to a commercial man, of transacting a maximum of business with a minimum of time and trouble. A merchant can sell a cargo of produce for shipment at some future period, and can then proceed to another part of the room and charter a steamer against the sale. Assuming that he has secured a profit on the transaction—a contingency which frequently the future course of markets can alone determine—he can afterwards, without leaving the room, seek out a stockbroker, and through him either invest his profit in 'gilt-edged securities,' or speculate with it in the Kaffir Circus or in Westralians. Some years ago, when trade was in a more flourishing condition than at present, members of the Stock Exchange were largely in evidence on the floor of 'The Baltic,' but their visits have of late been less frequent. In a sense, they may be termed the 'barometers of "The Baltic,"' for by their presence or absence may be gauged pretty accurately the volume of business which is being transacted, and the profits which are being made, within the walls of the building. A certain pregnant saying might here suggest itself to the irreverent mind, but one refrains from associating the stockbrokers who frequent 'The Baltic' with the gathering together of birds of prey, 'eagles' or otherwise, or their clients with the 'carcase' which provides a sumptuous feast.

And if the vocations of the members vary, how much more their nationalities. A more cosmopolitan assemblage of business men it would be difficult to imagine. Even 'English as she is spoke' by Englishmen on 'The Baltic' varies materially in accent and purity. The Irish brogue may occasionally be heard mingling

with a *soupçon* of the Scottish Doric. Jew and Gentile, Frenchman and German, Greek and Russian, Belgian and Italian; all creeds and no creeds, and nearly all European nations, are represented. The Germans and the Greeks form a considerable proportion of the foreign element, both in numbers and influence; some of the Greek merchants, particularly, are among the wealthiest members of the Exchange.

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, members may be seen in large numbers at the Corn Exchange in Mark Lane, where the brokers meet their country clients, and exhibit samples of grain which they have for sale. And every afternoon there is an exodus of those members engaged in the oilseed and cognate trades to the Royal Exchange, where sellers and buyers come into free contact with one another. 'Going on 'change' is a daily duty which is rigorously observed, whether or not it is likely to be productive of business.

Although a certain number of members are probably too deeply engrossed in business to devote much attention to pastimes, or recreation in any form, a considerable section are strongly of opinion that 'all work and no play makes Jack (or Fritz) a dull boy.' Consequently both art and athletics receive a certain amount of attention. The 'Cereals,' an association which combines sociability with the benefits of an Oddfellows' Society, has been the means of unearthing musical talent and promoting good-fellowship amongst those members who belong to it. And operettas, written, composed, and performed by members, have in the past been the means of developing whatever histrionic talent the latter may possess. The rowing men in the room have on several occasions displayed their prowess in friendly contests with crews selected from the members of the Shipping Exchange. And 'The Baltic' numbers amongst its members international footballers, present and past; whilst tennis and kindred games have also well-known exponents.

A feeling of 'hail-fellow! well met,' generally prevails, which goes far towards relieving the strain of business, and oiling the wheels of life as it is lived within the walls of the large brick building in Threadneedle Street.

## THE DISBURSEMENT SHEET.

By W. W. Jacobs.

The old man was dead, and his son Edward reigned in his stead. The old man had risen from a humble position in life; his rule was easy, and his manner of conducting business eminently approved of by the rough old seamen who sailed his small craft round the coast, and by that sharp clerk Simmons, on whose discovery the old man was wont, at times, to hug himself in secret. The proceedings, when one of his skippers came home from a voyage, were severely simple. The skipper would produce a bag, and, emptying it upon the table, give an account of his voyage; whenever he came to an expenditure, raking the sum out of the heap, until, at length, the cash was divided into two portions, one of which went to the owner, the other to the skipper.

But other men, other manners. The books of the inimitable Simmons being overhauled, revealed the startling fact that they were kept by single entry; in addition to which, a series of dots and dashes appeared against the figures, forming a code, the only key to which was locked up somewhere in Simmons's interior.

'It's a wonder the firm hasn't gone bankrupt long ago,' said the new governor, after the clerk had explained the meaning of various signs and wonders. 'What does this starfish against the entry mean?'

'It isn't a starfish, sir,' said Simmons; 'it means that one bag of sugar got wetted a little; then, if the consigners notice it, we shall know we have got to allow for it.'

'A pretty way of doing business, upon my word. It'll all have to be altered,' said the other. 'I must have new offices, too; this dingy little hole is enough to frighten people away.'

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Captain Fazackerly, of the schooner *Sarah Ann*, who, having just brought up in the river, had hastened to the office to report.

'Mornin', sir,' said the captain respectfully; 'I'm glad to see you here, sir, but the office don't seem real like without your father sitting in it. He was a good master, and we're all sorry to lose him.'

'You're very good,' said the new master, somewhat awkwardly.

'I expect it'll take some time for you to get into the way of it,' said the captain, with a view to giving the conversation a more cheerful turn.

'I expect it will,' said the new master, thinking of the starfish.

'It's a mercy Simmons wasn't took too,' said the captain, shaking his head. 'As it is, he's spared; he'll be able to teach you. There ain't' — he lowered his voice, not wishing to make Simmons unduly proud—'there ain't a smarter clerk in all Liverpool than wot he is.'

'I'm glad to hear it,' said the new master, regarding the old man with raised eyebrows, as he extricated a plethoric-looking canvas bag from his jacket pocket, and dropped it with a musical crash on the chipped office table. His eyebrows went still higher, as the old man unfastened the string, and emptying the contents on to the table, knitted his brows into reflective wrinkles, and began to debit the firm with all the liabilities of a slow but tenacious memory.

'Oh, come,' said the owner sharply, as the old man lovingly hooked out the sum of five-and-sixpence as a first instalment, 'this won't do, cap'n.'

'Wot won't do, Mas'r Edward?' inquired the old man in surprise.

'Why, this way of doing business,' said the other. 'It's not business-like at all, you know.'

'Well, it's the way me an' your pore old father has done it this last thirty year,' said the

skipper, 'an' I'm sure I've never knowingly cheated him out of a ha'penny; and a better man o' business than your father never breathed.'

'Yes; well, I'm going to do things a bit differently,' said the new master. 'You must give me a proper disbursement sheet, cap'n, if you please.'

'And what may that be?' inquired Captain Fazackerly, as, with great slowness, he gathered up the money and replaced it in the bag; 'I never heard of it afore.'

'Well, I haven't got time to teach you book-keeping,' said the other, somewhat nettled at the old man's manner. 'Can't you get some of your brother captains to show you? Some deep-sea man would be sure to know.'

'I'll see what I can do, sir,' said the skipper slowly, as he turned towards the door. 'My word was always good enough for your father.'

In a moody, indignant frame of mind, he stuck his hands furiously in his trousers' pockets, and passed heavily through the swing-doors. At other times he had been wont to take a genial, if heavy interest in passing events; but, in this instance, he plodded on, dwelling darkly upon his grievance, until he reached, by the mere force of habit, a certain favourite tavern. He pulled up sharply, and, as a mere matter of duty and custom, and not because he wanted it, went in and ordered a glass of gin.

He drank three, and was so hazy in his replies to the young lady behind the bar, usually a prime favourite, that she took offence, and availing herself, for private reasons, of a public weapon, coldly declined to serve him with a fourth.

'Wot?' said the astounded Fazackerly, coming out of his haze.

'You've had enough!' said the girl firmly. 'You get aboard again, *and mind how you do so.*'

The skipper gazed at her for a moment in open-mouthed horror, and then, jamming his hat firmly over his brows, stumbled out of the door and into the street, where he ran full into the arms of another mariner who was just entering.

'Why, Zacky, my boy,' cried the latter, clapping him lustily on the back, 'how goes it?'

In broken indignant accents the other told him.

'You come in with me,' said the new-comer.

'I'll never enter that pub again,' said the skipper.

'You come in with me,' said the master-mind firmly.

Captain Fazackerly hesitated a moment, and then, feeling that he was safe in the hands of the master of a foreign-going barque, followed him into the bar, and from behind his back, glared defiantly at his fair foe.

'Two glasses o' gin, my dear,' said Captain Tweedie, with the slightest possible emphasis.

The girl, who knew her customer, served him without a murmur, deftly avoiding the gaze of ungenerous triumph with which the injured captain favoured her, as he raised the cooling beverage to his lips. The glass emptied, he placed it on the counter, and sighed despondently.

'There's something up with you, Zacky,' said Tweedie, eyeing him closely as he bit the end off a cigar; 'you've got something on your mind.'

'I've been crool hurt,' said his friend, in a hard, cold voice. 'My word ain't good enough for the new guv'nor; he wants what he calls a disbursement sheet.'

'Well, give him one,' said Tweedie. 'You know what it is, don't you?'

Captain Fazackerly shook his head, and pushing the glasses along the counter, nodded for them to be refilled.

'You come aboard with me,' said Tweedie, after they had emptied them.

Captain Fazackerly, who had a doglike faith in his friend, followed him into the street, and on to his barque. In a general way, he experienced a social rise when he entered the commodious cabin of that noble craft, and his face grew in importance as his host, after motioning him to a seat, placed a select array of writing materials before him.

'I s'pose I've got to do it,' he said slowly.

'Of course you have,' said Tweedie, rolling his cigar between his thin lips; 'you've got orders to do so, haven't you? We must all obey those above us. What would you do if one of your men refused to obey an order of yours?'

'Hit him in the face,' said Captain Fazackerly, with simple directness.

'Just so,' said Tweedie, who was always ready to impart moral teaching. 'And when your governor asks for a disbursement sheet, you've got to give him one. Now, then, head that paper—Voyage of the *Sarah Ann*, 180 tons register, Garston Docks to Limerick.'

The captain squared his elbows, and, for a few seconds, nothing was heard but his stertorous breathing, and the scratching of the pen; then a muttered execration, and Captain Fazackerly put down his pen with a woe-begone air.

'What's the matter?' said Tweedie.

'I've spelt register without the "d,"' said the other; 'that's what comes o' being worried.'

'It don't matter,' said Tweedie hastily. 'Now, what about stores? Wait a bit, though; of course ye repaired your side-lamps before starting?'

'Lor', no!' said Captain Fazackerly, staring; 'what for? They were all right.'

'Ye lie,' said Tweedie sternly; 'you did! To repairs to side-lamps, ten shillings. Now, then, did you paint her this trip?'

'I did,' said the other, looking at the last entry in a fascinated fashion.

'Let's see,' said Tweedie meditatively—'we'll say five gallons of black varnish at one shilling and threepence a gallon'——

'No, no,' said the scribe; 'I used gas tar at threepence a gallon.'

'Five gallons black varnish, one shilling and threepence a gallon, six-and-fivepence,' said Tweedie, raising his voice a little; 'have you got that down?'

After a prolonged struggle with his feelings, the other said he had.

'Twenty-eight pounds black paint at twopence a pound,' continued Tweedie.

'Nay, nay,' said the skipper; 'I allus saves the soot out of the galley for that.'

The other captain took his cigar from his lips, and gazed severely at his guest.

'Am I dealing with a chimney-sweep or a ship's captain?' he inquired plaintively; 'it would simplify matters a bit if I knew.'

'Go on, Captain Tweedie,' said the other, turning a fine purple colour; 'how much did you say it was?'

'Twenty-eight twos equals fifty-six; that's four-and-ninepence,' continued Tweedie, his face relaxing to receive the cigar again; 'and twenty-eight pounds white-lead at twenty-eight shillings a hundredweight'——

'Three penn'orth o' whiting's good enough for me, matey,' said Captain Fazackerly, making a stand.

'See here,' said Tweedie, 'who's making out this disbursement sheet, you or me?'

'You are,' said the other.

'Very good, then,' said his friend; 'now don't you interrupt. I don't mind telling you, you must never use rubbish o' that sort in a disbursement sheet. It looks bad for the firm. If any other owners saw that in your old man's sheet, he'd never hear the end of it, and he'd never forgive you. That'll be—what did I say? Seven shillings. And now we come to the voyage. Ye had a tug to give ye a pluck out to the bar.'

'No; we went out with a fair wind,' said Captain Fazackerly, toying with his pen.

'Ye lie; ye had a tug out to the bar,' repeated Tweedie wearily. 'Did ye share the towing?'

'Why, no, I tell 'e'——

'That'll be three pounds, then,' said Tweedie. 'If ye'd shared it, it would have been two pound ten. You should always study your owner in these matters, cap'n. Now, what about bad weather? Any repairs to the sails?'

'Ay, we had a lot o' damage,' said Fazackerly, laying down his pen; 'it took us days to repair 'em. Cost us four pounds. We had to put into Holyhead for shelter.'

'Four pounds,' said Tweedie, his voice rising almost to a scream.

'Ay, all that,' said Fazackerly, very solemnly.

'Look here,' said Tweedie, in a choked voice. 'Blown away fore lower topsail, fore-staysail, and carried away lifts to staysail. To sailmaker for above, eleven pounds eighteen shillings and tenpence. Then ye say ye put into Holyhead for shelter. Well, here in entering harbour we'll say loss of port anchor and thirty fathoms of chain cable'——

'Man alive,' said the overwrought skipper, hitting the table heavily with his fist, 'the old anchor's there for him to see.'

'To divers recovering same, and placing on deck, two pound ten,' continued Tweedie, raising his voice. 'Did you do any damage going into dock at Limerick?'

'More than we've done for years,' said Fazackerly, and shaking his head, entered into voluminous details; 'total, seven pounds.'

'Seven pounds,' said the exasperated Tweedie. 'Seven pounds for all that, and your insurance don't begin till twenty-five pounds. Why, damme, you ain't fit to be trusted out with a ship. I firmly b'lieve if you lost her you'd send in a bill for a suit of clothes, and call it square. Now take this down, and larn a business way o' doing things. In entering dock, carried away starboard cathead and started starboard chain plates; held survey of damage done: decided to take off channel bends, renew through bolts, straighten plates and replace same; also to renew cathead and caulk ship's side in wake of plate, six seams, &c., &c. There, now, that looks better. Twenty-seven pounds eighteen and sevenpence halfpenny, and I think, for all that damage, it's a very reasonable bill. Can you remember anything else?'

'You've got a better memory than I have,' said his admiring friend. 'Wait a bit, though; yes, I had my poor old dog washed overboard.'

'Dog!' said the deep-sea man; 'we can't put dogs in a disbursement sheet. 'Tain't business.'

'My old master would have given me another one, though,' grumbled Fazackerly. 'I wouldn't ha' parted with that dog for anything. He knew as much as you or me, that dog did. I never knew him to bite an officer, but I don't think there was ever a man came on the ship but what he'd have a bit out of, sooner or later.'

'Them sort of dogs do get washed overboard,' said Tweedie impatiently.

'Boys he couldn't abear,' pursued the other, in tones of tender reminiscence; 'the mere sight of a boarding-school of 'em out for a walk would give him hydrophoby almost.'

'Just so,' said Tweedie. 'Ah! there's cork fenders; ye may pick them up floating down the river, or they may come aboard in the night from a craft alongside; they're changeable sort o' things, but in the disbursement sheet they must go, and best quality too, four-and-sixpence each. Anything else?'

'There's the dog,' said Fazackerly persistently.

'Copper nails, tenpence,' said Tweedie the dictator.

'Haven't bought any for months,' said the other, but slowly entering it.

'Well, it ain't exactly right,' said Tweedie, shrugging his shoulders, 'but you're so set on him going in.'

'Him? Who?' asked Captain Fazackerly, staring.

'The dog,' said Tweedie; 'if he goes in as copper nails, he won't be noticed.'

'If he goes in as tenpence, I'm a Dutchman,' said the bereaved owner, scoring out the copper nails. 'You never knew that dog properly, Tweedie.'

'Well, never mind about the dog,' said Tweedie; 'let's cast the sheet. What do you think it comes to?'

''Bout thirty pun',' hazarded the other.

'Thirty fiddlesticks,' retorted Tweedie; 'there you are in black and white—sixty-three pounds eighteen shillings and tenpence-ha'penny.'

'And is that what Mas'r Edward wants?' inquired Captain Fazackerly, gasping.

'Yes; that's a properly drawn up disbursement sheet,' said Tweedie, in satisfied tones. 'You see how it simplifies matters. The governor can see at a glance how things stand, while, if you trusted to your memory, you might forget something, or else claim something you didn't have.'

'I ought to have had them things afore,' said Captain Fazackerly, shaking his head

solemnly. 'I'd ha' been riding in my carriage by now.'

'Never ye dream of having another vy'ge without one,' said Tweedie. 'I doubt whether it's lawful to render an account without one.'

He folded the paper, and handed it to his friend, who, after inspecting it with considerable pride, tucked it carefully away in his breast pocket.

'Take it up in the morning,' said Tweedie. 'We'll have a bit o' tea down here, and then we'll go round a bit afterwards.'

Captain Fazackerly having no objection, they had tea first, and then, accompanied by the first mate, went out to christen the disbursement sheet. The ceremony, which was of great length, was solemnly impressive towards the finish. Captain Tweedie, who possessed a very sensitive, highly-strung nature, finding it necessary to put a licensed victualler out of his own house before it could be completed to his satisfaction.

The one thing which Captain Fazackerly remembered clearly the next morning when he awoke was the disbursement sheet. He propped it against the coffee-pot during breakfast, and read selections to his admiring mate, and after a refreshing toilet, proceeded to the office. Simmons was already there, and before the skipper could get to the purpose of his visit, the head of the firm arrived.

'I've just brought the disbursement sheet you asked for, sir,' said the skipper, drawing it from his pocket.

'Ah, you've got it, then,' said the new governor, with a gracious smile; 'you see it wasn't so much trouble after all.'

'I don't mind the trouble, sir,' interrupted Captain Fazackerly.

'You see it puts things on a better footing,' said the other. 'I can see at a glance now how things stand, and Simmons can enter the items straight away into the books of the firm. It's more satisfactory to both of us. Sit down, cap'n.'

The captain sat down, his face glowing with this satisfactory recognition of his work.

'I met Cap'n Hargreaves as I was a-coming up,' he said; 'and I explained to him your ideas on the subject, an' he went straight back, as straight as he could go, to make out *his* disbursement sheet.'

'Ah, we shall soon have things on a better footing now,' said the governor, unfolding the paper, while the skipper gazed abstractedly through the small, dirty panes of the office window at the bustle on the quay below.

For a short space there was silence in the office, broken only by the half-audible interjections of the reader. Then he spoke.

'Simmons!' he said sharply.

The old clerk slipped from his stool, and obeying the motions of his employer, inspected, in great astonishment, the first disbursement sheet which had ever entered the office. He read through every item in an astonished whisper, and, having finished, followed the governor's example and gazed at the heavy figure by the window.

'Captain Fazackerly,' said his employer, at length, breaking a painful silence.

'Sir,' said the captain, turning his head a little.

'I've been talking with Simmons about these disbursement sheets,' said the owner, somewhat awkwardly; 'Simmons is afraid they'll give him a lot of extra trouble.'

The captain turned his head a little more, and gazed stolidly at the astonished Simmons.

'A man oughtn't to mind a little extra trouble if the firm wishes it,' he said, somewhat severely.

'He's afraid it would throw his books out a bit,' continued the owner, deftly avoiding the gaze of the injured clerk. 'You see, Simmons's book-keeping is of the old-fashioned kind, cap'n, starfishes and all that kind of thing,' he continued, incoherently, as the gaze of Simmons, refusing to be longer avoided, broke the thread of his discourse. 'So I think we'll put the paper on the fire, cap'n, and do business in the old way. Have you got the money with you?'

'I have, sir,' said Fazackerly, feeling in his pocket, as he mournfully watched his last night's work blazing up the chimney.

'Fire away, then,' said the owner, almost cordially.

Captain Fazackerly advanced to the table, and clearing his throat, fixed his eyes in a reflective stare on the opposite wall and commenced:

'Blown away fore lower topsail, fore-staysail, and carried away lifts to staysail. To sailmaker for above, eleven pounds eighteen shillings and tenpence,' he said, with relish. 'Tug out to the bar, three pounds. To twenty-eight pounds black soot, I mean paint'——

## THE PRIDE OF THE COUNTRY-SIDE.

Oh! Phyllis is surpassing fair,
I know no maid that's fairer;
Her beauty is beyond compare—
No beauty could be rarer:
She scorneth fickle fashion's guide,
And russet is her gown—
Yet she's the pride of the country-side
And the envy of the town!

She is a queen we all declare,
Though no crown she possesses,
Beyond a wealth of rich brown hair,
That hangs in dainty tresses:
Her matchless eyes have long outvied
The gems in monarch's crown—
And she's the pride of the country-side
And the envy of the town!

Her form is full of fairy grace,
Her voice is music mellow,
And oh! the bloom upon her face
Is the red rose's fellow:
Ah! he who wins her for his bride
Wins more than wealth, renown—
For she's the pride of the country-side
And the envy of the town!

F. J. Cox.

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## THE GLASTONBURY LAKE-DWELLERS.

By Charles Edwardes.

I visited Glastonbury the other day, not to see the Abbey or the Holy Thorn—cuttings of which are in countless urban back-gardens—but to transport myself in fancy a thousand or two years earlier than the foundation of the Abbey or the first planting of the thorn-bush. The Abbey is all very well as an antiquity. It is, however, nowhere in comparison with the prehistoric village lately dug out of the marsh-land between Glastonbury and Godney, in the midst of the flat, black-ditched watershed of the little river Brue.

It was a dismal morning as I strode along the muddy road towards Blow-hard Farm, the initial stage of my trivial investigations. The rain fell in 'strings'—that, I believe, is the most expressive modern term—and the clouds seemed welded fast from horizon to horizon. Yet, from beneath my umbrella I could see enough of little Glastonbury to admire it. There was an apple-tree in blossom in one garden; and roses and sun-flowers also testified to the mildness of the season. For the rest, the village—it is scarcely more—seemed steeped in bucolic somnolence. The sweet perfume of peat-smoke stole abroad on the moist air from divers modest chimneys; and the tongues of the few wayfarers with whom I clashed spoke in the broad free dialect of the land.

The houses were soon all left behind. Stretched before me to the west, south, and north, was a vast level area, which made Glastonbury's Tor seem a mountain by contrast. I was actually on the brink of what was in Henry VIII.'s time the Meare Pool, a sheet of water 'in circuite fyve mile and one myle and half brode.' The Pool has, however, now become a nonentity. Its drained bed is trimmed into many a rich meadow, with pollard elms and oaks on the boundaries, and green-scummed ditches separating one from another. It is a great dairy district. At Blow-hard Farm I saw many milk-cans, and the balmy breath of kine drifted from the damp stalls towards the muddy road.

A mile or so from Glastonbury I reached my quarry. The chief indication of it was a notice board in the wet meadow to my right, near a turbid ditch, advertising a reward of ten shillings for the conviction of any trespasser on the field. Undeterred, however, I climbed into the precincts. There were low heaps of upturned soil in the field, ruts and pools of agitated water between the heaps, a shed or two, and several dozen insignificant grassy mounds spread over an area of three or four acres. These mounds are the prehistoric village in its modern presentment. Hardly one of them is more than eighteen inches above the normal level of the field, and until they were broken into, there was nothing to convince the beholder that man, and not a race of gigantic moles, was responsible for what lay beneath them. But for the laudable curiosity of Mr Arthur Bulleid, in the spring of 1892, the traveller between Godney and Glastonbury would still pass by this home of our remote progenitors in complete ignorance of its existence.

A streak of blue smoke from a hovel of sods on the margin of the lake village told of nineteenth-century mortals quite as forcibly as the sections of certain of the mounds recalled an old-time population. In answer to a call, a commonplace navvy stepped from the hovel and placed himself at my disposition.

'There is little to see, sir, in such weather,' said the man. 'The old beams the houses were raised on lie under water, and we are filling up the holes until the spring. Then we shall begin upon other mounds, and see what turns up.'

Their *modus operandi* is simple enough. The mounds anatomised are first stripped of their cuticle of turf. Then nine or ten inches of soil are removed, and a hearthstone is displayed, embedded in clay, or the charred remains of

various things—from bones, ashes, and broken pottery to weaving-combs, nutshells, and spindle whorls. Lower still there may be a second hearthstone, a third, a fourth, or even a fifth. And under all are the more or less sound or rotten relics of the horizontal woodwork which formed the flooring to the hut, and which in its turn was supported over the surface of the lake by vertical piles sunk from twelve to fifteen feet into the ground. Each mound has its hearthstone, or layer of hearthstones. And to each hut we may therefore apportion a family of these early lake-dwelling Britons.

The best thing still visible in the enclosed area was a little tongue of bright pebbly land running into the heart of the excavated region. This is supposed (reasonably or not) to have been the village landing-place: an artificial pier for the boats to draw alongside. Hence our ancient friends could readily ascend to the platform upon which the residential huts nestled in such very social contiguity to each other. Perhaps one may, without insulting these Somersetshire lake-dwellers, fairly compare their modes of existence to those of the Polynesians, photographs of whose houses on platforms may be seen in the British Museum.

Only two or three fragments of the house-piles were to be seen. They were black from long interment in the peaty earth, and now rotten from exposure. But I was assured that when they were first drawn from the soil their points were quite sharp, and apparently as serviceable as when they were set. A section of a boat also lay in one of the trenches, deep under water.

In the excavation hut adjacent to the works were a number of suggestive trifles, and heaped outside was a cubic yard or so of mixed bones. Oyster-shells were not abundant, but enough were present to prove that these ancients knew how to vary their flesh diet in the most delicate manner. Bones of horses, oxen, sheep, deer, dogs, cats, beavers, and swine also help us to figure in a manner some of the conditions of their life. Here, too, were several of the broken hearthstones. There is no quarry nearer than Street, a village two or three miles distant. The reddish stone has been identified as likely to have been obtained from Street. How, it may be asked, came there to be as many as four or five of these stones in a single hut? The answer is simple. The hearths were in the middle of the residences, mounted on a little dais of clay or pebbles embedded in clay. In process of time, as one hearth sank into the clay, another was placed over it. From the number of the hearths, therefore, we may guess at the relative age of the particular domestic establishment. Similarly, we may conjecture that the more outlying mounds, in which the hearths are single, and not notably sunken, represent the latest additions to the lake village—either the homes of accredited immigrants, or of enterprising young men determined to have houses of their own rather than live patriarchally with their fathers.

Of pottery there is great store. Neither here nor in the Glastonbury Museum did I see a single unbroken pot or urn. The raiders who finally put an end to this once happy settlement burned and smashed the huts so that they became incoherent masses, and the floods of centuries duly put their crust of alluvial detritus over the entire village. The interment was complete until 1892 A.D.

Half an hour spent in this saturated meadow was more than adequate for my purpose. My guide, though willing, could not tell me very much. He was only a paid digger and delver: in no sense an archæologist. When he had passed sentence on the former inhabitants as 'little better than a lot of wild savages,' it probably seemed to him that he had righteously quenched what measure of enthusiasm the continuous rain had left in me. But, in fact, he had done nothing of the kind. I had seen the site of the lacustrine village. It now behoved me to theorise over the objects taken from it: those deemed worthless by the sea-robbers or others who effectually put an end to the settlement in an unknown century, or those which were designedly left behind as grim witnesses to their brutality and might.

The most inspiring articles in the Glastonbury Museum are the two skulls: the only human traces worth mentioning of these Belgic Britons. They are comfortably stalled behind glass in a cupboard. Evidences of the local custom of burning the dead and storing the ashes in cinerary urns are common enough to make these relics particularly interesting. Nor is this all. The finer of the two heads was found stuck on a pole in the ground, and had clearly been severed from the body. Conjecture sees in it the work of the marauders. These were not content with burning the village and carrying off captive such of its inhabitants as they could secure. They killed the chief of the village, and, having cut off his head, impaled it on a stake in the midst of the smouldering huts. On the right side of the cranium is an ugly cleft in the bone, done by an axe or a club.

This skull is a magnificent specimen of its kind. It belonged to a man in the prime of life. The teeth would evoke praise from the most captious of dentists. Only one is missing, from the front, and that is believed to have fallen out since the skull's transference to the Museum. The facial angle is about seventy-two degrees, which indicates a sufficiency of intellectual power for the ordinary purposes of life in England from two to three thousand years ago, though it would not nowadays carry a man far among civilised beings. The forehead slopes abruptly backward.

Of the other head little need be said, except that it is the residuum of an old man who enjoyed a rough time of it while he lived. The cranium is covered with scars. Either the villagers were constantly engaged in internecine strife, or this man was the fighting champion of the district. Quite possibly he was the father of the other man, and they were both honoured in their death by the particular attentions of the assailing barbarians. Craniologists will be interested in these skulls, and may be glad to know that photographs of them are to be bought in the village for ninepence apiece.

Among the other determinate bone treasures are the skulls of an ox, a horse, and a sheep,

admirably preserved, and coloured a fascinating dusky hue by the peat impregnations. There are further human arm and leg bones, the ends of which have been palpably gnawed by animals. With them are the jaws of certain dogs and wild-boars, the former of an alarming size. These very jaws may have once feasted on the human victims left to them by the already sufficiently mentioned sea-robbers. One cannot affirm much in these situations. It is therefore permissible to give the imagination a somewhat lengthy tether.

I was moralising inefficiently over the simple piscatorial existence led by these early denizens of the Somersetshire swamp, when the Museum custodian drew my attention to something which instantly put fresh tints into the picture. 'Look at that, sir,' he said. He pointed to a little bone armlet—so it seemed—about four inches long, with two neat bands to it. But it was a dice-box, not a prehistoric bracelet. True, it had no bottom. That, however, was not necessary for people endowed like ourselves with accommodating palms to their hands. For a moment I demurred, reluctant to believe that the unhallowed lust of gaming could have got hold of these primitive persons. But there was no arguing against the dice themselves, which lay cheek-by-jowl with the deer's-horn dice-box. The only alleviating element in this discovery was the fact that the dice were not loaded.

Among the articles in the cases here are certain little rings of brown Kimmeridge shale, not unlike in shape the quaint copper 'cash' used by the Chinese. The term 'Kimmeridge pennies' is still, I believe, locally extant, and can refer to nothing in the world but these perforated bits of stone. Is it possible the shale rings were a species of currency—maybe devised more especially for dice-box purposes? This, however, is hardly suggested in sober earnest. Would that one of the skulls in the cupboard could enlighten us on this and kindred subjects of its living epoch!

Possibly the Phœnicians had some sort of second-hand intercourse with the villagers. To them may be due this introduction of a civilised habit. The idea gets a certain confirmation from an article in the collection which assuredly may be viewed as an exotic: a brazen bowl, to wit, of elegant shape, lightly but artistically decorated, and which, when it was first found, 'shone like a new guinea.' Its lustre has, however, now largely left it, and it is so fragile that it cannot be handled for cleaning purposes without risk of fracture. No coins have been discovered hitherto, and no pottery at all suggestive of Mediterranean influences. But there are a few beads of amber and dull blue glass, which also hint at outside commercial relationships.

The only weapons used by the people are supposed to have been slings. Thousands of small egg-shaped pieces of baked clay litter the ruins of the huts. These were the ammunition of the settlement. Though serviceable in deft hands, they could have been of little effect against the swords and axes of Continental invaders. A single iron spear-head seems to bear witness to these latter gentry, rather than to prove that the lake-dwellers understood the art of working metals. A kindred explanation accounts for the bronze fibulæ and serpentine finger rings in the cases. The Museum custodian, in pointing out three tiny crucibles, suggested that they were used for smelting gold. But no trace of gold or silver in any form has yet been unearthed, and either these Britons knew nothing about the precious metals, or the raiders made a very clean sweep of such valuables as they possessed.

Bone and horn were the materials for decorative and industrial purposes most obviously at their disposal. There are needles and combs in abundance. Some of these weaving-combs are quite elaborately scratched and cut with patterns in horizontal and crossed lines and small circles, and they differ also from the Kent's Cave combs in the more convenient form of their handles. The pottery may be bracketed with that of the Torquay find. The same rude traceries appear on both.

Nothing in the Museum seems to have the least bearing on any religious beliefs the lake-dwellers may have entertained. To be sure, one could not expect a ring of stones to be set up in the middle of a lake; nor was the worship of the ancient Celts much concerned with effigies and graven images. The dice-box is at present the most eloquent existing testimony to the habits of the people when they were not engaged in procuring food. Several oblong flattened stones also, however, deserve notice. They may have been strigils for use after bathing—for which the natives had every convenience—or for flesh exercise as a substitute. Spindle whorls of amber and stone, as well as the remains of querns for grinding corn, enable us to see a little more of the domestic pursuits of the lake-dwellers. And lastly, professional delicacy must not allow me to forget what have been shrewdly conjectured to be mere pot-boilers: a number of charred stones which were, it is supposed, first made red hot and then dropped into the earthen vessels to make the water boil with as little risk as possible to the stability of the pots themselves.

The largest object in the Museum—and from some aspects the most alluring—is the prehistoric canoe which, after having lain for a millennium or two under ground, was first observed about ten years ago by a field-labourer. The peasant in question met with it as an obstacle to the digging of a drain. He chopped a piece off it there and then, to facilitate his labours, and forgot all about it. The actual explorations, however, brought it to the light, and now it stands, in all the dignity of its sixteen feet of length, protected from inquisitive fingers by a barrier. The thing is made out of a single tree trunk, had when removed a beam measurement of two feet, and was a foot deep. It also tapered gracefully to the extremities. Exposure has to some extent affected it, in spite of the preservative anointings of linseed and paraffin oil with which it is indulged. This treatment hardens it, but does not keep it from cracking, and it has warped very perceptibly. Time and the peat-water have made the oak as black as Irish bog-wood. Parts of a second canoe were more recently dug out.

I have nothing more to say about these old lake-dwellers except to echo the hope already expressed, that the British Association, or some other national society, will co-operate with the praiseworthy local antiquaries, and see that the very utmost is made of this unique spot in the land. A couple of skulls and little knots of human hair fired at the ends, and mixed up with charred straw and bracken roots, are not exhaustive relics of these our early forefathers. But they are better far than none at all; and there are still scores of mounds to be dissected, with the agreeable possibility of uncovering much of a more significant kind than the Museum yet holds. The British Museum itself may in a year or two have to glance with longing eyes at the possessions of the little room at Glastonbury under the town's Council Chamber.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

### CHAPTER VI.—BARRED.

Mrs Dalton did not feel happier as time went on. The first disagreeable incident of the new relations was a visit from Seth Farmley, who came down from London that night with his son to show Mary and her mother his satisfaction with the engagement his son had made.

'I never hoped to see him do so wise a thing!' exclaimed the effusive lawyer, whose manners, when he was excited, were not the best. 'Mary is the very girl for him, Mrs Dalton—I'm proud of her, even if she hadn't sixpence. But she has beauty enough to prove to all the world that it isn't her money alone that's got her Freddie for a husband.'

His idea was that they should live in his house, which he would make over to his son, himself remaining with them as guest or lodger. Mary, in her heart, did not like the prospect, and hoped her mother would insist on their residing with her. To her great disappointment, Mrs Dalton agreed that if they did not set up house for themselves, the best thing to do would be to adopt Mr Seth Farmley's proposal, as to which Mr Farmley vigorously insisted that it would be absurd of them to think of a separate house whilst his was at their service. It should be their own, and he should be nobody. The truth was that Mrs Dalton shrank from the idea of receiving Seth Farmley as an everyday guest in her house, as would have been necessary had the young couple gone to reside with her. She would have to part with her daughter.

Then he was pressing that no delay should take place regarding the marriage. Long engagements were, he argued, in the abstract undesirable; when a thing was to be done, let it be done; the interests of his son were much bound up in his speedy settlement, and in deference to the recent affliction, the ceremony would be quite private. You read of such things every month in high life, where the proprieties are most strictly observed. He, Seth Farmley, was for having the thing come off quietly as soon as possible; he would not mind going to the expense of a special license, so that they need not go back to Crownley at all for the purpose.

Mr Seth Farmley was not a very persuasive advocate, but there was some ground for his impatience, which his son, by more effective arguments, made the most of. In consideration, chiefly of the importance to the young man, in view of his new appointment, of being married, mother and daughter, with some reluctance, gave their consent to a private wedding in five weeks. But on one point Mary strangely refused to give way—assigning no reason but 'a woman's reason,' and probably having no clear understanding of her sentiments on the subject. She would be married only in St John's at Crownley, after regular publication of the banns. So, accordingly, it was settled. Mr Seth Farmley went back to London, but his son remained on at Herne Bay, seemingly without taking much interest in the new appointment that was waiting for him.

Another incident disquieted the mind of the nervous widow, though she kept it altogether from Mary. She had written to Mr Fairfield, and his reply—a cold, formal acknowledgment—was very chilling. She interpreted his silence aright, and in her own vindication addressed him again, laying stress upon every point in favour of young Farmley, and in her eagerness, describing even that secret act of generosity to Mr Brock which influenced so greatly her own estimation of the young man. Then Mr Fairfield wrote to her again, very kindly, assuring her of his conviction that she had acted in everything from the highest and best motives; adding a friendly hope that her daughter would find happiness in her choice. The letter was one that left nothing to be desired, except the spirit which the reader felt to be wanting.

The sentiments with which the news was received in Crownley need not be referred to particularly. If Mary Dalton's engagement to Freddie Farmley was doubted by any, the publication of the banns brought conviction, quick and unexpected. It was whispered here and there among the people returning from church that Sunday, that Seth Farmley was not the man to leave a fortune of thirty thousand long in any jeopardy.

Dr Maitland, before the date of the vicar's death, had taken a house, and had purchased from the executors, whilst Mary Dalton and her mother were away, most of the contents of the vicarage. He had pleased himself with the fond fancy of Mary's pleasure on seeing in his house the chairs, the pictures, the many little things full of cherished associations. She and her mother had promised, before they went, to come and inspect the house as soon as they returned. He no longer expected that promise to be kept. The dream was over. He was living there now, solitary and dejected, with the vicar's old 'establishment.' Maitland was not a man to break down under a heavy blow, nor to have mistaken views of what had happened. He knew he had lost Mary Dalton because he had not been bolder; but he could not admit that he ought to have been bolder. He had loved and reverenced her in her innocence, her youth, and her sorrow, too tenderly ever to have allowed himself to depart for a moment from the delicacy of consideration which his honour and his heart prescribed. When, indeed, he realised the danger she was in, with that first lover by her side, day after day at the sea-coast, he did at last go down

there in fear that he was not acting wisely. He arrived too late.

When the banns had been published for the 'third and last' time, they came back to Crownley. They were accompanied by Frederick Farmley, who had not yet gone to his secretaryship. It appeared that the company was still in formation, and that he should not be appointed formally until after his marriage. In gathering the local news of occurrences during their brief absence, they heard of Dr Maitland having bought almost everything from the vicarage, and that he was now living in his house, with the old vicarage servants. Neither Mrs Dalton nor her daughter forgot the promise to visit the new establishment as soon as they returned; but neither spoke of it now. Nor did they see Dr Maitland at all. The atmosphere of Mrs Dalton's home was depressed by the absence of the living, as well as that of the dead; a sad change, truly, within a few weeks.

The wedding day was to be in less than a fortnight now, although the fact was not as yet publicly known. No girl who had freely given herself to the lover of her choice could fail to be happy at so near an event. Mary Dalton was happy, even if at times she could not help being a little pensive, and—regretful on account of something into which she did not examine closely. Freddie Farmley was with her every day, and her mother was cheerfully busy and interested in the preparations. The young man took Mary to see her future home, and he did not conceal his confidence that she would be pleased with it. The house was a commodious one, and her mother had warned her that she must expect to see many signs of negligence where there had been no lady to preside over matters. This Mary was prepared for—but she saw things which she was not prepared to see, evidence of vulgarity and bad taste, and of things even more offensive to her, of which she was surprised that the young man, at least, did not seem to be conscious. She said nothing, however, and satisfied herself with the resolve that she would make changes when she became mistress of the establishment. Mary was too inexperienced to notice (as her mother did) that neither father nor son invited her to express her wishes about the house before she should come to live in it.

Before they left Herne Bay, some correspondence took place between Mr Fairfield and Seth Farmley, which greatly irritated the latter. Tone and substance of Mr Fairfield's letters were equally unpleasant to the other, being equally suggestive of the writer's opinion of him. When his son was home again, Mr Seth Farmley delivered himself very freely to him on the subject.

'If it lay in Fairfield's power, I tell you the marriage would never come off.'

'Fortunately it doesn't lie in his power.'

'No, but he makes himself as disagreeable as he can. He has been at me about settlements.'

'Naturally, I suppose.'

'I offered to settle a thousand of the Popular Bank shares, fifteen pounds paid, which I think was very good. No—his worship didn't think so! and said it in a very pointed way. What d'ye think of that, now?'

'Why, father,' replied the young man with the utmost coolness, 'I am inclined to agree with him. I shouldn't like to be saddled with a liability of five pounds a share on so much of the Popular capital. Can't you do something better?'

'I can't!—just at present,' was the angry answer. 'I'll settle this house on you, and you will have to do with that until I am in a position to do better. You won't be so badly off, if I never gave you anything. Your wife will have five hundred a year when she marries, and the whole lot when her mother goes off—not very long to wait, I should say.'

'That's not the point, however,' said the son, lighting another cigarette. 'It is the look of the thing, you see. Every one regards you as a rich man.'

'A man may have a good lot without being able to get at it readily.'

'But to explain that would be rather awkward, wouldn't it?'

This was very aggravating, and Mr Farmley left the room with some words the reverse of complimentary.

Meanwhile, something else arose to disturb the current of events. The two trustees—Mr Fairfield and the Rev. Mr Everard—had, as a matter of course, been informed of the date fixed for the marriage, and that Mary was going to reside in her husband's present home. The two gentlemen had a long consultation together, and the result was the following letter addressed to Mrs Dalton:

'Croham, *August* 20.

'My dear Mrs Dalton—Mr Everard and I have received your intimation that the wedding is fixed for September 2.

'So far, no arrangement has been come to with Mr Seth Farmley regarding settlements, nor is the matter at present in a satisfactory state. Altogether, apart from this consideration, however, we are both strongly of opinion that, if possible, a postponement of the date of marriage is very desirable. Of course, we admit that the matter is entirely one for you and Miss Dalton yourselves to decide; but, considering how recently Mr Dalton's death has occurred, and perhaps also the general sentiment of the parish, Mr Everard joins with me in asking for a reconsideration of the decision you have communicated to us. In the absence of strong reasons to the contrary (as to which we are ignorant), we both feel that these I have alluded to ought to have weight.—Yours sincerely, James Fairfield.'

There was no doubt as to the weight these reasons had with Mrs Dalton when she was reminded of them. She welcomed this letter as furnishing some hope of a delay, which, indeed, she had much at heart, though she had not yet hinted at such a thing.

'This is what Mr Fairfield writes, Mary,' she said at breakfast, handing the letter to her daughter. The allusion to settlements Mary did not understand, but the rest was sufficiently clear, and she seemed perplexed what to say.

'As Mr Fairfield says, the matter rests with you and me, Mary—with you, rather, because whatever you wish I will agree to.'

'What Mr Fairfield and Mr Everard say is

true,' said the girl somewhat sadly, 'and I would wish it to be so, indeed. I—I—fear, mamma,' she added, with a half sob, 'people are talking, and—don't seem the same.'

'We must do what we think to be right, Mary,' answered Mrs Dalton, 'rather than what others think. Don't mind that at all.'

In truth, she felt it keenly herself, but was too solicitous to show it.

'I will show this letter to Freddie,' said Mary. 'When he reads it, he may think as we do; and it would be quite soon enough after Christmas.'

There was no hope that the considerations by which the Farmleys had urged this early marriage would have any influence with the trustees. Mrs Dalton and her daughter did not suggest such a thing to themselves or each other. They knew the marriage was being hurried to meet the wishes of Frederick Farmley and his father, whom both were now anxious to please; and that there was nothing else to urge against the strong reasons for delay stated by Mr Fairfield.

When Frederick Farmley called that day, and was shown the letter by Mary Dalton, his face took a pallor of anger that startled and frightened her.

'This means, as clearly as if the words were written, that Mr Fairfield and his colleague want to break off the marriage if they can.' He was almost white as he spoke, and his tone, low and sharp, cut like a knife. 'I have nothing to say except this. If you wish to follow the advice of this letter, you are, of course, free to do so. But I will never come here again.'

'Freddie!'

'That is my decision. I will come back again,' he said, moving to the door, 'in the evening, to receive yours!'

He had handed back the letter, which dropped at her feet. He passed slowly out, but she did not utter a syllable, or move an eye-lash. But before going far, the young man (who was no fool) bethought himself that the mood in which he was leaving the girl might be a dangerous one, and he came back.

'Forgive me, Mary, if I have said a word to wound you. I was taken by surprise—vexed—frightened, if you will. How could it be otherwise, at the merest thought of losing you now?'

'Why should you think of losing me, Freddie?' she answered, bursting into tears.

'A man is so sensitive to every fear,' he said softly, drawing her to him, 'when the being who is everything to him is in any way concerned. I was afraid by your showing me the letter that it was your wish also.'

'No, no, no,' said the poor girl, with sobs; 'my wish is to please you.'

He knew quite well it was her wish—and must have been her anxious wish, when she went so far as to show him the letter—to postpone their marriage; but he professed to think otherwise, and dried her tears tenderly.

'We will say no more about it, Mary,' he said, when she had become calm again. 'It will be sufficient to tell Fairfield that it is your wish the wedding shall take place on the appointed day. As he freely admits, the decision belongs to you, and no one else. That will be the end of it.'

She agreed to adopt the course which he suggested—or rather, to get her mother so to answer Mr Fairfield's letter. He made one more remark, however, which grated on the girl's feelings.

'If my governor saw that letter, Mary, he wouldn't let the engagement exist an hour longer.'

Mr Fairfield's letter was answered as Farmley suggested, and the matter was mentioned no more. It was thought of, however, by mother and daughter, and the recollection of that morning was a trouble which Mary had to hide away behind all the bright anticipations she could picture for herself.

'Never mind, Freddie,' observed Mr Seth Farmley that evening after dinner, when his son told him of Mr Fairfield's attempt to postpone the marriage, 'we will get even with him one day, I hope.'

Father and son sat reading newspapers in silence for a quarter of an hour after this. Suddenly the former uttered an exclamation, and sat straight up.

'Here's a—go!' he cried, in a tone of mingled interest and vexation. 'I hope they are not going to revive the sensation of the parson's death just at this particular time. It would be deucedly awkward!'

'What is it?' demanded the son, turning pale. His father had a local newspaper in his hand.

'I'd lay odds,' was the deliberate reply, 'that Fairfield is at the bottom of this trick. It is only a trick, but it's an awkward time to play it—for your business.'

'What is it?' he repeated.

'A woman's gray dress has been found in Croham Wood. The sensational idea is suggested that it may be connected with the cock-and-bull female supposed to have been seen coming down the road the evening the parson was found dead. It's the most palpable trick I ever heard of—I'll swear it has been got up just to revive the sensation at this particular time.'

Frederick Farmley agreed with his father that it looked very like a 'trick' to revive a sensation on so slender and ridiculous a basis. But from the way his face retained its pallor, and from the way his hand shook as he reached for the newspaper, it seemed as if he felt seriously alarmed on account of the possible success of the attempt. Nothing could be more fatal to the carrying out of the marriage project on the day fixed (only twelve days hence) than the sensation supposed to be aimed at.

'Bosh!' he exclaimed, when he had read the paragraph and flung the newspaper from him. 'To make so much of the finding of an old skirt! The thing is too transparent—but I suppose the reporter received his coppers for it.'

It showed, however, how much this matter lay on Frederick Farmley's mind, that next morning he went into Croham to make inquiries about it. He disregarded the newspaper office, and went direct to the police superintendent.

'As you may know, perhaps,' he explained, 'I am about to be married to Miss Dalton, and

on her account, I am anxious to learn if there is really anything in this reported discovery?'

The officer observed him curiously for a moment, and answered:

'No, Mr Farmley—nothing at all. As you have rightly observed, the thing would be a little too absurd.'

Thanking the officer rather more eagerly than was necessary (though the circumstances would account for this), Frederick Farmley went back to Crownley, to find, to his great satisfaction, that Mary Dalton and her mother had no knowledge of the newspaper report. He made himself so pleasant that day that Mary succeeded in forgetting the occurrence of the preceding morning. In the afternoon, he took her out to walk—through Crownley, for the first time; but before we relate what this walk ended in, we must return for a space to Croham.

As for the police superintendent, he knew his business too well to answer the inquiries of Frederick Farmley or any other person, in regard to a case which he had in hand. There was more discovered in Croham Wood than the report was aware of; not only a woman's dress, but in another place a bonnet, veil, and cloak. These things in themselves did not go far; but they set matters in motion, and a chance direction in the right track sometimes brings about results with astonishing rapidity.

## WORK IN COMPRESSED AIR.

People who have gone up in balloons, or have climbed the loftiest mountains, have had a good deal to say about the effects of the extremely rarefied air into which they have soared. There are just now down under the bed of the Thames at Blackwall, and there have been for the past two years, a large number of workmen whose experiences have been exactly the reverse. They live and move and have their being, for all their working-hours, in an atmosphere of more than treble density. The reader knows, of course, that air has weight, just as water has, and in the ordinary way this atmospheric weight at the sea-level is about fifteen pounds to the square inch. The operatives engaged in driving the Blackwall Tunnel under the Thames are under an air pressure of about thirty-five pounds over and above the normal pressure of the atmosphere. Every square inch of their body surface sustains a weight of fifty pounds, or nearly half a hundredweight. The men are shut closely into an air-tight chamber, and pneumatic pumps, driven by steam-engines of one thousand or one thousand two hundred horse-power, force the air in upon them. The steam-engines are, indeed, of one thousand five hundred horse-power, but their full strength is not employed. They are able to force in about eight thousand cubic feet of air a minute, or something like seventeen tons of pressure an hour. One gets a very impressive idea of what this force is in standing by when a stopcock is opened, and the air is allowed to escape. It rushes out with an absolutely deafening roar, a deep, fierce, sonorous bellow. Ocular evidence even more striking has been afforded on two occasions, when the river-bed has proved unequal to the imprisonment of the great air-bubble down below, and there have been blowings-up. It is said by those who have witnessed the effect up above, that a circular column of water, fifty feet in diameter, was tossed up to a height of twenty-five feet. So enormous is the pressure, that air may sometimes be seen boiling up in the river eight hundred feet away from the working face in the tunnel below.

The object of the atmospheric compression in the excavation of this and other tunnels is to keep out water. Everybody knows that if a hole is kept full of air, water cannot get in. Now this hole at Blackwall has been dug out right under the Thames, where, at high-water, it may be sixty or eighty feet deep, and at one point there was nothing between the excavators below and the river above but about eight feet of loose, shingly gravel. Without some special device the water would have rushed down and drowned the whole enterprise, just as it did when Brunel was making the Thames Tunnel. The plan has been to build at the back of the workmen excavating the gloomy gallery an air-tight barricade, and to force air into the chamber thus formed. By making this force sufficiently great at the Blackwall Tunnel they have managed to keep out the water even with only a little loose gravel overhead.

This air pressure, and the health and safety of the men required to work under it, have been important factors in determining the plans of this great engineering work; and when it was decided that at a minimum depth below the river the pressure must necessarily be considerably over three times the normal weight of air, it was declared by some respectable authorities that it would be impossible to employ eighty or one hundred men under such conditions without a lamentable amount of injury, and in all probability a very serious loss of life. The work is approaching completion, however, and happily these fears are proved to have been to a large extent groundless. There have been injuries and some amount of illness, but for the most part not of a serious character, and no death has resulted from this work under such exceptional conditions.

The air-tight barricade that has been referred to is just a solidly built brick wall, twelve feet thick, capable of resisting an outward pressure of a thousand tons. Through this wall there are two passages leading into the tunnel head where the workmen are engaged, each passage having in the middle of it an 'air-lock,' which operates between the higher and the lower air pressure exactly as a river-lock does between the higher and the lower water level. To get in to their work, the men at the Blackwall Tunnel let the air out of a lock and pass in, close the iron door, and open the valves from the inner chamber. The air comes in with a terrific rush, there is a rapid rise of temperature, and unless ear passages are clear and there is a ready way for air into the

middle ear by the eustachian tubes—so that the pressure may be the same on both sides of the tympanum—very acute pain is experienced. If the pressure is continued, it may result in the rupture of the membrane. If the ear tubes are not entirely blocked, however, the trouble is soon over, and the chief effect of the enormously increased pressure is a slight feeling of exhilaration. The fact is, one becomes a little intoxicated by the increased amount of oxygen breathed in in the compressed air. However exhilarated one may feel, it is of no use to attempt to whistle or sing. As to whistling, it cannot be done at all; the density of the air, somehow, entirely prevents it, while upon the ordinary voice the very curious effect is to raise the pitch. Men with deep, strong, bass voices find themselves talking in thin, weak, treble tones, though it is said that the weakness of voice is very largely counterbalanced by the strength of the adjectives some of the men are apt to employ when they want to give vigorous expression to feelings or opinions, and find they cannot do so by mere loudness of voice. Any increase amounting to about twenty pounds above the normal atmospheric pressure affects the power of whistling and the character of the voice in this way.

There is nothing very noticeable in any other respect in consequence of the great atmospheric pressure, so long as the body is actually under it. When, however, the pressure is removed, serious results sometimes follow, especially when the change is made too suddenly. In coming out, everything is of course reversed. The men enter the lock under pressure, shut the door behind them, and then the air is allowed to escape. Temperature, which before rose rapidly, now falls with equal rapidity. Whatever moisture there may be in the air is precipitated as a thick, damp fog, and a chill is very likely to be experienced. Although injurious effects do not manifest themselves while the workers are in the condensed air, it is pretty evident that the unwonted pressure has its effect. Dr E. H. Snell, who resides upon the works for the purpose of looking after the health of the men, says: 'It is thoroughly established that the amount of illness varies with the amount of pressure and with the length of stay in the air.' While the men are at their work, there seems to be nothing the matter. On coming out, however, they often experience great pain in the arms and legs, and sometimes these pains are extremely severe. In some cases giddiness and paralysis are the more serious and prolonged results, the paralysis generally striking the legs. One man engaged in the tunnel was thought to have received permanent injury to that part of the brain which enables a man to preserve his balance, and the consequence is that he cannot walk straight, but reels and staggers about like a drunken man. At the outset of the work, the London County Council, in consideration of the exceptionally hazardous nature of the employment, very properly made provision for pensions for men thus disabled, and this man retired to a village, where he settled down with about a pound a week as a pension. The latest information, however, is that he has so far recovered that he is now filling the post of a watchman under the County Council, and it is believed that he will entirely recover. A second case of the kind occurred subsequently, but that seems to have been somewhat slighter, and the last account was that this man also appeared to be recovering.

This system of work under compressed air is not altogether new. It was first suggested for such undertakings by Lord Dundonald in a patent he took out in 1830. It has been successfully employed under Lake Michigan, under the Hudson, at New York, and under the St Clair. On that side of the Atlantic, indeed, pressure has been carried up to forty-eight pounds to the square inch, or an absolute weight of no less than sixty-three pounds—nearly five atmospheres! It was also employed in the construction of the City and Southwark Electric Railway. The City and Waterloo Electric Railway, now in course of construction under the Thames, has had occasion to adopt this system. Excavations are going on by means of it now. But at the Blackwall Tunnel it has been carried out on a more extensive scale than ever before, and for a longer time. Moreover, the consideration of the London County Council in appointing a scientific man to watch the working of it, has been the means of throwing considerable light upon the physical effect of working and breathing in greatly condensed air. It has been observed that the faster the work proceeds, the less illness there is among the men. This seems to mean that when the earth being excavated is of a comparatively light and porous character—such as can be most easily dug out—a large quantity of air escapes through it, and, of course, a constantly renewed supply has to be pumped in. Dr Snell thus arrives at the conclusion that 'the amount of illness varies inversely with the amount of fresh air supplied;' that is to say, the more fresh air the less illness, and it is believed 'that up to a pressure, at present uncertain, but probably up to thirty or thirty-five pounds, compressed-air illness, among healthy men, can be almost, if not entirely, eliminated.'

## JAN PENGELLY.

### CHAPTER III.

NEXT day there was a big catch of fish, and all Tregartha was on the beach helping with the carrying. It was one of those phenomenal hauls that make the fishermen discontented and bewildered with the absurd plenitude of their harvest.

'I s'pose us ought to be thankful,' grumbled one old man, 'but 'tis very onreasonable; wan time 'tis out all night, two men and a boy, and hardly enough for the breakfus' of us; and then 'tis a reg'lar Bible catch, a great multitude of fishes that nobody knows what to do with, and two or dree days mending nets and tackle.'

'I reckon 'tis the same way with some folks' money,' said another; 'they get so much that 'tis a trouble to 'em.'

'Fish is money, in a way of speaking,' said

a third philosopher; 'a little fish is a little money, but unfortunately, a lot o' fish isn't a lot o' money; man heapeth up riches upon the earth, but 'tis no good heaping up pilchards. The value of pilchards is mortal fleeting. Well, well! so 'tis with all of us,' he added meditatively; 'us be all poor perishables!'

Jan Pengelly, who had not been out with the boats, was lending a hand with the landing of the fish, and was making his way up the beach with a heaped creel, when he was greeted with a hearty slap on the shoulder, and there stood Captain Trefusis, with a fine assumption of jovial benevolence.

'Jan, my sonny, you're the very lad I was looking for. I've a bit of good news for 'ee. The steamer *Arabella*, a fine big steamer, is in Plymouth harbour, and my own sister's husband, Captain Pepperell, is master of her. I've spoken to him about 'ee, what a fine young fellow you be, and he's offered to take 'ee for a voyage to Valparaiso, and the steamer leaves next Monday. 'Tis a rare chance for 'ee, Jan; you'll see foreign places, and a lot of fine sights—it'll make a man of 'ee!'

'No, no!' cried Jan vehemently, 'no steamers for me. I baint afeard of wind and watter; blaw east or blaw west, 'tis the Lord makes the wind—but I couldn't live aboard a steamer. I tell 'ee, cap'n,' he continued excitedly, 'I went aboard wan at Falmouth, and they took me down inside where the wheels be, where 'tis all fire and flame—'twas like the bad place, and I couldn't bide there!'

''Tis a fine chance for 'ee, Jan,' persisted Trefusis; 'you'll be reckoned a fool if you don't go.'

'I'm reckoned a fule as 'tis,' said Jan, 'so that's no odds;' then looking the captain calmly in the face, he continued, 'I'm going to break word with 'ee, cap'n; I'm going to tell parson what you and miner Roskree and old Edwardes was talking about by the boat that night. As well as I can mind, I shall tell 'en all the words of 'ee.'

Trefusis stood aghast for a moment, then with a savage oath, he hissed, 'If you do, I shall shoot 'ee; do you understand that?'

But Jan had left his fears at the top of the Warrior Rock, and he replied, with a simplicity that staggered the captain, 'Ees, I suppose you'll shoot me, but all the same I shall tell parson this evening, when I go up to the rectory with the whiting.'

'Then I'll keep my word, and shoot 'ee like a dog, Jan Pengelly—and that'll be the end of it!'

But Jan's logic went a step further, and he retorted, 'And then they'll hang 'ee, cap'n—they'll hand 'ee to Bodmin Gaol!' and with his parting shaft, he lifted the creel again to his shoulder, and walked away.

Trefusis was beaten; he had fought with threats, and his weapons were useless. He had presumed on the cowardice of a simpleton, and found in Jan more than a man's courage. He felt he had played his own bad game badly. It would have been better if he had taken Jan to Plymouth on some boating or fishing errand, and shipped him to South America by the steamer under pretext of landing him at Falmouth; true, Captain Pepperell would have wanted money for that job, but it would have been effectual. Not only was he balked of the fortune that seemed within his grasp, but he would lose his character in the place. He had an undeserved reputation for integrity, and like many another villain he valued it.

Full of evil thoughts, Trefusis stood and watched the landing of the fish, his face dark and angry with the passion within him. The little children shouted and played around him, and one that stumbled against him was savagely rebuked.

'How can 'ee speak so to a little chield?' protested one woman; while a bolder one shouted, 'Doan't 'ee come a-nigh my fish with that black face, maister!' and the laughter that followed swelled the bitterness in his heart.

Roskree and Edwardes were both there helping the fishermen. He well knew that at a word from Parson Trevennick they would betray him, and confirm Pengelly's story. He had hoped to buy the shares the rector held, but his first attempt, through a friend in Plymouth, had utterly failed; although that impecunious aristocrat, old Lady Polperro, had fallen easily into the same trap.

So far, the spoil was not worth the scheming, and he had half a mind to make a virtue of baffled villainy, and go to the rector himself. And yet—Jan alone stood in his way, a half-witted simpleton. Threats had failed, but other means might silence him—a dreadful idea crossed his mind, but the next moment he shuddered at his own imagining, and shaking himself free from his dark thoughts, he joined the group of toilers on the beach. To the amazement of the men, he flung himself fiercely into the work, hauling, lifting, and carrying with desperate energy, till the devil within him was exorcised.

'Here's a purty sight,' cried the woman, who had before jeered at him. 'Here's the mining cap'n helping with the fish, and working like dree men!'

And later in the day, when the philosophers gathered at the 'Tregartha Arms,' one said, 'I reckon 'twas oncommon kind of Cap'n Trefusis to help us with the fish this morning.'

'I can't make out the mining cap'n lately,' said another; 'seems to me he's like a man a bit mazed. He was up to Dick Riddaway's last week offering to buy shares in Tregartha mine.' "You're welcome to 'em," says Dick, "but I can't see what good they be to 'ee." "'Tis just a notion of mine," says the cap'n. "Some folks be fules enough to gather old postage-stamps, and I'm fule enough to gather up any old shares in Wheal Tregartha—'tis just a notion."'

There was a lull of lazy tranquillity in Tregartha that afternoon; the fish had all been carted away to the nearest railway station, and the men were resting from the activities of the morning.

'That mine-inspector gentleman from London is biding here a longish time,' observed one gossip.

'Ees; but he's a cliver young man, that

Maister Cameron. Folks say that Tregartha church tower is onsafe, and wan Sunday morning in a sou'-westerly gale, 'twill surely fall scatt, and bury the parson and congregation in one burial; for my part, I'd ruther be out channel in a hurricane, than sitting under thicky rickety old tower, a-singing hymns for those at say—so 'twas said the tower must come down and be re-built; but Cameron, he says it can be made as firm as a rock without removing wan of the old ancient stones, and Parson Trevennick's mighty pleased.'

'It seems to me,' said an older man, reverting to Trefusis, 'that if the mining cap'n buys shares, it must be to zell again—Trefusis is no fule.'

'Speaking of fules—there goes wan, sure 'nough!' cried a youngster; and Jan Pengelly passed the window, carrying two long iron spikes, and a length of rope knotted at intervals; 'bird-nesting again—the reckless good-for-nort!'

'Sammy, my son,' gravely interposed a senior, 'you should niver spake bad of mazed folks, for fear of your own mind.'

They watched Jan ascend the steep path that led past the coastguard station, and disappear over the shoulder of the hill. Other eyes were fixed on the climber—Captain Trefusis from the porch of his house watched the distant figure of Pengelly, and suddenly seizing his hat, walked rapidly in the same direction. Not looking right nor left, he strode on like a man impelled in a trance; and the look on his face was murderous. When he reached the crest of the hill, Jan was far ahead; his form stood silhouetted for a moment against the sky on the height of Trevasse Head, and then was lost to view.

East and west of this bold headland is seen a magnificent stretch of broken coast, a glorious view of bay and promontory, spaces of glistening sand and cliffs that stand like vanguards of the shore, and break the onslaught of the Atlantic.

When Trefusis reached the summit, Jan was nowhere to be seen; but within a few yards of the precipice, two iron spikes were driven firmly into the ground, and a rope was cunningly tied to each, and passed around a smooth upright boulder to relieve the direct strain upon the bars.

The captain did not look over the precipice—he dared not; but he saw that the rope was drawn to the verge of the cliff, and a little heap of plucked heather and moss served as a mat to prevent its fraying on the granite edge.

For a minute, Trefusis stood and watched the pulsation of the straining rope; it looked like a live thing there, quivering with tension, in the heather at his feet. Then, suddenly kneeling, with two swift strokes of his clasp-knife, he cut through the strands, and like a live thing, the rope leaped over the precipice, and far below there was a splash, and a great tumult of sea-birds!

Never did remorse fall more terribly swift upon a human soul. For a few awful moments of impotent penitence, he knelt there gazing at the short end of the rope he had severed, and would gladly have given his life to recall the deed. He dared not look over the cliff, but rising to his feet with a wild hope, he rushed down the circuitous path that led to the beach, and catching his foot in a projecting boulder, he fell headlong, stunned!

## CYCLOMANIA.

Since last season, an unprecedented boom in the cycle industry has taken place, and the end is not yet. The wheel has found, or is finding its way into every part of the civilised world, and even backward countries, such as Spain, Turkey, and Egypt, rejoice in cycle tracks. Some cyclists have been ambitious enough to make a track for themselves round the world. Mr R. L. Jefferson, who has already ridden from London to Constantinople, and last year from London to Moscow, has done the latter journey again this season, and has gone on to Siberia. Since 1879, Mr A. M'Cormick of Portarlington, Queen's County, has ridden 170,000 miles, or nearly seven times the circumference of the globe. Last year his record was 10,000 miles. Only the other day, an Edinburgh youth came up smiling, after 100 miles in the Highlands upon his 'Osmond;' riding in one day from Perth to Crieff, on by Comrie, Lochearnhead, Callander, Stirling, and home. This is but a sample of what the cyclist is doing.

The boom has even penetrated and affected the wilds of Brazil and West Africa; for has not the price of rubber gone up, owing to the demand for rubber tyres? The various cycle factories, mainly in the English Midlands, have been running night and day in order to meet the demand, and machines have been impatiently waited for, over many weeks. The wholesale fashion in which the ladies have taken to the pastime of cycling is largely responsible for this state of matters. In Dublin, during one week, in spite of the number of cycle depots there, it was impossible either to hire or buy a lady's machine. The gentler sex are credited with thirty-three per cent. of this year's output of machines, as compared with five per cent. in 1894. The eight cycle factories of 1888 have grown to over four hundred last year, while numerous companies have been formed, or amalgamations have taken place, for the manufacture of cycle tubes and other accessories.

The renewals and new members for the Cyclists' Touring Club, for the first five months of this year, reached the number of 21,422, nearly 10,000 of an increase over last year. Lawn-tennis and golf clubs have even suffered; twenty-five per cent. of one London golf club retired in favour of the wheel. Members of Parliament may be seen riding to the House, to the discomfiture of the London cabmen. Crowned heads and their families have taken to the wheel as ducks to water. The king of Greece began about eight years ago; there is a photograph extant of imperial and royal cyclists, showing the Czar of Russia, Prince Nicholas of Greece, Prince Charles of Denmark, Prince George of Greece, and Prince Waldemar of Denmark, with their respective cycles. The family of the Prince of Wales, especially Princess Maud, are also devotees. The London streets and parks show a fair sprinkling of the nobility,

and if the horseless carriage is all that its promoters allege, we are surely on the way towards the gradual abolition of horse-flesh. We have seen a statement to the effect that there are now 1,300,000 cyclists in Great Britain, and that £75,000,000 have been invested in the industry, giving employment to 50,000 men. We have similar news from America, where the output of machines is estimated at between 500,000 and a million this year. One factory, for making chains alone, had orders for a million. Last year the output was 400,000 from five hundred factories. A great sensation was caused in the money market when the Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Company, on reconstruction, sold its business to a syndicate for £3,000,000. The capital of the new company is over £4,000,000, a sum which was subscribed many times over. The profits for the six years (1890–96) were £600,000. Within three months prospectuses of more than thirty cycle companies have been issued, with a capital of £10,000,000. Skilled labour has, of course, been in great demand for cycle factories, and many mechanics in the gun and engineering trades have been eagerly accepted.

A writer in the *Daily Chronicle* is still of the opinion that machines may be improved in respect of being lighter, and that the British cycle maker must see to this, if he is not to suffer by American competition. The average American roadster is from five to seven pounds lighter than the English one. He thinks we have from eight pounds to twelve pounds dead-weight of metal more than we require, and mentions a 'Columbia' which weighs twenty-five pounds with everything on, which shows no extra vibration while riding. The saddle is also more cleverly adjusted. He has also something to say for the Hartford tyre, invented by Mr J. W. Boothroyd, because of its resiliency, lightness, non-liability to injury, and ease of repair. But this single tube tyre has, as yet, found no favour in England, and we have not yet heard a practical cyclist say a good word for it, save as to ease of repair. He agrees also with Mr Bidlake, that a brake is an essential for a well-equipped machine, but that a bell is seldom needed. Mr Bidlake has no faith in single tube tyres, however.

Timid ladies may be encouraged by having medical opinion on their side; but those who have already felt distinct benefit from the pastime will be inclined to snap their fingers at the doctor. An American writer terms the wheel the best gift the nineteenth century has brought to women. Some physicians have gone the length of saying that science has discovered no new remedy for incipient brain disease equal to the bicycle. Dr W. H. Fenton, in his paper on the subject in the *Nineteenth Century*, says that so far from being dangerous to health, it has done more to improve the health of women than almost anything that has been invented. An organically sound woman may cycle with as much impunity as a man. Women are capable of great improvement where the opportunity exists; but their dress handicaps them. He considers that cycling can cure ninety per cent. of the functional ailments of women 'begotten of *ennui* and lack of opportunity of some means of working off the superfluous muscular, nervous, and organic energy. The effect of cycling within the physical capacity of woman acts like a charm for gout, rheumatism, and indigestion. Sleeplessness, so called "nerves," and all the petty miseries for which the liver is so often made the scapegoat, disappear in the most extraordinary way with the fresh air inhaled, and with the tissue destruction and reconstruction effected by exercise and exhilaration.' It is good news to hear that already thousands of women qualifying for general invalidism have been rescued by cycling.

In America, Dr H. J. Garrigues has contributed a thoughtful paper to the *Forum* on cycling for women. He strongly recommends the preserving of the upright position on a machine (what men are careless about and that in which women excel), because the spinal column thus kept straight, the shoulders are thrown back, and the weight of the body rests on the saddle. This position is not only the best from a medical and hygienic standpoint, but in case of a fall one is less likely to be thrown fatally on head or hands, than when leaning over the machine. Although certain muscles come chiefly into play, all the muscles of the body used are more or less strengthened. A person who only works and walks seldom fills his lungs as the cyclist must do to accomplish his journey. This brings about a more perfect oxidation of the blood, 'and good blood means healthy tissues, strong nerves, and normal secretions.' The whole nervous system, he tells us, is highly benefited by cycling, as the rider must use the senses of hearing, seeing, and feeling constantly, in order to avoid collisions, direct his machine, and keep his equilibrium. No exercise, therefore, is more calculated to draw the mind away from its normal groove, and give refreshment and new interest.

This season, as we have said, has witnessed the floating of many concerns in the cycling world, for making steel tubes, cycles, and pneumatic tyres. The story of the Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Company has added another page to the romance of commerce in our times. But for the ease and comfort of the air-cushion tyres, cycling would never have spread so rapidly as it has done. We know what sixty miles on a solid tyre and the same distance on the pneumatic means. There is all the difference as between a rough cart and a delicate machine on springs. There is something more. On a good road, when in condition, the cyclist comes as near the sensation of flying as he is ever likely to do. As already mentioned in article 'Cycling for Health and Pleasure' (*Journal*, Aug. 24, 1895), the inventor of the pneumatic tyre is Dr John Boyd Dunlop, born at Dreghorn, Ayrshire, in 1840. He had settled as a veterinary surgeon outside Belfast, where he had a large and flourishing business. We are told that he had long studied the question of spring frames and wheels for cycles, though the use of air tubes was developed, like many other important inventions, a good deal by accident. The use of air-cushions and the water-bed in medical practice, no doubt, fostered the idea, and the desire to get more 'life' into the wheel, decided him in thinking

that the inflated rubber tyre was what was wanted. Mr Harvey Du Cros, connected with a large paper manufacturing business in Dublin, and afterwards manager of the Dunlop Company, was, as an experienced rider, one of his first practical advisers, as Dr Dunlop at this time had never ridden a machine. He built his first air-wheel from ordinary thin rubber sheets, purchased at a macintosh emporium in Belfast, fitted with an inside tube, and rubber plug and valve. Mr C. K. Welch followed with his method of wiring on tyres. Great difficulty was experienced at first in getting anybody to believe in it, and the starting of a small company by Mr Du Cros, with a modest capital of £25,000, in which Mr Dunlop was given 3000 shares for his patent, was no easy matter. The appearance of the pneumatic at the Surrey Bicycle Club's meeting at the Oval, in 1889, was the signal for a good deal of criticism and derision. But these machines won the day on the track, and soon caught on. At the Stanley Show in 1891 they made a good impression, and the company were led to transfer their works from Dublin to premises in Alma Street, Coventry. How the business grew may be seen from the profits, which were £2660 in 1890; £21,974 in 1891; £48,595 in 1892; £149,319 in 1893; £157,183 in 1894; and £220,007 in 1895. And so, as we have said, the recent sensation in the money market was the transfer of the company to a syndicate for £3,000,000. It is expected that the new firm will also make tyres for all kinds of vehicles, including the new horseless carriage, of which great things are expected once the way is made plain by legislation.

Meanwhile, other developments, few of which come to anything, may be noted. Mr James O'Brien, New York, has added a battery, motor, and switch-board, weight sixty pounds, to a cycle. The dry chloride battery is of fifteen pounds-weight, and will supply motive-power for forty-eight hours; its running powers have been tested up to fifty miles an hour. Either pedals or electric power can be used. There are cycles adapted with oil-motors, one of which has been brought out by Mr George Johnston, Glasgow, of horseless carriage and oil-motor notoriety. In this cycle one pound-weight of oil is sufficient to propel the machine for twenty miles, and the size of the motor is fourteen inches long, five broad, and eight and a half deep. One of these cycles, it is alleged, will accomplish the journey of forty miles between Glasgow and Edinburgh in three hours, at a cost of 2½d. for oil.

As to speed, records are continually being broken. The hour record was about seventeen miles in 1878, it rose to twenty-nine miles last year, and now Tom Linton did thirty miles within an hour on a Parisian cycle track. A. A. Chase did thirty miles and thirty yards within the hour at Catford. A mile has been ridden, with a flying start, in 1 minute 50 2-5 seconds. On a good road one hundred miles have been accomplished in six hours or less; and five hundred and twenty-nine miles in twenty-four hours. But the ordinary cyclist is less interested in this than in the fact that he can double the pleasure and profit, and vary the monotony of an annual holiday, by circular tours around his place of abode.

The return made of cycling accidents to the House of Commons over a certain period, if it proves anything, shows that in comparison with the number of riders and the distances covered, there are fewer accidents by this method of locomotion than by any other. When fatal accidents do happen, they are not unfrequently owing to some carelessness on the part of the rider, in 'coasting' a dangerous hill and losing control of the machine, or in passing traffic too near. There is no use of being daring and reckless in crowded streets. A wrong move in getting out of the way of a cab may place one in front of a tram-car, with fatal consequences. In view of the many accidents that have happened and are happening to women who are not careful enough in crowded thoroughfares, we hold that their riding in such streets should be more cautiously pursued.

Every cyclist must be independent and self-reliant enough to mend a simple puncture. Happily this is easy enough, under ordinary circumstances. The Bagot tyre has been ridden over nails and broken glass without puncture. It is encased in a thin and flexible suit of aluminium chain-armour. But a fortune awaits the inventor of an easy and at the same time unpuncturable tyre. No less so will the promotion of suitable winter cycling tracks in all our large towns prove popular, where ladies and all who are so inclined could have a spin, irrespective of weather. The *Spectator* tells us, 'the moment the cycle costs five pounds, will last ten years, and is independent of repairs, cycles will become for all the healthy the universal means of locomotion.'

When we consider the thousands of pounds spent on machines, it is marvellous how little light and leading have been supplied to the inexperienced cyclist by the various agents and the manufacturers. The daily and weekly journals, and the special cycling papers, and the handbooks, have so far supplied this want. But like ancient Pistol, the world is still to every cyclist his oyster, which he with cycle must open and explore. Every considerable town ought to have a well-drawn-up card or handbook of day or evening runs, with distances, objects of interest, and inns or hotels noted, for halts and refreshments. The clubs have their runs, but every cyclist is not a club member, and the ladies and the inexperienced rider, if wanting in nerve and originality, may repeat the same runs until they become stale, flat, and unprofitable. Nothing is more delightful and refreshing than a little circular tour, going one way and returning another. This should be provided in the handbook. We are glad to hear that such a handbook is being provided for Edinburgh, along with information also of a day's outing by rail or coach.

The cycle is being felt in literature, but the happiest poem we have yet seen about the wheel is that of Adriel Vere, contributed to the *Spectator*. It sums up very well the joyous freedom and inspiration of the pastime:

> Dear other self, so silent, swift, and sure,
> My dumb companion of delightful days,
> Might fairy fingers from thy orbit rays

Of steel strike music, as the gods of yore
From reed or shell; what melodies would pour
On my glad ears; what songs of woodland ways,
Of summer's wealth of corn, or the sweet lays
Of April's budding green; while evermore
We twain, one living thing, flash like the light
Down the long tracks that stretch from sky to sky.
Thou hast thy music too; what time the noon
Beats sultry on broad roads; when, gathering night,
We drink the keen-edged air: or, darkling, fly
'Twixt hedgerows blackened by a mystic moon.

Another poet in more prosaic fashion sums up thus 'A Multitude of Counsellors and No Safety:'

I've pored through countless catalogues descriptive of machines,
And the advertising pages of the monthly magazines;
And it's certainly perplexing, when I want to get the best,
To read that each has some advantage over all the rest.
I've questioned every man I know who rides upon a bike,
And although they all have different kinds (which all look just alike),
Each one about the merits of his own alone will talk—
And so, when I would ride my wheel, I take the cars or walk.

In conclusion, it will be of great mutual advantage to town and country if the houses of call are increased. There are places where neither inns nor hotels exist, and where rest and refreshment are much required. Why should the country cottager not bestir himself or herself to earn an honest penny and make the cyclist comfortable? We have made many a cottager so bestir themselves, and we are glad to see that the Mowbray House Cycling Association has taken the Gables, of Horley, where, at a moderate tariff, their wheelwomen can have refreshments or bed and board.

## A STORY OF THE LAGOS BAR.

THERE are many tracts of rotting swamp and fever-haunted lagoons sweltering beneath the fierce heat of the tropic sun, where Englishmen, for whom the words of the Litany, 'From plague, pestilence, and famine — Good Lord, deliver us,' have a very real meaning, daily lay down their lives for the supremacy of our Empire, and the extension of our foreign trade. Their bones whiten beneath the stagnant waters of every Cuban lagoon and deadly Brazilian harbour, but perhaps lie thickest of all among the mangroves of Western Africa. It is not hard, therefore, for those who have seen these things, and have counted the number of rough wooden crosses surrounding every station along the last-named littoral, to realise that truly, as the poet says, 'If blood be the price of Admiralty—Great God, we have paid in full.'

Possibly there are more unhealthy places than the five or six hundred miles of mangrove swamps which surround the numerous mouths of the Niger River from Lagos to Opobo. If so, they must be hard to find, for in this region, where the breaking of a shallow trench in the quaking mud generally follows close upon the arrival of a new trader or officer, there are, at least, six different kinds of fever, to say nothing of smallpox, dysentery, and cholera, always ready to claim a victim. Still, here, as in other lands, wherever there is an opening for the development of trade or the extension of British dominion, there is never a lack of adventurous spirits to fill the deadly breach. Man after man falls at his post, but another is always ready to step forward into his dead comrade's place. So the work goes on, but it is well at times for those who sit in comfort and security at home to open their eyes and consider these things.

One hot day in August, the 400-ton branch boat *Avocet* lay alongside the big mail-steamer *Atumba* in the Forcados River, one of the deltaic arms of the Niger, heaving out heavy barrels of yellow palm-oil and greasy kernels amid the rattling of winches and shouting of naked Krooboys. Owing to the shallow water, and furious surf which breaks across the Lagos bar, all the cargo from that colony has to be taken out in small steamers. These go down to the Forcados River, some 120 miles away, and transfer it there in smooth water to the homeward-bound vessels.

The muddy waters flashed back the fierce sunlight like a sheet of molten brass, and the eyes of the passengers lounging about beneath the double awnings were glad to turn away from the glare of white decks and shimmering river towards the dull green of the mangroves, which stretched away on their high arched roots as far as the eye could reach on every side.

By-and-by, as the last tub of kernels was tipped into the *Atumba's* hold, the winches ceased their rattle, and the tired Krooboys dragged their dripping black limbs into whatever shade they could find, and went to sleep.

Then a silence fell over the two ships, only broken by the gurgle of the tide against the full bows, and the pulsing of a jet of steam from the *Atumba's* escape pipe; for between the heat and the dense oppressive atmosphere, all on board were too listless and dispirited even to talk.

Presently an unlovely voice broke out into a song, and the words 'Oh the broom, the broom, the lang yellow broom,' rang across the ship, suggestive of scenes very different from the steamy African lagoons. When the astonished passengers turned to see who had the heart to sing on an afternoon like this, they beheld Tom Stevenson, second engineer of the *Avocet*, sitting bareheaded in the sun, and balancing himself on the edge of the bridge rails.

Now Stevenson, like many others in this distressful country, had a weakness for grog, for there are times when a man's spirits sink like lead beneath the dead-weight of the climate until his soul abhors the everlasting mangroves and the smell of river mud. Then the temptation to snatch a few hours of oblivion is almost irresistible.

Early that morning the second engineer woke up with a racking pain in every limb, and a head where liquid fire seemed to circulate instead of blood, and knew he was in for the fever again. So, possibly because it was the worst thing he could do, he allowed one of the *Atumba's* artificers to tempt him with a long

cool draught of whisky and iced soda, which slipped down his parched throat like nectar. A very little spirit is generally too much for a man who has the fever, therefore Stevenson speedily forgot his troubles, and felt that it was incumbent on him to have a good time.

He accordingly made for the highest part of the ship he could reach, and having thrown his hat into the water, proceeded to troll out doleful ballads.

'Who's making that nerve-trying noise? Come down, you idiot, before you get sunstroke or fall in,' said a fussy Government officer. Tom felt insulted, and attempted to draw himself up, in imminent peril of falling between the two ships, then he took off an imaginary hat and addressed the company.

'Not idiot—gentlemansh,' he said pointedly. 'Chief's stificat, Borotradsh. Pur-a-lil-oil on enginsh—pul-a-lil-lever an' enginsh go—see.'

'Captain Jackson, here's your second engineer delirious on the bridge—take him away before he gets overboard,' sang out the mate of the *Atumba;* but the captain was asleep, so the unfortunate man sat where he was, and made weird music, until it happened that he saw the pet goat of the *Atumba* walking daintily up and down the saloon deck with its necklet of ribands.

'Prery lit goatsh,' he said, springing out from the bridge, and by a special providence caught the *Atumba's* rail and swung himself on board. After an exciting chase round the deserted deck, he secured the unfortunate animal, and with it tucked under his arm, tried to regain his ship. But in spite of affectionate thumps on the head and mixed endearments, such as 'Pretty polly' and 'Good dogsh,' the goat insisted on bleating. Then the skipper of the mail-boat, whose especial pet the animal was, darted out of his room, and not recognising, let us hope, that the engineer was in the grip of the fever, ran at him and with a swift left-hander hurled him backwards down the slippery ladder on to the iron deck below.

Bruised and bleeding from a gash in his head, poor Tom sat up, and gazed around with a puzzled look until it struck his scattered senses that some one had taken advantage of his defenceless condition, and that he must have that person's blood. So he fought his way up the ladder again, and it would have gone hard with the self-satisfied captain if a number of Krooboys had not thrown themselves upon the assailant. At last, bruised and battered, he was carried to his stifling room above the boilers of the *Avocet* and locked in, to roll helplessly to and fro with splitting head and aching limbs, until at length he fell into a merciful unconsciousness.

Presently the anchor winch of the *Avocet* rattled; the cable came clinking, clanking home, and the chief engineer, sick as he was, managed to crawl into his engine-room, and opened the throttle with a trembling hand. The engines panted, and then with whirling propeller kicking up the muddy water astern, the branch boat steamed down the Forcados River, and out to sea.

Late that night young Captain Jackson paced up and down the high bridge of the *Avocet*, watching the black water break away from beneath the steamer's bows in sheets of blue and green phosphorescent flame. At times a blaze of fire, sometimes blue, sometimes crimson, lighted up the horizon, and though this kind of lightning is common enough in the tropics, it seemed unusually bright that night. The captain was not easy in his mind about it, for a very low glass in the middle of the tornado season is not to be regarded lightly, and in case of bad weather, he did not know what could be done about the engines. At present they were running themselves, with two naked river men crawling about, oil-can in hand, greasing the bearings which needed it least, while the chief engineer had been carried back to his berth, and the second was hopelessly delirious.

The mate was also sick from dysentery, and the captain groaned as he thought of his young wife at home, and wondered whether he should ever see her again, or if before many weeks were passed, he would lie among the mangroves, food for the loathsome creatures of the slime. Meantime, his business was to take his steamer safely across the thundering bar into Lagos harbour; so he resolutely put such thoughts away and turned his eyes towards the low hung crescent moon which shed down a faint light on the dark sea-plain beneath.

Presently a whirling cloud of vapour drifted across the luminous streak, and the light went out. A few heavy drops of rain splashed along the warm deck, and for a moment every rope and spar stood out sharp and clear against a background of fire.

Then, as if the heavens were opened, zigzags, sheets and streaks of lightning blazed across sky and ocean. The air was filled with the rush of falling water, and while the thunder rang out above, a puff of cold wind fanned the captain's cheeks.

'Steady—on her course,' he shouted to the sable helmsman, and entered the little deck-house for his oilskins, for he knew what to expect, and as the only white man able to stand, realised that the safety of the ship depended upon him alone. What his Krooboy deck-hands, a raw draft fresh from the Liberia coast, would do, he did not know, as the woolly-haired Krooman, though unequalled in boats and canoes, takes some time to get used to the working of a steamer.

As he came out again, the heavy teak door was torn from his hands, and hurled back with a crash against the deck-house, and the screaming tornado burst upon them. The air was thick with driving spindrift, the sea around white like snow, while sheets of water lifted by the furious blast whirled and lashed across the deck.

For a few moments the *Avocet* stopped dead, then slowly drifted astern, for no light-drafted small-powered coaster can steam against the first wild sweep of the tornado. Afterwards, as it settled down a little into a steady blow, she slowly gathered way and struggled ahead, already rising and falling with vicious jerks, for the long swell was rapidly changing into white-crested seas.

The chief engineer, in his room beneath the bridge deck, was roused by the heavy thud of

water against the port. He had heard it before, more than once, and recognised the call for him to be at his post, sick or not. Crawling out with trembling and half useless limbs he dragged himself along by the handrail, and staggering through the engine-room door, sat down on the top platform. There he leaned feebly against the bulk-head with a glittering eye on the whirling machinery below, devoutly hoping that the low pressure piston, which had been troubling him, would not go wrong now.

The sea was rising fast, and from time to time the lightly built steamer trembled through every plate and rivet with the mad racing of the engines, as rising on the crest of a big roller she lifted the rattling propeller clear of the water. Something throbbed and drummed in the engineer's head, keeping time with the clanking pumps, as with shaking hand he turned the valve wheel to and fro to ease the straining machinery.

Down below the greasers, with dripping skins, clutched the bright rails to prevent themselves being flung into the crankpit by the heavy rolling as they leaned over the warm bearings, oil-can in hand, while the broad-shouldered Egba negroes in the stokehole balanced themselves carefully as they flung shovelfuls of coal into the roaring furnaces—the life of the ship.

So the long dark hours passed, until gray dawn broke high up in the Eastern sky, and the tired captain, clinging to the reeling bridge, saw through eyes smarting with brine the tall shaft of the lighthouse which marks the dangerous Lagos bar rising beyond a wild stretch of tumbling water. A tornado does not last long, the first violence rarely more than an hour, but though the wind had fallen somewhat, it still blew hard and the sea ran high. Even in the finest weather, the long Atlantic swell breaks in ceaseless thunder across this dreaded sand.

Presently a ray of bright sunshine streamed out from beneath a bank of hard-edged clouds, and turned the dusky sea beneath into a reach of flashing green and snowy foam. Sweeping the long ocean ridges with his binoculars, the captain made out the dancing buoy which marks the entrance to the narrow channel of deep water by which alone the surf may be crossed. 'Keep the buoy on starboard bow,' he said to the helmsman, and leaned out over the rails with anxious eyes turned towards the land.

Meantime, Tom Stevenson wakened up, and in trying to rise felt his weakness, as he fell back in his bunk with a groan. He had a confused idea of having done something foolish, but it was only by degrees that what had passed yesterday could be recalled, and his face darkened as he remembered it, and burying his hot head in the pillows he dozed off again.

The *Avocet* was now rapidly nearing the great green seas that piled themselves crashing upon the bar and rolled across it, amid spouts of foam and sheets of spray; a winding streak of smoother water marking the narrow channel.

A red flag fluttering across the sandhills showed that the tide had risen sufficiently to allow the steamer to cross, and while she rolled shorewards, her nose on the plunging buoy, the captain's heart beat faster as he remembered the long list of vessels totally lost in this dangerous passage. Suddenly, when within quarter of a mile from the surf, there was a loud clang, a cloud of steam rose from the skylights, and the pulsing of the engines ceased, while the *Avocet*, rolling helplessly in the trough of the sea, drove down towards the worst part of the bar.

'Let go both anchors,' shouted the captain in a harsh and strained voice. The heavy cables rattled out after the splash, and the steamer swung round head to wind; but the set of the sea rolling towards the bar was too much for her, and dipping her bows deep into the creaming water, she dragged her anchors through the sand.

Leaving the bridge, where he could now do nothing, Captain Jackson ran below, thrusting on one side the frightened Krooboys. He paused just inside the engine-room door, for a cloud of hot steam met him in the face, while a jet of scalding water splashed upon the plates. Through the dense vapour he could see the chief engineer with a coat over his head, crawling back on hands and knees from an unsuccessful attempt to reach the valve, while from somewhere below came the moaning of a scalded black greaser.

'For God's sake do something, or we'll be smashed like an egg-shell in quarter of an hour,' said the captain. 'Low press cylinder head's gone; if we could disconnect the crank it would be all right, but I can't get at it for steam—look here,' answered the engineer, holding up a hand from which the burnt flesh was peeling in rags, then he feebly sank down on to the steel grating. The two men looked at one another with ashy faces, while the jarring and ringing of the cables told that the steamer was steadily dragging her anchors towards the bar. A sea washed along the deck feet deep, and pouring over the bulkhead into the engine-room, fell hissing on to the hot metal below. Then the captain felt a hand on his shoulder, and started as Stevenson slipped through the doorway like a reanimated corpse, his hair matted with blood, and his feverish eyes shining out of a ghastly face. Without a word he dropped flat on the gratings, and crawling into the scalding steam, disappeared from sight. 'The man's half dead already,' gasped the captain, as he listened with beating heart to the roar of the steam and the water rushing to and fro in the bilges beneath. A ringing of hammers drifted up from below, followed by a clanking sound, and afterwards there was silence. 'I'll go down; he's being boiled alive,' shouted the captain, but the engineer grasped his arm. 'Wait,' he said. With every nerve tingling, the two men waited and listened, not daring to look in each other's eyes for terror at what might be going on beneath the hot vapour below. Then there was a wheeze from the intermediate cylinder, the cranks revolved slowly, and through the steam a dripping object, with the flesh shrivelled from the cheeks, and hands bare to the bones, crawled feebly up the ladder, staggered forward, and fell heavily across the platform. A low regular panting and clanking through the now fast-thinning steam showed that the engines were turning; so while the captain rushed to

the bridge, the chief lifted the scalded and blackened face of his subordinate upon his knee, shuddering as he looked at the ghastly sight.

The shrivelled eyelids slowly lifted, a faint light came into the weary eyes, and looking up into the chief's face, the second engineer slowly gasped, 'It's all right—ahead full—I did my best.'

Then the head fell forward, and the eyes closed for ever on this world, to rest until the light of the Resurrection morning breaks across the mists and sorrows of earth, and there shall be no more sea.

Slipping both anchors, the captain was able to take his vessel safely through the channel at half speed, and two hours later, while the chief engineer, biting his lips to keep back a cry of pain, leaned on the shoulder of a black greaser whose comrade lay beside the crankpit with a fractured skull, the *Avocet* slowly steamed across the lagoon towards Lagos wharf. The flag fluttered half-mast high, and all that remained of the man who saved both ship and cargo lay cold and still beneath the crimson folds of the red ensign.

So passed Thomas Stevenson, second engineer, whose simple epitaph was that 'he did his best.' He sleeps, like many another dauntless Englishman, in the sound of the ceaseless thunder of the African surf; his only mementoes a crumbling, worm-eaten cross, and a story which is occasionally told on the Lagos Marina as the sun dips and the white mist rolls across the still lagoon.

At times, leaning on their coal shovels, the Egba stokers, who are true Mussulmans, speak of him in words of regret, for as the sable giant Amun says, 'He was a kind man and a brave—Allah is very merciful, and doubtless this day he rests in paradise.'

## REMARKABLE PHOTOGRAPHIC FIGURES.

By R. W. K. Godwin.

Rarely has a scientific discovery created as much interest and enthusiasm as the electro-photography due to Röntgen, popularly known as 'the new photography.' This new radiation (for we can scarcely call it light) has been so much written of lately, that perhaps a few remarkable figures in other branches of the popular science may cause a little wonder.

It is now several years ago since Anschütz successfully photographed a cannon-ball in flight with an exposure of $\frac{7.6}{1000000}$ of a second. Krupp, the great cannon maker, rewarded this unexampled feat by a present to Anschütz of 5000 marks (about £250).

In astronomical photography, however, perhaps the most startling figures confront us. Stars, which to the eye are invisible even with the most powerful telescope, are readily depicted on the photographic plate used in conjunction with the telescope. As an example—Dr Gill's photograph of the nebula near Argus. It will give some idea of the number of stars shown by this photograph, to mention that the space of sky that would be covered by a shilling held at arm's length from the eye, contains no less than 200,000 stars, scarcely one of which would be visible to the unaided eye.

Sir Robert Ball said in a lecture delivered by him in 1894, that among such 'invisible' stars, photographs of which he had shown his audience, there were many sunk into space to a distance so inconceivable, that if the glad tidings of the first Christmas in Bethlehem, 1894 years ago, had been telegraphed to them at the speed at which light travels (about seven times round the world in a second), yet those stars were at a distance so overwhelmingly great that the news would not yet have reached its destination. These distances were not wildly guessed at, but were the results of years of labour on the part of the astronomer and the mathematician.

The camera in conjunction with the microscope also reveals some remarkable facts. The microbes or germs of disease can easily have their portraits taken, though at a low computation it would take 300,000,000 of them to cover a square inch. Seven complete portraits of persons have been produced in the space occupied by the head of an ordinary pin, so that 10,000 could be included in one inch square. Another great feat in micro-photography (as it is called) is that of the Lord's Prayer inscribed in a space the size of $\frac{1}{150000}$ of a square inch. The height of each letter was but $\frac{1}{1000}$ of a lineal inch, therefore the space occupied by a letter such as u or n, which are as wide as they are high, was actually no more than $\frac{1}{1000000}$ of a square inch.

Even the modern photographic printing machinery gives us some wonderful figures. A roll of sensitive paper, 1000 yards in length by something over a yard in width, travels along, on which a number of negatives are automatically exposed by the flashing of electric incandescent lamps. About 250 cabinet prints can be exposed in a minute—an ordinary day's work of ten hours yielding 157,000 cabinet prints. These have all been printed, developed, fixed, and washed, and are ready for pasting on the mounts in the way we are accustomed to purchase them.

## A SHETLAND SUMMER.

Now breaks a wave of golden light
O'er half the Earth, and stars are dim;
Glad birds the gleaming waters skim;
A dreamy glory gilds the night.

Now wake the dreary Northland isles
And beauty decks the lonely shores,
No more the wintry tempest roars;
And Ocean's face is wreathed in smiles.

It is the Sungod's Wooing, this
A moment to his heart to hold
His Northland love, so coy and cold—
In all the year, but one sweet kiss!

J. J. Haldane Burgess.

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## THE CHILD OF THE FOREST.

Among the many miseries to which the beautiful country of France was subjected, during the dreadful years of the Great Revolution, was that of brigandage. In the dark, heavy atmospheres of the cities, murder, pillage, and famine were rife; in the pure air of the country, and in the frontiers, bloody warfare was carried on, and in places remote from the great centres of population, there existed bands of brigands which spread terror among the peaceful inhabitants of the agricultural districts.

Of these bands, none were more remarkable than that known as the 'Chauffeurs.' It was thus called, because the method used by these malefactors for torturing helpless farmers was that of placing the feet of their victims before a hot fire until they confessed where their money was hidden.

The whole band was brought to justice at Chartres, through the instrumentality of a small child; and the circumstances supplied that ancient town with the spectacle of a most extraordinary criminal prosecution, the accused numbering no less than one hundred and ten persons, who all appeared in the dock together.

It was in the midst of the Revolution that these degraded ruffians were brought to justice. In order to have them all placed before the jury at the same time, a large church in the centre of the town was converted, for the time, into a court-house; and each morning, during the trial, the culprits were taken from the prison, and conveyed thither in a long procession, strongly guarded by mounted gendarmes and foot-soldiers.

At the head of the column, according to an eye-witness, the celebrated lawyer, Berryer, there walked a powerfully built red-haired man, of a decidedly repulsive aspect, who was the avowed chief of the band. He had, on this occasion, been brought from the hulks at Brest, where he was already undergoing punishment, so that he might be placed with the others before the judges. Beyond the dock, in what, on better occasions, proved the aisle of the church, were installed the witnesses and numerous victims who had managed to escape with their lives from the outrages of these villains that had been discovered to be inhabitants of the forest of Orgères.

About thirty-five miles from the town of Chartres, near the district known as Le Vendomois, there is a vast forest of great antiquity, still called by its ancient name, the Forêt d'Orgères. In one of the thickest depths of this wood, some extensive limestone quarries had been worked in former ages, and had supplied an enormous amount of fine building stone, that, for instance, with which the cathedral of Chartres was built. These quarries were afterwards abandoned, and in course of time, thieves and vagrants began to use them as a hiding-place. After a while, a complete colony of vagabonds of the worst description took up their usual abode there. This state of things appears to have existed for many years, until, quite unknown to the authorities, a very large concourse of men, women, and children of the most destitute and degraded classes had made this locality their regular home.

When the wives of the men were admitted, the strictest rules were enacted, and adhered to by the whole gang, under pain of death. There was a kind of chief or governor, and a set of laws, adapted to the dreadful profession, these men followed. Their usual plan was to rob systematically and in separate bands. They had orders from the chief to commit these robberies at any cost, under pain of death. They had numbers of agents dispersed through the provinces, whose occupation was to watch isolated mansions and farms, taking careful note of those which were easiest to plunder, and communicating their observations to the band in the old quarries. The chief, and a few of his intimate associates, then held council in the

caverns, and delegated a certain number of men to go and secure the booty.

It was proved that they often went to work in the most insidious manner, gaining admittance as labourers, or on the plea of hospitality, to some secluded dwelling indicated by the agent. They then suddenly secured all the farm-servants, and threatened the proprietor and his wife with instant death, unless they at once delivered up all the valuables they possessed. Torture of various kinds was resorted to on such occasions to extract an avowal of the places where the money was hidden; but the usual method was to light a large fire, and hold to it the feet of the poor victims until they confessed what they had, and where it was. It was generally the women who were subjected to this horrible treatment, and the band of the 'Chauffeurs' was intensely dreaded by the entire farm population of this part of the country.

From time to time a few of these men had been captured by the police, and sent with life sentences to the galleys; even the chief of the band had not escaped; yet the robberies and murders continued to be reported, and no one knew whence the villains emanated, nor could a single one of those taken have the fact of his having had recourse to torture placed in evidence against him. As to the great cavern in the deserted quarries, nobody appears to have ever heard of its existence, and the most acute police-officer had no idea where the stolen property went, except that it appeared, now and then, to have been sold in small lots at a time, in various village fairs, far distant from the places where it was stolen.

The mystery surrounding the headquarters of this band of brigands was at length solved by a most singular accident.

Early one morning, two gendarmes were riding along the outskirts of the forest of Orgères, when one of them perceived in this desolate district, many miles from any inhabited place, a small boy about six or eight years of age. He called his companion's attention to this circumstance, and their surprise was all the greater, because the child's dress struck them as peculiar. One of the gendarmes got off his horse, went a little way into the wood, and beckoned to the boy, who soon approached, for he was hungry, and asked them to give him something to eat. They told him that if he would go along with them he should soon have a good breakfast, and to this he very readily consented. He was at once placed on the saddle, in front of one of the gendarmes. They then rode off, and when they had arrived at the nearest village, they entered an inn, and ordered a breakfast for the half-starved urchin. Whilst the famished boy was eating, the police-officers observed him closely, and were not long in remarking that he put everything that happened to be within reach in his pockets. Two teaspoons, a fork, and a corkscrew soon disappeared in this manner whilst he was devouring his food. The boy did this, apparently, without the least notion that he was doing anything wrong.

At last one of the gendarmes asked him why he took these things, but he merely replied that he liked them, or something to that effect. No other reason could be extracted from him by the most skilful interrogatory, nor could he be made to understand that there was any harm at all in what he had done. His father, he said, brought home things like these to his mother almost every day, and she never scolded him.

When the two police-officers had somewhat recovered from the surprise which this conduct had occasioned, they both came to the conclusion that this boy must be the offspring of some professional thieves, who had brought him up in the forest. After the little vagabond had had a glass of wine, he became very loquacious, and told his companions that he lived in a great cavern under the ground, in the heart of the forest, with a number of people, besides his father and mother; that he had several playmates there about his own age, some of whom had bullied and teased him so much that he had determined to run away; the more so, as his father and mother were very cross, and did not give him all he wanted.

The two gendarmes imagined that by taking charge of this child of the forest the authorities might eventually succeed in tracing, through him, some of the vagabonds whom, as he told them, lived in the great subterranean cavern that was now heard of for the first time. They therefore told the boy that as long as he remained with them, and behaved himself well, he should have plenty to eat, and lots of things to play with, but he must promise not to take anything except what they gave him; and they made him understand that if he would quietly point out to them any of the people of the cavern whom he might see in the villages or on the roads, they would give him a sou for every person he was able to show them.

The child seemed to be thoroughly content with the bargain. He was then washed, and dressed in a new suit of clothes, so that it would have been almost impossible for even his own parents to recognise him. Thus disguised, the police-officers took him to various markets and fairs in the surrounding villages, and placing him beside a woman, who passed as his nurse or governess, gave him the opportunity of indicating to them every individual he had seen in the forest.

In the course of a few days, several arrests were made, and before many weeks had elapsed, a considerable number of thieves of the very worst description were thus taken. These arrests went on, steadily increasing, and the course adopted was so effective that the child of the forest had been nicknamed 'General Finfin' by the police-officers engaged in the business.

It is a singular coincidence, noted by the great lawyer above named, that among the very large number of individuals captured in this manner, and brought to justice, neither the father nor the mother of the child were to be discovered among the culprits. Either they never left the cavern at all, or the child took good care not to point them out to the police.

Finally, the cavern itself, then deprived of all its vile inhabitants, was discovered, and soon after the condemnation of the thieves, some

masons from the town of Chartres were ordered to brick up the entrance. What eventually became of the child of the forest is not recorded; doubtless the gendarmes, who managed this business so well, saw that he was provided for. In this curious manner France was rid of one of a systematic and desperate band of burglars.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

### CHAPTER VI. (*continued*).

At the same time that Farmley was calling on the officer, Mr Fairfield was opening his morning letters in another part of Croham. According to his custom, he had put aside a few that he knew to be private by the addresses, whilst he read the others and handed them, one by one, with brief instructions to Mr Brock, the confidential clerk. This person stood by the table, pale and nervous. Latterly, it had been remarked in the solicitor's office that Mr Brock's look had undergone a great change. He was preoccupied and unhappy, and in his employer's presence he no longer possessed that deferential ease which was the privilege of a confidential position. It did not add to Brock's comfort to know that Mr Fairfield was aware of this change, without appearing to notice it. The fact was, that, on learning from Mrs Dalton of Frederick Farmley's generosity to the clerk in a time of difficulty, Mr Fairfield had questioned him coldly, but closely, as to that matter, and as to his general relations with the young man. The information elicited from the frightened clerk—who looked more frightened than the circumstances seemed to demand—the solicitor had received without comment; and his silence since then wore an ominous look. As the clerk stood by his employer this morning, his restless eyes more than once glanced with furtive uneasiness at the few private letters that lay aside, unopened.

The business correspondence having been dealt with, Mr Brock withdrew with the papers. Mr Fairfield opened the others. The first, from Mrs Dalton, he read without apparent surprise or disappointment. The second, the cover of which bore the name of a well-known South African steamship company, he perused with deeper interest. Mr Fairfield seldom had need to read a letter a second time, but he did it in this case; and with the significant interjection 'Ah!' he folded the sheet, replaced it in its envelope, and put it in his pocket. It was a very important communication indeed. He at once wrote, and sent by messenger, a line to Mrs Dalton, saying that he proposed calling in the evening at six.

Farmley was there when the note arrived, and he heard of the proposed visit with evident indifference. That he made no remark at all, and maintained the good-humour he had been in since his arrival, pleased the two ladies very much, because for a moment they had feared he might behave differently in view of what had happened the preceding day. The young man's manner clearly showed that, whatever might be the object of the lawyer's visit, the question of the marriage was now finally settled.

Farmley went home after luncheon, but returned about half-past four, and had tea with the ladies. He was preparing to go away again when he made the remark:

'It is so delightful this morning, after the shower, that I would like to take Mary for a walk, only that Mr Fairfield is coming.'

'But Mr Fairfield is not coming to see me,' the girl answered at once, anxious to please her lover.

'Very well,' he said brightly, 'get that pretty straw hat you look so nice in, and we will start.—We shall not be very long, Mrs Dalton.'

They went through Crownley, calling at several shops; and then they wandered on into Croham. In the main street they stopped at a stationer's, and here, after some pretty blushing and resistance, Farmley obtained the girl's shy consent to his leaving an order for the printing of their new visiting-cards. Mary's face was very pink and warm indeed when she saw her name for the first time written 'Mrs Frederick Farmley.' Farmley laughed, and privately pressed her fingers.

As they were about to leave the shop, a singular thing happened. Some trays lay on a counter, filled with photographs, and to one of them a label was attached, bearing the words 'Local Views.' Mary Dalton turned a few of them over indifferently (she was not interested particularly in Croham), but, on a sudden, exclaimed:

'Oh, Freddie! here is our house, I declare.'

The shopwoman explained that the collection contained several views in and about Crownley. They had been taken by a travelling artist, who had only that morning left them on commission.

Yes, that was certainly Mrs Dalton's house, and a good picture too, which at once was retained as a purchase. There were others also, of less interest; but a view of the vicarage, with the church a little beyond, drew another exclamation of pleasure from Mary Dalton.

'There is the door wide open—and all the windows—as dear uncle liked them to be. And—can that be Mrs Atkins peeping from the dining-room window—I declare, with a bonnet on?'

Farmley took the photograph from her hand, and glanced at it. Mary did not notice the deadly pallor that crept over his face—but the shopwoman did. He was observed to shut his lips tightly, and give two or three quick respirations, like pants.

'Well,' he remarked, retaining the photograph, and commencing to toss the others about on the tray, 'we will take all the views of your house and the church.'

'Not all, Freddie?'

'Yes,' he answered, 'I want to send some away. How many have you?' he asked the woman.

They were picked out, six of the house, and only five of the church. One, it was explained, had been sold.

'To whom?' he quickly asked, with curious interest.

The woman did not know, but made in-

quiries of her daughter in a room off the shop. The sixth photograph of the church had been purchased half an hour ago by Mr Wilkinson, the superintendent of the police—who, it was added, had asked where the artist was to be found, and had been told that he was probably still in Croham.

The photographs were paid for, and stuffed in Farmley's pocket. A little way down the street, Mary Dalton glanced up in his face, and uttered a little cry of alarm.

'You are ill!' she said. 'Freddie, what is it?'

With some muttered words, and a look almost fierce, he darted into a public-house, leaving her standing amazed, and a little ashamed, on the pavement. He soon emerged, looking like a man half intoxicated, and held up his hand to a passing cab.

'I am—ill,' he said to Mary Dalton, but without looking at her. 'I must drive home.'

So saying, he climbed into the cab, flung himself back, and was driven away.

The girl, amazed by the whole affair, became conscious when she found herself standing on the footpath the object of curious interest to some men who came out of the public-house and were standing at the door. Blushing deeply, she walked on homeward, but had not proceeded far when she was overtaken by Mr Fairfield, driving in the same direction. The solicitor took her up beside him, with a few words of commonplace courtesy, and talked only of the weather during the few minutes that elapsed before they reached Mrs Dalton's house.

Gently, but very decisively, the solicitor demonstrated to Mrs Dalton and her daughter, a few minutes later, that the wedding must not take place. He used no arguments, except facts. That letter from the steamship office armed him with authority which had to be obeyed. These were his facts, and their effect may be left to the imagination of the reader, who, perhaps, will be of Mr Fairfield's opinion that, in the circumstances, directness of speech was kindest as well as wisest.

Frederick Farmley had notified that he was coming home by the *Ross Castle*, sailing from Cape Town, 25th of June. He was not a passenger by that vessel.

But he was a passenger by a steamer of another line, the *Negro*, which arrived at Southampton, the 30th of June. The alleged letter (burnt) of the late vicar, dated 4th of July, was therefore a fabrication. No letter had been received at Southampton addressed to Farmley, on either steamer.

Farmley's movements between 30th of June and 12th of July (date of arrival of *Ross Castle* and of his appearance at home), were now being investigated.

The effect of this communication, and of that which it dimly but portentously shadowed, was, on the part of Mary Dalton, different from what might have been expected. Sitting on the floor by her mother's feet, pale and stunned, she was probably incapable of realising what she had heard. The occurrence in Croham, which was unknown to the others, added to her mental confusion. Mrs Dalton went to the door with the solicitor, who said to her quietly, 'Take the child to her room, and leave her alone.'

This was done, and Mary Dalton was left undisturbed (though the mother went often to her door) until past nine o'clock. She was then asleep, on a moistened pillow, with but a little of the colour back in her cheeks. Mrs Dalton lay down softly beside her, grateful in her heart of hearts for a great mercy; and they both slept, unconscious of the news the servants were discussing in whispers below.

*(To be continued.)*

## A CHAT ABOUT BARRISTERS.

By One of Them.

The Law List for this year discloses the fact that there are over eight thousand gentlemen now living who have been 'called to the Bar.' Of these, two hundred and twenty-three are Queen's Counsel, the rest being ordinary barristers, known variously as 'juniors' or 'stuffgownsmen.' The Q.C. wears a silk gown, somewhat plainly made, with a broad and deep collar. Hence the saying that So-and-so 'has taken silk.' The junior is distinguished by a gown which, though it is made of a less expensive material, is much more elaborately fashioned — reminding one of the old-time smock-frock.

Of late years, the proportion of foreigners appearing in the list has considerably increased, gentlemen bearing the most unpronounceable names (one rejoicing in a string of seven such), and hailing from India, Persia, Egypt, and other parts of Asia and Africa, figuring to about eight per cent. Most of these, after being called, return to their native country—for its lasting good, we may reasonably hope.

The number of barristers available for actual work is greatly reduced when we excise those whose practical acquaintance with the Bar ended on their being called. These represent probably one-half of the gross total. Various are the reasons which lead gentlemen to study for the Bar, without any intention of gaining a livelihood by practising at it: the two most salient being—(1) to thereby fit themselves for Government and other appointments at home or abroad; (2) the desire to advance their social position.

With regard to the first, these gentlemen may be found dispensing justice, according to our ideas, or administering affairs in the name of the Queen, wherever the British flag is unfurled; and a glance at the list of magistrates for almost any county, shows that many of these names appear also in the Bar list. As to the other set, the fact of being a barrister is the open sesame to society which would be closed to the man who without it is, say, only a retired tradesman's son.

Not so long ago, an officer in the army came to a police-court to conduct the case on behalf of two of his men who were charged with some civil offence. He was informed that, not being a solicitor, he was debarred from so doing. 'But,' said he, 'I am also a barrister. I was called to the Bar before entering the army, and I

appear in that capacity;' and he succeeded in getting the case dismissed.

Those who do intend to practise, choose a circuit at the outset, and generally adhere to it. England and Wales comprise seven circuits, and the question of which shall be adopted depends greatly upon circumstances. It is usually considered that a man has a good chance if he or his family is well known to the solicitors in one or more of the towns on his prospective circuit. Marriage with a lady related to an influential solicitor is also a good source of hope; but, as a Lord Chancellor once put it, the man had the best chance who, with brains and an infinite capacity for hard work, had nothing else to rely upon for the necessaries of life—which was his own case.

At assizes, to bring in a man from another circuit involves the payment of a heavy additional fee—quite out of proportion to the needs of an ordinary *nisi prius* case. This regulation very much narrows down the area of choice to the provincial solicitors; and occasionally the barrister who is supposed to be the best man of the circuit for the particular case in hand, is retained as soon as it is seen that the action is imminent. On our own circuit, there is one gentleman who figures in almost every criminal case of any importance—and nearly always for the defence. He has the reputation of making 'a rattling good speech,' and that is always left to him, whatever other part he may or may not be called upon to take. Many a man has he pulled out of the fire by a good speech at the end, attacking and criticising the points urged by the prosecution, and trusting to the effect of his speech on the mind of the twelve good men and true. If he calls no witnesses, he deprives the prosecution of the opportunity to reply: thus securing the last word—often of the greatest importance in jury cases.

A fact not generally known is that, as Queen's Counsel are officers of the Crown, it is necessary, before they can appear for a prisoner against the Crown, to obtain a permit, which is, however, always granted, and costs half-a-guinea.

It is only the bare truth to say that the really leading men can command their own prices, and even then are pelted with work which it is sometimes impossible for them to properly attend to, notwithstanding the assistance of clerks, pupils, and the system known as 'devilling.' Like other human beings, they cannot attend to two things at one time.

The Parliamentary Bar suffer terribly in this way. The working-days in a year are fewest with them, and in the effort to make their hay, the pressure is felt severely by both themselves and the people (mostly public bodies) who seek their services. It is a common practice to retain three counsel to pilot a private Bill through Parliament. You may then hope to secure the corporeal presence of one or other of them throughout, and perhaps two for the greater part of the time. In connection with one Bill in which I was concerned, we briefed three. The leader came and 'opened'—and we never saw him again during the five days the committee sat, until the favourable decision was given (for which he, with becoming modesty, took the credit); and he was only once at the daily conferences. Frequently we only had one present, and twice was our counsel's bench empty. Needless to say, they all drew their heavy fees regularly, and with as little diffidence as if they had each and all been in close attendance the whole time.

What can you do? Pay, and look as pleasant as possible. There is nothing else for it.

As in other professions, there are specialists at the Bar. A famous Q.C. (now retired) was related to a well-known musical family, and, in consequence, for a generation he appeared in nearly every case involving musical or dramatic copyright.

Not long ago, a county council proceeded against a manufacturer for alleged pollution of a stream. The defendant could not afford a fancy fee. Yet, to lose the case meant ruin to him. He *must* have a first-class speaker and cross-examiner, and—more important still—one well up in that branch of chemistry associated with sanitary and public health laws. So far from being able to pick and choose a man who possessed these two qualifications, he had first to be discovered. Eventually he was found—at a handsome fee; but he justified his reputation, and succeeded—which is the main thing. It pays to be a specialist.

Years ago, there was an agitation inaugurated against the practice of charging a fee for the clerk on top of that paid to the principal. This fee is an additional half-a-crown upon any fee up to five guineas, five shillings up to ten guineas; and so on up to fifty guineas, upon and above which it is two and a half per cent. Many hard-worked counsel have more than one clerk; while, with the briefless crowd, one boy frequently does duty for several, and his almost nominal services (so far as briefs are concerned, that is) are considered adequately rewarded by ten shillings a week.

From what the reader knows now, he will be prepared to hear that the agitation dropped through. Leading counsel don't sit at their chambers waiting for work, and willing to chaffer about fees. Rather, you have to go cap in hand, and await their pleasure—or run the risk of having your papers returned on any sign of impatience.

It is safe to say that it would be a revelation to those who may wonder at these things, could they but attend a few consultations at the chambers of one of the leading men. To save time, the solicitor will perhaps have prepared a short epitome for present use, in addition to the more or less lengthy 'instructions' which were delivered days ago. As likely as not, this will never come out of his pocket, a casual observation from the great man showing that he 'knows all about that,' and more—knew it, in fact, before the case began. The all-round knowledge of the world which is stored up in the mind of a leading Q.C. is an eye-opener: it is that which you have to pay so heavily for.

No article on this subject would be complete without a reference to the peculiar—probably unique—relations subsisting between barristers and those whose interests they represent.

You may take papers to 'a gentleman of the long robe,' and obtain his opinion—and then you may snap your fingers at him, and refuse to pay. He has no remedy at law. Of course, you would not do it again, either with him or any one of his fraternity—you wouldn't get the opportunity. Except with a well-known firm of solicitors, or one with whom counsel may have a running account, with half-yearly settlements, the money is left with the papers. Should the amount tendered be considered inadequate, the clerk intimates the fact to the solicitor. Often enough, the fee is not marked by the solicitor, but left to the barrister's clerk. One never corresponds with the principal about fees! He, theoretically, is quite above such mundane matters—merely working from platonic motives: his sordid clerk is there to protect him from being plucked, and to collect a commensurate 'honorarium.'

To maintain an equipoise in this otherwise very one-sided arrangement, an effectual, though refreshingly simple, law exists, that a barrister is under no obligation to attend to any work which you may take to him—and pay for in advance. He may return your papers, and pocket the fee; or, worse still, he may go into court, and make the most fatal and idiotic arrangement binding upon your client—and you have no legal remedy, such as a layman has against a solicitor. But here, too, the case is highly hypothetical, and in an experience of twenty years, I have never known real harm to ensue from it. The laws of business and common-sense in effect govern this, as all other professions; and a barrister who sought to take advantage of his theoretical rights, would doubtless have but little possibility of repeating it. The whole thing *seems* absurd; but it works well in practice, and probably neither barristers, solicitors, nor clients, if canvassed, would care to alter it.

## JAN PENGELLY.

### CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

Mrs Polwithey, who lived at the coastguard cottage, was hanging out her linen, and the grassy slope behind the house was white with fluttering garments. Polwithey himself was pacing the paths of the little square garden, smoking his pipe; and a pretty garden it was, gay with spring flowers, and enclosed by thick hedges of fuchsia. On the sheltered side of the house was a gigantic geranium that half covered the wall, and the growth of it and the size of the gnarled stem were the wonder of strangers; for the vegetation is semi-tropical in the warm nooks of southern Cornwall.

'Good-afternoon, Mrs Polwithey,' cried a pleasant voice from the path, and Miss Rose Trevennick walked smiling past, escorted by Cameron.

Mrs Polwithey made a dutiful response, and watched the two descend the winding path.

'Seems to me,' said the worthy woman, more to herself than to her spouse, 'that when two young folks pass a body's door brisk and quick, and directly they get a bit down-along saunter and saunter—seems to me it means something.'

'They two took a boat together last week,' remarked Polwithey, with a twinkle in his eye. '"Do 'ee want a man, zur?" said I. "No thank'ee," said he; and Miss Rose, her says to me, innercent like, "how 's the wind, Ned?" "Bless yer purty face," says I, "it doan't want no sailor-man to tell which way the wind blaws."'

'Well, well,' observed Mrs Polwithey sententiously, 'as 'twas, so 'twill be;' and with this bit of condensed philosophy, she resumed her labours at the clothes-line.

'Hulloa! what 's up below?' shouted Polwithey a minute after; 'Missus, come here quick—there 's something wrong!' And far down the hill they saw two men carrying a strange burden up the rugged path.

''Tis surely a drownded man!' continued the coastguard excitedly. 'Do 'ee get things ready, Sarah, and I 'll rin down and help 'em up!'

Over her parlour mantel-piece, proudly framed, hung an illuminated certificate, setting forth that Sarah Polwithey had satisfactorily undergone a course of instructions in first aids to the injured; and it was with astonishing celerity that the good woman prepared the various restoratives and appliances; but she felt hysterically excited when the three men bore into the house the dripping form of Jan Pengelly, apparently lifeless. A Tregartha fisherman supported his head, but the man who held his feet was a stranger to the place.

'I b'lieve there 's a flutter of life in 'en,' said Polwithey; 'his heart seems to beat, and his eyelids quivered a bit as us carried 'en—us 'll bring 'en round.'

In a few minutes, to their intense relief, Jan opened his blue eyes for a moment, and his lips parted, though he remained unconscious.

'What 's amiss?' cried a voice at the door, and Cameron entered, while Miss Trevennick waited anxiously in the porch. They had caught sight of the men carrying the body up the hill, and had hastened back to the coastguard station.

''Tis a poor chap half-drownded, zur,' said Polwithey, 'but, plase the Lord, us 'll bring 'en back—'tis Jan Pengelly, the mazed chap. I wish wan of 'ee wid fetch the doctor.'

'I 'll run, George,' cried Miss Trevennick, letting his Christian name escape her in the excitement of the moment; 'you may be more useful here.'

It was nearly half an hour before Doctor Bolitho appeared; for he was old and stout, and the steep path was impossible for his pony. His quick eye took in at a glance the condition of the sufferer, and the excellent methods that had been adopted pending his own arrival. 'Capital!' he grunted; 'Mrs Polwithey, you 're half a doctor.'

Rose Trevennick paced the garden walk, eagerly awaiting the examination of the doctor; and catching sight of her white face as she passed the open door, he said, 'He 's all right. There 's no bones broken, though he 's knocked about a good deal—he 's in no immediate danger.' And burying her face in her hands, she sank on a seat in the porch, and burst into a flood of tears.

She was much attached to Jan; for years he had been her faithful henchman, her casual gardener and boatman. At Christmas, it was Jan who brought the holly to the church, and twined the ivy; and the crowning glory of each harvest festival was Jan's trophy of wheat and flowers, hung where none but he dared reach. His very infirmity of mind was a bond between them, for there were times when he clung to her with a childish reliance.

Meanwhile, Jan had again opened his eyes, and murmuring the word 'Parson!' relapsed into stupor.

'And how did all this happen?' asked the doctor, when he could spare his attention from his patient.

'It was quite providential,' said the stranger, a gentleman from Truro; 'I have several times visited Tregartha, and have long had a desire to explore the famous cavern under Trevasse Head; and this afternoon, the tide being favourable, I took a boat with that purpose. As we approached the mouth of the cavern, we saw a man swinging by a rope from the cliff above, and while the boatman was telling me of the intrepid daring of the climber, he fell before our eyes from a great height into the sea. We rowed quickly to the spot, and in a few minutes dragged his floating body into the boat; his hands still held the rope, which must have broken. By a mercy he fell into deep water; but the current ran strong, and I fear he was badly beaten against the rocks before we reached him.'

'Well, 'tis the Lord's hand,' said Mrs Polwithey; 'but 'tis surely a lesson to 'en. I never did hold wi' climming after a passel of say-birds' eggs that baint fit to cook when you've found 'en.'

'He's a fine-grown young fellow,' said the stranger admiringly.

'And oncommon good-looking,' added Mrs Polwithey, gently touching the damp locks of red hair. 'Many a time when he's passed here with his rope birds'-nesting, I've called to him, "'Tis a fule's errand you're on, Jan, and some fine day you'll break your neck, or scatter your poor brains out." But he was wonderful sure-footed, and could clim' like a cat when he was just a bit of a chield. Us couldn't very well afford to spare Jan,' she added softly. 'Do 'ee mind Tremayne's little maid, doctor?'

'Ay, I remember,' said he gravely.

'Tremayne is wan of the lighthouse-keepers out to the Pinnacles,' explained Mrs Polwithey to the stranger; 'and last summer, when he was ashore for a day or two's leave, his little maid was cruel bad, like to die, and the poor fellow had to go back to his duty not knawing how 'twould be with the chield, and when the fever 'bated, and the maid mended a bit, us all said what a pity 'twas the feyther didn't knaw the news; but the say was awful rough, and no weather for boats. And Jan, he put out in the storm by hisself, and got near enough to the Pinnacles, to the windward, to shout a few blessed words o' message to Tremayne; and sure enough, he got back safe and sound, either by saymanship or the dear Lord's providence.'

'Saymanship's no word for it,' added Polwithey, ''twas soopernat'ral. I seed 'en come round Trevasse Point in a hurricane; and the way he brought the boat into the cove on the top o' the tide without a rag of sail 'twas marvellous to behold! Jan's a poor sawfty in most things, but 'tis wonderful how he knaws the watter, and the ways o' the wind.'

'I think I may now leave your patient to your good care,' Mrs Polwithey,' said the doctor, after a while; 'I'll look in again in the evening. I passed Captain Trefusis sitting by the path on my way up. He had had a nasty fall, and his head was badly cut; but as his case was not desperate, I bade him walk quietly home, and promised to call on him on my way back. Quite a chapter of accidents!'

An hour afterwards, Jan slowly recovered consciousness, and, looking weakly around, said, 'Where's Parson? I wish wan of 'ee wid fetch Parson.'

'How do 'ee feel, poor sawl of 'ee?' asked Mrs Polwithey, with motherly kindness; and the coastguard added heartily: 'You'm getting on fine, Jan, my sonny; you'll be right enough now us have got the say-watter out of 'ee. You baint drownded yet; a bit of a soaking warn't hurt a young watter-rat like thee.'

'Be 'ee troubled about your sawl, Jan?' asked Mrs Polwithey tenderly; and Jan, with some impatience, answered: 'No, missus, 'tisn't my sawl, 'tis my leg that troubles me—'tis stiff like an old rudder, and I can't move 'en. I can't walk to the rectory, that's certain, so Parson must please come here. I've got something I must tell 'en. Will wan of 'ee fetch 'en?'

Cameron, who had lingered in the cottage, soothingly promised to fetch the rector if Jan would keep quiet.

Later in the day, when Parson Trevennick came with Cameron, Jan was fitfully sleeping, and they waited patiently till he awoke, and took some nourishment. Incoherently, but with great earnestness, Jan told his story. The rector listened good-humouredly, and was at first inclined to attribute the whole matter to some delusion of Jan's excited brain; but the keener mind of Cameron at once grasped the significance of it all.

'If there is indeed any truth in this, it will be good news to many,' said the rector, as they walked home; 'but I am grieved to hear of such iniquity in the parish.'

'I would suggest that the man Roskree be sent for and questioned,' replied Cameron; 'I believe he would not withhold information if driven into a corner.'

And Roskree, who had all along been but half-hearted in his roguery, with many self-excuses confessed the whole matter. But that deeper villainy of Trefusis was never known.

Two days later, Cameron met the captain in the narrow cliff-path. The miner's head was bandaged with a handkerchief, and he looked pale and ill. For a moment the two men looked at each other, then the captain dropped his eyes.

'Captain Trefusis,' said Cameron slowly, 'I understand that you have a brother who is doing well at the copper-mines in Namaqualand.'

The captain nodded.

'Then I think,' added Cameron significantly, 'that Namaqualand would be the best place for you to go to.'

And Trefusis went.

## TAHOE, THE GEM OF CALIFORNIAN LAKES.

California has more than its share of the great wonders of Nature for which the continent of America is celebrated. On its golden shores are the mammoth trees, big enough for a large stage-coach to pass through; the Yosemite Valley, with its three thousand feet of perpendicular rock, and its waterfalls, the highest in the world; lastly, beautiful Lake Tahoe, whose waters are of such transparency that a trout can be seen fifty feet beneath the surface. It is of this lake that we propose to treat in the present sketch, and if it decides even a few to visit those lovely shores, the writer will be satisfied.

Tahoe, though well known to the Californian, is not so familiar to the foreigner as it deserves to be. The most important point to consider for the excursion is the season of the year. The tourist who intends staying a few days, and seeing all the sights, should not go there till the middle of July or, better still, August. Before that time the snows are so thick on Mount Tallac, that the ascent is in the highest degree difficult, if not impossible; and the view from this mountain is so fine—embracing as it does sixteen lakes—that one would regret losing it. If, however, a prolonged stay is meditated, any time from the end of May is pleasant; for, excepting Mount Tallac, nearly all the sights are as available then as later on, and the waterfalls are seen to better advantage.

Leaving San Francisco at five o'clock in the afternoon, the Central Pacific brings us at five next morning to Truckee, and hence a stage-coach takes us fourteen miles to Tahoe City on the lake. It is preferable to come by this afternoon train, thus avoiding the great heat of the Sacramento Valley, and rather monotonous scenery. On our arrival at Truckee, finding that we had an hour and a half before the departure of the stage, we took breakfast, and had a stroll through the town; but as it only consists of houses of one storey, all little shops or taverns, we were not much interested. Soon after our arrival at Truckee a coach with six horses started off at a good round pace for Tahoe. Our route lay by the Truckee River, which foams and dashes through a charming valley, rocky hills several hundred feet high rising on either side.

Soon we saw the blue waters of the lake nestling amid the Sierras, and drew up beside some dozen houses dignified by the name of Tahoe City. A pretty little steamer now started for Tallac, and we were at once struck with the marvellous transparency of the water, which makes the lake renowned, and we thought of the eulogies that Mark Twain bestows upon this peculiarity. One could read a name fifty feet beneath the water. Tahoe is twenty-two miles long by twelve wide, and has an average depth of six hundred feet, whilst off the cliffs, near Tallac, a much greater depth is found. After a considerable run we turned off into Emerald Bay, an offshoot of Tahoe. It is difficult to praise the scenery here too highly—so beautiful are the mountains around it, so luxuriant the wooding, and so perfectly lovely the green shading of the water, making a striking contrast with the blue of Tahoe.

A short run from Emerald Bay and we obtained a fine view of Mount Tallac (9600 feet), at the base of which was our destination. Though this mountain is exceeded in altitude by Mount Freal, still in configuration, beauty, and by his snowy diadem, Tallac is monarch. The Tallac hotel is the only one in the district, and it, as well as a large tract of pine-woods, is owned by 'Lucky' Baldwin, who is likewise proprietor of the hotel named after him in San Francisco. The hotel is excellent, and there are nine hotel-cottages for people making a long stay and desiring home comforts. We arrived about one o'clock in the afternoon, and after luncheon took a walk on the excellent carriage-road to Fallen-leaf Lake, which is about two miles distant. Our route lay through some magnificent pine-trees, large enough to astonish one, if not already *blasé* by seeing the Californian mammoths. This lake, encircled by pine-woods, and situated at the base of Mount Tallac, is shaped like a leaf—hence its name—is three miles long, and abounds in trout. Its remarkably pure water supplies our hotel.

The evening we devoted to the Indian camp, only a short distance from the Tallac house. The moon was rising above the pines, and the dusky Indian figures grouped around the blazing camp fires formed a picture long destined 'to hang on memory's wall.' We had hoped to purchase some baskets, moccasins, or other curios, but found the Indians distrustful and sullen. We learned that the 'whites' had forbidden them to spear trout in future, and hence their unfriendliness. A chief had been beating his wife, and the forest had rung with her screams till our arrival broke up the little scene of domestic felicity! We saw about thirty Indians in all, and about half of them were women and children. The men were much better-looking than their squaws.

Next morning at eight o'clock we started on horseback to see the mountain-lakes, accompanied by a guide, who is essential on this excursion, it being so easy to lose one's way amid the forests. At first we rode through pine-woods, and soon had to traverse marshes caused by the overflow from Tahoe. We noticed that the bark was stripped off many of the trees owing to the porcupines which abound here. Soon we arrived at the shores of Cascade Lake, so called because Snow-cloud Fall precipitates itself into it. The lake is extensive, and in colour and other characteristics resembles its neighbour Tahoe.

We now continued our route, passing by the small but pretty Mirror and Deer lakes, finally arriving at Floating-island Lake. The name arises from the presence of a small patch of land, about four yards long, which floats on the surface. On this islet was once a single

tree which some vandal has cut down. The lake contains numerous water-snakes, one of which our guide killed with repeated blows of his whip. As the snake's body continued to wriggle, the guide said it would not die until the sun went down; and though we tried to show him the absurdity of this vulgar superstition, we fear he remained unconverted.

We were now on the side of Mount Tallac, 6500 feet above sea-level, enjoying splendid views of Tahoe and Fallen-leaf Lake, and seeing quantities of the red snow-plant. Soon our horses began to sink so deep that we had to make numerous detours to get along, and at last our guide refused to go any higher, declaring it unsafe. The snow here was in patches quite thirty feet in depth. We returned to our hotel after a ride of about twenty-five miles, regretting that we had not seen the sixteen lakes from Tallac summit, but in a measure consoled by this beautiful excursion. In the evening we took a boat, and went trolling for trout, for which Tahoe is famed. Each boat has a fish-tank, and the rower takes one to the best spots for making a catch. The average-sized Tahoe trout weighs from one and a half to three pounds, but frequently much larger fish are killed. The largest ever taken was stated to have been over twenty-nine pounds, and was sent to the then President of the United States.

Next day we made another excursion on horseback, this time to Glen Alpine, a very picturesque district in the heart of the mountains. At first we rode by our old acquaintance, Fallen-leaf Lake, and then through a long rocky valley, traversed by a mountain-stream which descended in several fine waterfalls *en route*, and skimming through the spray we saw numerous kingfishers. From its wildness and the grandeur of its scenery Glen Alpine is a favourite place for spending a few days, especially for sportsmen, who can shoot any quantity of badgers, besides deer, and an occasional bear. There is a small and rather primitive-looking hotel, which is reported, however, to be sufficiently comfortable. When we saw it in the month of July, the surrounding district was one veritable swamp, which they were beginning to drain, to be ready for the August season, when a stage runs between here and Tallac. Close to the hotel is a fine soda spring, strongly impregnated with iron, and very beneficial for invalids. Leaving Glen Alpine we went about two miles up the mountains, when we lost the path in the snow, and our guide could not strike it again. The creek, beside which we rode, was spanned by several natural bridges of snow, caused by the melting of the portion near the water, and here and there were other curious snow formations, one being the exact shape of a gigantic tortoise. After reaching Pyramid Point, a very striking and picturesque mountain summit, so deep grew the snow that our horses got frightened, and soon further advance became impossible. On the homeward journey one of the party shot four badgers; the Indian cherishes them for their meat, and the white man for their skins.

We had now seen the principal sights, and after our delightful stay at Tallac, took the steamer for Tahoe City, returning by the Nevada side of the lake. Though fine in parts, on the whole the scenery is rather monotonous, arising from the sameness of this portion of the Sierra Nevada. Glenbrooke is a very pretty station, and it is preferable to leave the steamer here and return to San Francisco *viâ* Carson City, thus seeing the Comstock and other great Nevada mines, which made so many millionaires. The tourist to California cannot fail to bring away many delightful memories, and not the least pleasing will be Tahoe.

## CONSTANT CROSSBIE.

By W. E. Cule.

It was in Crossbie's Kensington sitting-room, and I was leaning back in the best arm-chair with my feet upon the window-sill.

'Very decent diggings, old man,' I said lazily. 'Still, they're not any better than your last. What made you change?'

'I had very little to do with it,' answered Crossbie. 'It was Mary Ann.'

I turned and looked at him searchingly. No, he was not quizzing, for his look was, if anything, rather more serious than usual. But in a moment he proceeded to explain.

'You'll remember my old rooms at 41 Basil Street? Well, Mary Ann came there about three months ago as housemaid. Something about her, I ought to say everything about her, captivated me at once. Her grace, her smiles, her manners were all remarkable, and I had never seen anything like them. There was no affectation, no nonsense, and everything she said or did was a part of herself, native and natural. Of course you can guess the result of all this. I adored her before a week was out, and in a fortnight I had proposed.

'You'd think that any ordinary housemaid might consider it a compliment to have the refusal of two hundred a year, and what some of the critics call a rising literary light. But Mary Ann, being quite an extraordinary housemaid, treated the matter very sensibly. She said she liked me pretty well, but she could not give an answer then. We hadn't known each other long enough. I tried to persuade her that we should have plenty of time to get acquainted after the wedding, but she couldn't see it. A week later she told me that she had found another situation—this time in Bayswater.

'I was frantic. "What! going to leave?" I said. "Does that mean that you don't want to see me again?"

'"Oh no, sir," she said quietly. "It does not mean that. I'm taking another place, that's all."

'In two minutes I had made up my mind. There were rooms vacant in the very house she was going to, and a week later I had taken possession. I was with her once more.

'That rest was all too brief. She seemed to have a very strong objection to staying more than a few weeks in the same service, so in a

month she had found another situation and was off again. I couldn't understand it. The people all liked her and wanted her to stay, and I begged her to take a final situation with me. It was of no use.

'"No," she said firmly; "I like a change, and if you really love me you will wait a little longer. I believe you're ashamed of me because I'm a housemaid."

'I protested in vain; and she went.

'But I had determined not to lose sight of her for a single moment, so I made the necessary inquiries, and soon found myself installed as a lodger where she was again the housemaid. This is the place, and I've been here three weeks now. I know it can't last, though, and I'm expecting every hour to hear that she has found another situation. That's the whole story.'

Crossbie sighed as he concluded. I was gazing at him in doubt and wonder, hardly believing my ears.

'Do you mean to say,' I began at last, 'that you have fallen in love with a housemaid, and that you change your lodgings every two or three weeks because the girl takes it into her head to change her situation?'

He nodded gloomily.

'And her name is Mary Ann?' I murmured.

'It is,' said Crossbie, with a melancholy smile.

I thought the matter over. He was sane enough, as sane, in fact, as any hard-working literary man could be expected to be. Yet his story revealed a state of things as mad as any I had ever heard of.

'I know what you're thinking about,' he said suddenly, throwing the end of his cigar through the open window. 'You think I'm crazy. But wait till you see Mary Ann! I'll ring for supper.'

He rang, and in a minute or two Mary Ann entered with the cloth. Crossbie glanced at me curiously and must have been satisfied with the effect, for I am sure that my surprise was plainly visible in my face.

Mary Ann was a lady. Mary Ann was sweet. Mary Ann was charming. Housemaid indeed she was, but an angel in a pretty cap and apron may be an angel still.

'Crossbie,' I remarked, when she had gone, 'please, forgive my suspicions. Go to the North Pole, old man, if you like, or take a pair of back garrets in a Whitechapel alley. I'll guarantee that you are the sanest man alive.'

He cheered up a little, and smiled.

'It's a queer thing, of course,' he said, 'but I am determined to go on with it. She speaks of another three months, and of course that's not long to wait for such a girl. But these continual changes are quite beyond me.'

'Perhaps she breaks things,' I suggested softly.

'No,' he said with decision. 'It's not that. She never breaks anything or makes any trouble. Why, the landlady at Basil Street was crying after her—actually crying. Nobody ever cried after me! I think she must be of a roaming disposition, or something of the kind. Perhaps she has gypsy blood in her veins, though she doesn't look like it. At any rate, I can't be sure of her for a single week, and never felt so unsettled in all my life.'

I sympathised with Crossbie. He was a really good fellow, a hard worker, and one who could always be depended upon. I wondered that any housemaid in the wide world could treat him in such a way, or fail to see his merits at a glance. And to keep him changing his rooms every month, and travelling from one end of London to the other, was adding injury to insult. I rather wondered, too, how he could stand it, for Crossbie was one of those fellows who love their creature comforts. He must be hard hit indeed.

When I left him an hour later, I told him to cheer up and make the best of it. After all, I said, it was better that Mary Ann should do all her roaming before marriage than after. With that sentiment he fully agreed.

Ten days later I called to see him again, and found that he had gone. Nobody seemed to know where, and for a long time I could find no trace of him.

Long afterwards, however, we met once more, and he related the whole story of his singular experiences subsequent to the date of my visit. It is a remarkable history.

Mary Ann had soon tired of the Kensington situation. Crossbie saw the change coming, yet he groaned inwardly when at last she declared her intention.

'What? Off again, dear? When will you give it up and settle down?'

She looked at him reproachfully.

'Remember,' she said gently, 'what I have promised! But you need not follow me this time. I will write to you once a week.'

'But,' persisted Crossbie, turning quite pale at the suggestion, 'what is the need of all this? Let us finish it. Take me now—I have two hundred a year, enough to keep us comfortably'——

But she would not hear him, and at last Crossbie gave in. She had found a new situation in Burdett Road, and, after some difficulty, he took the only room that was vacant there, and once more settled down.

It was a change for the worse, and he nearly broke his leg on the first evening by falling over a bucket which some one had left in the hall, but he bore it without an audible murmur. He knew it would not last long, and wondered whether the next change would improve the surroundings.

He suffered in many ways owing to these changes. He was obliged to wound the feelings of several excellent landladies by giving them notice without any very good reason, and this troubled him a good deal. Several times, too, he was obliged to pay rent in lieu of proper notice, and these calls upon his purse had to be soberly considered. Moreover, his work suffered, for no sooner did he settle down and get out his writing-pad, than he seemed to be off once more. Acquaintances began to look suspiciously at him, and whispered darkly of duns, while one editor told him in rather vigorous language that he need not submit any further manuscripts until he had fixed upon some address to which they could safely be returned.

The last change was the worst of all. Mary Ann seemed determined to drain the very dregs of housemaid existence, and, as a last experiment, went as sole 'general' to a small lodging-house in Hoxton. Crossbie pleaded in vain, for she was still inflexible, though he pointed out that the work was slavery, that the neighbourhood was bad, and that she could easily get a thousand better places. His own rooms there were dark and dirty, and he found it absolutely impossible to write a single line in them. So he walked about, and idled in the reading-rooms all day, returning in the evening to sleep the sleep of the infinitely perplexed.

After a fortnight of it, he waylaid Mary Ann on the stairs one day and relieved her, despite her protestations, of a tremendous bucket of coal which she was carrying to the third-floor. And when he had finished that little business, he began to plead again, only to receive the same answer.

'You say you love me, and yet you cannot put up with this much for my sake.'

'I can put up with anything,' cried the faithful Crossbie, 'but I must consider you. How can I be happy when I have to see you slaving day after day in a place like this?'

Her lovely eyes softened, and her voice was even tender when she spoke again:

'Is that it really, Dick? How soft-hearted you are! But it will only last another week. I've found another situation, and have already given notice.'

'Oh! And what is the new address?' asked Crossbie, a slight sentiment of hope mingling with his resignation.

'It is a good place this time,' said Mary Ann with a smile. 'Ninety-nine Belgrave Square. They don't take lodgers there, of course, but you can call to see me—if you're not ashamed to visit the housemaid!'

Crossbie flushed slightly. He saw a vision of himself sitting in the kitchen among the footmen, with smirking maid-servants making eyes behind his back. But in a moment his love triumphed over his dignity.

'I would follow you to the end of the earth,' he said earnestly, 'or even to the scullery. But this is to be the last, please?'

Mary Ann nodded, and he was happy. A week later she had gone to her new place, and he had found rooms in a quarter not far distant from Belgrave Square.

Crossbie's conduct throughout surely proved that he was finally and thoroughly in love. There was no lukewarmness about him, but still he had a large share of self-respect, and the prospect of 'courting' Mary Ann in the servants' hall gave him many uneasy moments. He had never thought of asking her to meet him out of doors, and of course it was not her place to suggest such a thing. Go he must, and go he would. Anything and everything must be dared for Mary Ann's sake. Yet his emotions were terribly mixed when one Tuesday evening, at half-past seven, he knocked at the area door of number ninety-nine. For a thriving literary man, who was already a lion in many Bohemian drawing-rooms, to seek a place in the servants' hall—to drop to the level of a 'follower'—oh, it was awful! He was glad it was dark, so that nobody sitting in the windows of that great house could see him, and he hoped, with a great and sincere hope, that the kitchen would be pretty clear. If this adventure should get abroad he would never hear the end of it.

A solemn-looking page opened the door, and Crossbie, in a husky voice, asked for 'Miss Robinson.' He was relieved to see that the imp did not even smile.

'Yes, sir. Please come this way, sir,' was all he said; and Crossbie followed, bracing himself for a terrible ordeal.

But instead of being taken to the kitchen, he was led up-stairs, and he saw, to his annoyance, that some mistake had evidently been made. But before he could say a word, a door was thrown open, allowing a murmur of voices to reach his ears, and a splendid footman had announced his name in clear, distinct tones.

'Mr Crossbie!'

Flowers, voices, evening dress, ladies—he was vaguely conscious that he was doomed. That idiot of a page had brought him to the drawing-room, where an 'evening' of some kind was evidently being held. Crossbie gazed around him in blank dismay, and in another moment would have bolted to the door. But before he could escape, an elderly lady sailed across the room to his side.

'So pleased that you have come, Mr Crossbie,' she murmured. 'We have been expecting you for some time.'

'Expecting me!' said Crossbie in the purest surprise. 'I am afraid you mistake—it must be some other'——

The lady laughed pleasantly.

'Come,' she said; 'who could mistake the author of those delicious "Idle Idylls" in the *Poetaster?* But let me introduce you to some of the people here.'

She was a pleasant old lady, with a motherly face, but Crossbie was too bewildered to see it. Some awful mistake had been made—but how did she know of the Idylls?

Before he could collect his thoughts, he found himself sitting on a couch between two gentlemen to whom he had been introduced. His amazement was not lessened when he understood that one was a notable editor, and the other a very eminent artist.

How they greeted him, what they said, what he said in reply, he could never remember. He was trying to contrive a means of escape, but was trying in vain, and after a short time his companions resumed their conversation.

'Yes,' said the editor of *Our Own Review*, 'you may call it eccentricity if you please, but it is a good and useful eccentricity. We shall have some new light on the subject now.'

'Do you publish?' asked the artist carelessly.

'Yes. I have secured the series. "Life Below Stairs—The Experiences of a Mary Ann." I think it will go well.'

Crossbie started. The familiar sound had caught his ear, but he soon perceived that it was not his Mary Ann whose name had been mentioned.

He was on thorns. Of course there was only one thing which he could do. He must go to that motherly old lady, and explain.

'I am afraid, madam, that I have been introduced by mistake. I came here to see your housemaid, Mary Ann.' That would put things right, but how could he do it?

And if he did not, the poor girl might come in to answer the bell at any moment. She would see him, and perhaps speak to him. In any case he must speak to her—and then!

He rose in desperation, resolved to brave it out. But at that moment the door opened again, and a young lady entered. Crossbie saw a vision of silk and lace, a figure of familiar beauty, and a face that he knew, and rubbed his eyes in amazement. For the face was certainly the face of Mary Ann!

He turned to the editor.

'I beg your pardon,' he said hurriedly. 'Can you tell me that lady's name?'

The editor looked up in some surprise. Fancy a guest ignorant of the name of his hostess.

'Certainly, he said; 'her full name is Marion Dallas.'

Marion Dallas—Marion Dallas! Crossbie began to see a ray of light. He had heard that lady spoken of as being young, rich, literary, and a champion of her sex as thoroughly in earnest as she was charming.

The truth broke upon him suddenly and forcibly, and he rose to find the door, feeling dimly conscious that he had been badly victimised. But before he reached it, Miss Dallas stood before him.

'You are not going?'

'Yes,' he said coldly; 'I am going. I have been deceived.'

She saw his mood, and laid her hand upon his arm.

'Do not think so,' she said softly. 'Let me explain. The editor of the *Review* agreed to take up the cause of the domestic servant. A series of articles had to be prepared by a special writer thoroughly familiar with the subject. You know my views—I agreed to write them for him. That was the reason of my masquerade, and the reason also for my many changes of situation. You were very kind to me, but I could not tell you my secret. Don't you understand?'

There was a charming blush upon her face, and Crossbie's anger passed away suddenly. But she continued, still speaking softly:

'I told aunt all about it, and we made these arrangements. I wondered whether you would really come after all, but now'——

She paused with a little smile, and Crossbie looked up into her face. This radiant creature was not his Mary Ann, but something he saw in her eyes inspired him to put his fate to the hazard of a question. The answer he received gave him perfect satisfaction.

'No,' she whispered, 'I am not changed. To you I will always be *Mary Ann!*'

. . . . . .

Crossbie's travels came to an end a couple of months later. He took rooms in the square for good, having followed his little housemaid through the bitter to the sweet. Even those who are inclined to envy his luck are ready to admit that he thoroughly deserved it, and in Fleet Street we still call him 'Constant Crossbie.'

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

According to the *Journal* of Geneva, a strange discovery was made at the recent rifle-meeting at Winterthur, in summing up the results of the shooting. It was found that the shots fired from the right-hand side of the range showed a common deviation to the right of the bull's-eye; while those fired from the left side were in a similar manner deflected in their course to the left side of the target centre. This was presumed to be due to the circumstance that on either side of the range were a number of electric wires, and that, as a current-laden wire is attractive to steel like a magnet, the modern projectiles, into which that metal so largely enters, were coaxed out of their true course. Experiments showed that this theory was the correct one; and as a consequence, it is now boldly stated that 'a section of infantry exposed to fire at three hundred yards would enjoy complete safety if a dynamo or accumulator were placed on its flank: a whole company would be in the same security at five hundred yards, and artillery fire could be rendered innocuous at one thousand yards.' We are afraid that such a conclusion is rather too hastily arrived at. It might, with greater consistency, be argued that in a big city like London, it is impossible to shoot anybody with a steel, or steel-coated bullet, because the projectile would at once be attracted to the overhead or underground wires which form such a network in the streets.

Dr Macartney, the medical officer at Chin-Kiang, adverting in a recent report to the injuries arising from compressing the feet of Chinese women and girls, asserts that in Chin-Kiang the feet are more tightly bound than in any other districts in the Yangtsze valley; and the practice is more general, too, for it extends to the poorest classes. The women themselves own that the practice is productive of constant suffering, not only during the early bandaging process, but throughout life. Women with compressed feet cannot stand for any length of time without torture. Paralysis of the legs is often the direct result of bandaging; eczema and ulceration are its products, and very frequently amputation of the foot becomes necessary, on account of gangrene induced by this most unnatural custom.

The Royal Commission, which was appointed to look into the practicability of connecting isolated lighthouses and lightships with the telegraphic system of the United Kingdom, have, in their fourth report, just issued, explained the manner in which it is proposed to deal with light-vessels, which, on account of being subject to the action of tides and local currents, offer obstacles to the attachment of a cable in the usual manner. They propose to run a cable from the shore, and to make it describe a circle under and around the light-vessel, so that as

the ship strains at her cable, she is always well within the circle. The vessel itself will be girded with several coils of insulated wire, which will be connected with a telephone receiver on board. Now it is a well-known law in electrical science that a wire carrying a current will create or *induce* a current in a wire in its neighbourhood. In the case before us, an intermittent vibratory current will be sent through the cable from the shore, and interrupted by a Morse key. Long and short buzzing sounds will in this way be made evident in the telephone circuit, which will be readily translatable by the Morse alphabet. In sending signals from ship to shore, the operations are simply reversed. The commission regards this method of communication as offering greater chances of success than any of the other inventions of the same nature which have been brought before it.

A wonderful increase in the growth of the trade in explosives is shown in the twentieth annual report of Her Majesty's Inspectors, which has been recently issued as a Parliamentary paper. Since the Explosives Act came into operation, twenty years ago, not only has the number of factories more than doubled, but the number of persons employed shows a like remarkable increase, three thousand workers having been added during the past ten years. The introduction of smokeless powders and new nitroglycerine compounds is responsible for this increased industry. But while factories for the making of new explosives show this activity, the gunpowder-works have remained stationary. The number of firework factories has doubled during the past two decades, although large consignments of fireworks come in from abroad. The accidents during the past year were one hundred and fifty-two in number, causing injuries to one hundred and sixty-seven persons, and forty deaths.

It is an old axiom, and one of which the truth has been constantly proved by events, that a theatre is doomed, sooner or later, to be destroyed by fire. With the general introduction of the electric light, and the adoption of a fireproof curtain, which can, at a minute's notice, be let down so as to separate the stage from the auditorium, the risks from fire at a theatre are reduced almost to a minimum. A fire recently occurred at a London theatre, which might have ended in panic and general disaster, had not modern appliances been at hand to reassure the audience—which, by-the-by, was a bank holiday one. The fire broke out on the stage while a play was actually in progress; with commendable promptitude, the iron proscenium curtain was lowered, a hydrant set to work, and while the firemen were busy on the stage, the audience were told by the manager to keep their seats, for they were in no kind of danger. In a few moments the fire was completely subdued, and the play proceeded. The audience, as well as the manager and all concerned, may be complimented on showing presence of mind under very difficult conditions.

The liquefaction of the gases formerly called 'permanent' is one of the first achievements of the century, and there still attaches to liquid air a mystery which no other fluid can claim. A liquid which boils at 200 degrees below the freezing-point of water is still a curiosity; and at the Royal Institution, where its production has long ceased to be a novelty, audiences never tire of watching experiments with an agent which so nearly approaches in temperature the absolute zero. The most recent experiments with it are due to Professors Dewar and Fleming, who have found that metals are curiously altered in their magnetic and electrical properties by immersion in liquid air, the amount of change depending in great measure upon the purity of the metal under examination. For example, it is well known that copper is a far better conductor of electricity than iron, yet if iron be cooled by immersion in liquid air, it becomes a better conductor than copper by thirty per cent. All pure metals gain this increase of conductivity; but alloys, when subjected to the same treatment, are affected to the extent only of about ten per cent. It is generally known that the greater the electrical current, the bigger must be the cable to carry it; but Professor Fleming states that these experiments with metals at extremely low temperatures tend to show that at absolute zero the entire electric force generated by Niagara Falls could be conveyed by a wire as fine as a hair.

Colonel Maxim, whose machine gun is now known all over the world as the most destructive weapon ever invented, has recently published some very interesting notes relative to repeating-arms generally. It would seem that the first machine gun was invented and patented in this country by one James Puckle as long ago as the year 1718; and Colonel Maxim reproduces a drawing of this old weapon, which was designed to discharge grenades, shells, or bullets. Its principle is that of the revolver, there being one main barrel, with a series of revolving chambers at its breech, turned by a handle. One curious point is that, while one set of chambers are all adapted for spherical bullets, another set interchangeable with the first gives accommodation for square bullets; and in the accompanying description we find that the former is a set of chambers 'for round bullets against Christians,' and that the latter is for 'shooting square bullets against Turks.' This suggestion for regulating the shape of the projectiles according to the religious opinions held by the enemy against whom they are directed is exceedingly funny. But we need hardly point out that the principle of the revolving firearm is much older than the time of Mr James Puckle. When Colonel Colt patented his first revolver, he undertook to investigate the origin of repeating-firearms, and discovered to his dismay that in the Tower of London was a revolver which dated back to the fifteenth century.

The one great difficulty in the development of gold-fields is the want of sufficient water with which to work the machinery necessary to extract the precious metal from its ore. In the arid plains of Central Australia, indeed, many a miner has been driven from a promising claim for want of this first necessary of life. A process of extracting gold from its ore without the

need of wetting it is therefore a matter of great importance; and that recently invented by Mr W. H. Hyatt is said to extract all the metal from its mother-earth at a cost which compares favourably with other systems. The main feature of the apparatus is an iron pipe of wide area, which is bent into a spiral, each convolution of the worm holding a charge of mercury which, however, does not close the passage. Into this coil, the ore, previously powdered as finely as possible, is driven by a current of air, and the mercury is by this means forced into a spray which takes hold of and forms an amalgam with all particles of gold in its neighbourhood. In a recent trial, in which gold-dust was mingled artificially with river-sand, nearly all the metal was detained at the first bend of the pipe.

Another new method of extracting the precious metals from their ores which is highly spoken of is by means of molten lead. The idea is not absolutely novel, but previous attempts in the same direction have not been successful. The ore is first of all reduced to powder, and is afterwards roasted, so as to rob it of its sulphur, arsenic, and other impurities. It is then fed into the bottom of a bath of molten lead, where its natural tendency to rise to the surface is impeded by a series of grids, between which a series of paddles revolve, and turn the particles of ore over and over. By this means every metallic particle combines with the molten lead, and the residue that ultimately finds its way to the top is mere earthy matter.

A writer in the *American Machinist* gives some interesting particulars concerning the use of glass for bearings for machinery. This material was tried for the same purpose many years ago, but with negative results. Now, however, experiments have been conducted in a more thorough way, and it seems probable that glass may be used with advantage in the form of a sleeve for light machinery. Its surface presents such remarkable smoothness that friction is reduced to a minimum, and a great saving in lubrication is effected. The best result seems to have been attained by using a kind of wooden box, with the ordinary bearings removed, and pouring in molten glass, taking precautions that the shaft is held in a central position, and that it is turned occasionally before the glass hardens. Such a bearing, it is said, has now lasted several months, with a two inch steel shaft running at one hundred and eighty revolutions per minute, without heating or visible deterioration.

The question as to the best form of wood-paving for a busy thoroughfare has been occupying the attention of a special committee, appointed by the vestry of Paddington (London). This committee have recently sent in their report, in which they endorse the opinion already expressed by an eminent authority, that 'it is a wicked waste of public money to pave a line of heavy traffic with soft wood.' It has been found that soft wood, such as yellow deal, requires renewal at the end of four and a half years, but that blocks of jarrah, karri, and other hard woods have a life of about fifteen years. Of course the initial cost of the hard wood is greater than that of the soft; but there is a great saving in the end, without taking into account the inconvenience and loss suffered by shopkeepers in the neighbourhood by frequent removal of the roadway. As a result of the inquiry, one of the busiest thoroughfares in the parish of Paddington is to be repaired with hard wood blocks of not less than four inches in depth, such blocks to be close jointed with creosote and pitch.

According to a recently published report, Austria-Hungary, which country used to consume 105,700 tons of foreign petroleum, is now in a position to become an exporter instead of an importer of that natural product. Nearly two years ago the proprietor of the Anglo-Austrian bank purchased, at Schodniko in Galicia, four thousand acres of land which surrounded an oil-well there. Since that time about fifty borings have been made with invariable success, and in one case such a prolific supply of oil was tapped that it could not be controlled until thirty-six hours had elapsed, and five thousand barrels of oil run to waste. This well, when ultimately established, yielded the first twenty-four hours after opening one thousand tons of petroleum. The oil is conveyed by pipes to Boryslaw, a place thirteen miles distant, from whence it will be distributed by a railway shortly to be laid.

Some time ago our contemporary, *The Engineer*, offered prizes to the value of eleven hundred guineas for competition between makers of horseless carriages, the trial to come off in October next. This competition is now put off until next year; and the reasons given for the postponement indicate so clearly the present position of the horseless carriage question that it will be useful to quote them. The promoters of the competition say that although a considerable measure of success has been attained, and the horseless carriages exhibited at the Crystal Palace and elsewhere are probably the best in the world, nothing nearly suitable to the demands of the English public has yet been produced. None of them is fairly satisfactory; they are noisy, given to much vibration, and leave behind them most objectionable evidence that they have passed. The general public will not buy carriages which are not at once safe, comfortable, odourless, and silent. 'We are quite certain,' says *The Engineer*, 'that in a little time great advances will be made, and vehicles produced which will compare with those now in use, much as a Great Northern locomotive does with "The Rocket."'

In his recent address to the Selborne Society, Sir William Flower touched upon a theme of great importance to those public-spirited men who give time and trouble to the establishment of local museums. He pointed out that such museums, generally opened under the happiest auspices, sank in the course of two or three decades to such a state of neglect, that one might with some reason look for an inscription over the door to the effect that rubbish was shot there. A school without a schoolmaster, a church without a pastor, or a garden without a gardener are no good at all; and in like manner a museum without a curator cannot prosper. 'A curator,' he said, 'is the heart and soul of a museum, and yet we have museums

going to decay because nobody thought of the expense that is needful to keep a curator and his staff going. Sir William Flower further indicated that a museum should be a place which should enter into every scheme for the furtherance of technical education—a place where one could identify any stone, animal, or plant, and that an immense store of useful information could be gained from such an institution.

Many wonderful things have been told about the X-rays discovered by Professor Röntgen, some true, and others false. One of the latest was conveyed in a telegram from America, to the effect that some one there had found out that the mysterious radiations were destructive to Bacteria. No details of the experiments upon which this assertion was based being given, much was left to the imaginative faculties of newspaper scribes, who by no means neglected the opportunity thus presented to them. But Professor G. Sormani resolved to put the matter to test; and has since made experiments on sixteen different species of Bacteria, both in artificial cultures and when inoculated into living animals, and he asserts, as a result of these researches, that the rays have no appreciable effect upon disease germs.

The clever Japanese who during recent years have profited so much by shaking off old trammels and adopting western ideas are naturally great users of iron and steel. Hitherto they have imported the metal from our own and other countries, but they are now about to start huge iron and steel works of their own, which they hope to complete in less than three years' time. The cost of these works will be more than three-quarters of a million sterling, and they will comprise a staff of eighty-two officials of various grades, who will for the first four years be under the control of foreign experts. The estimated output of the works is 60,000 tons per annum at the outset, to be subsequently greatly increased. The amount stated will be made up thus: 35,000 tons of Bessemer steel, 25,000 of Siemens-Martin steel, 4500 of wrought iron, and 500 tons of crucible steel.

## SAWDUST.

No waste product, however humble, that can by any possibility be turned to profitable account, nowadays escapes the searching eye of the practical economist; and amongst them sawdust appears to have received of late years its fair share of attention.

A few of its everyday uses may be mentioned in passing. It is the best possible packing for ice and oranges: for strewing the floors of butchers' shops and bar parlours it takes the palm for cleanliness: builders employ it largely to prevent the passage of sound between rooms: to the cricketer in showery weather it is a priceless boon: to it the rag-doll owes its plumpness; while special varieties have their special uses, that of boxwood for cleaning jewellery, that of mahogany for smoking fish, and those of birch and rosewood for cleaning furs.

Under certain treatments its application enlarges. If, instead of the common practice of sprinkling a floor with water prior to sweeping it, wet sawdust be employed, as are tea-leaves on a carpet, the work is far more thoroughly performed, and no dust is raised; while the addition of some disinfectant to the wet sawdust makes the cleaning still more effectual.

When carbonised, it makes an excellent filter, used in distilleries in preference to ordinary charcoal ones, and in France to remove the unpleasant flavour common to some of their wines. In Germany, too, after a further chemical treatment, it is employed as a filtering and discolouring material.

Oxalic acid, so largely employed in calico-printing, in cleaning leather and brass, as a solvent for Prussian blue in the preparation of blue ink, &c., and for taking iron mould out of linen, is manufactured on the large scale by oxidising sawdust with a mixture of the hydrates of potash and soda.

In 1893 Mr John Wallace, a great fish-shipper of Washington, found *chilled* sawdust to be not only superior to ice as a packing for fish, but that its employment effected a great saving in every way.

As a manure it is by no means to be despised. It forwards the growth of young trees more than any other kind, and, in moderate quantity, will turn a common bad earth into good garden mould. The ground upon which wood-stacks have stood is always enriched to a surprising degree by the small pieces falling and rotting, and the improvement of barren lands by planting Scotch firs has been advocated, on account of the falling spines, their mouldering and subsequent enriching of the soil.

By the addition of other ingredients its sphere of usefulness still further expands. Saturated with a weak solution of carbolic acid, allowed to dry, and then enclosed in a bag of several layers of fine soft muslin, it forms an excellent antiseptic pad for absorbing the discharge from wounds.

Mixed with tan in the proportion of one to three, it makes a much better floor for a riding-school than does the pure bark, and is so employed in all our cavalry barracks.

With the refuse tar from the gas manufactory added, and compressed into cakes, a fuel is produced in every way superior to soft coal for open fires.

For building purposes it is now extensively employed, more especially in Germany, as a basis for concrete in place of stone. After being mixed with certain refuse mineral products, it is compressed into the form of bricks, a series of experiments on which by the Technical Royal School at Charlottenburg proved them to be very light, impervious to wet, and entirely fireproof: one that was placed for five hours in a coal fire came out intact. The necessity for disposing of the vast accumulations in the numerous sawmills, both in Europe and America, led to an invention for compressing it into roofing boards. The substance known as xyolith or woodstone is nothing more than sawdust mixed with magnesia cement, saturated with chloride of calcium, and subjected to a pressure of one thousand pounds to the square inch: it is very hard and uninflammable, but can be sawn, planed, and dealt with generally like wood.

In mortar it is superior even to hair for the prevention of cracking and subsequent peeling off of rough casting under the action of weather and frost.

Its manufacture into bread-stuff in the northern countries of Europe has often been described by travellers, and now in Berlin wood biscuits are made as food for horses. Professor Brand succeeded in extracting gum and sugar (grape variety) by the action of sulphuric acid. Several firms turn out a rough kind of paper from it, while at St Etienne, in France, it is converted into silk which, it is said, can be sold for less than half the price of the genuine article.

When it was reported, towards the close of 1892, that a German chemist had succeeded in making a first-rate brandy out of sawdust, the incident was noticed in a publication under the heading, *A New Danger to Teetotalism*, and commented on in the following amusing strain: 'We are a friend of the temperance movement, and want it to succeed; but what chance will it have when a man can take a rip-saw and go out and get drunk with a fence rail? What is the use of a prohibitory liquor law if a man is able to make brandy-mashes out of the shingles on his roof, or if he can get delirium tremens by drinking the legs of his kitchen chairs? You may shut up an inebriate out of a gin-shop and keep him away from taverns, but if he can become uproarious on boiled sawdust and desiccated window-sills, any effort must necessarily be a failure.'

Its latest application is reported in a recent issue of the *Engineering and Mining Journal*, which informs us that the little town of Deseronto, in Canada, where there are several large lumber-mills, is partially lighted by gas made from sawdust, and that the gas produced gives an illumination of about eighteen candle-power.

## THE WIND'S MUSIC.

Ever about Life's pathway floats
Strange music, thrilling and piercing notes,
Themes which, played by a master-hand,
Surge through the length and breadth of the land.
Earth is the keyboard, each new day
Its keys are fingered in varied way,
And the master-hand you may seek and find
With the wild, weird, wonderful, wanton Wind.

Listen: at times there seem to swell
The dancing notes of a Tarantelle;
To-morrow perchance may the Wind repent,
But to-day—an elf on mischief bent,
Whirling the cap from a schoolboy's head,
Stealing the apples, ripe and red,
Maddest of pranks for all mankind,
Wilful, worrying, witch-like Wind!

Darkness falls, and there rolls a Dirge
O'er the sleeping land and the ocean's surge.
Great, wild chords in their agony
Burst out, till ever in minor key
The music sinks to a mournful wail,
Rises and falls like some plaintive scale,
A funeral chant, or a requiem kind,
Wailing, wuthering, warring Wind!

Oftener still, from day to day,
A strange, monotonous Fugue holds sway,
So familiar grown, that the ear
Seems scarce its wandering maze to hear—
Fitting type of man's daily life,
Notes in continuous, gentle strife,
Master-product of master-mind,
Wistful, wavering, weary Wind!

Yet once more. As the Summer's heat
Of the day is dying, a Nocturne sweet
Steals from the hills with a soft 'good-night,'
Rippling a lake in the sunset-light,
Gently swaying a leafy bough,
Soft, cool touch for an aching brow,
Rest for a weary human-kind,
Welcome, whispering, western Wind!

Ever about Life's pathway floats
Strange music, thrilling and piercing notes,
Themes which, played by a master-hand,
Surge through the length and breadth of the land,
Glad or sorrowful, grave or gay,
Varying signature each new day,
And the master-musician we seek and find
In the wild, weird, wonderful, wanton Wind!

Evelyn H. M. Glover.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, All Manuscripts, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* in full.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

In the next issue of Chambers's Journal will be commenced a Tale of striking interest, entitled

# THE FASCINATION OF THE KING,

by

## GUY BOOTHBY,

Author of *Doctor Nikola; Billy Binks—Hero*, &c.

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# THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

By GUY BOOTHBY,

Author of 'Doctor Nikola;' 'Billy Binks—Hero,' &c.

## CHAPTER I.—BEING A LETTER FROM THE MARQUIS OF INSTOW, IN JAPAN, TO JAMES FORSYTH, ESQ., OF CHESSBOROUGH PARK, NEAR OXFORD, ENGLAND.

My dear Forsyth—Before entering upon a description of my own doings, since we said 'good-bye' upon the platform of the Oxford railway station, so long ago, I must thank you for your letter, dated the 1st of July, which came to hand but yesterday. Ever since my receipt of it, I have been puzzling my brain to understand by what manner of means I could best make you acquainted with the curious drama in which my sister Olivia and I have been playing a part since I stayed the night with you at Chessborough, exactly three years ago this week. I feel that it is only right you should know everything, but how to tell you is quite another matter. There is so much to be told, and if it is not narrated in detail, the effect will be lost. This voluminous epistle is the result, and I doubt very much if a more curious experience has ever fallen to the lot of mortal man. Indeed, I must confess to a feeling of apprehension as to whether you may not be tempted to believe that much travelling has driven me mad, and that what I have written is the creation of a deranged imagination, rather than actual fact.

To hark back to the very beginning of things, I must revert to the talk we had together on the evening just referred to. You will remember that during the previous season Olivia had been regarded, and very justly too, I think, as the most beautiful woman in London; and when I remind you of that fact, I haven't the slightest doubt but that it will recall to you the substance of our conversation as we smoked together after dinner. It was patent to all our world that Belgravia wanted to marry my sister; and you know how disappointed I was because she absolutely and irrevocably refused to entertain the notion for a moment. I have always liked Belgravia: we were at Eton and Oxford together; our properties in two counties adjoin one another; and, what is perhaps more to the point, he is a good soldier, a sterling friend, and as perfect a gentleman as any that walks the streets of London. Poor fellow, I fear her refusal was a blow to him; but women, God bless them, are queer creatures at the best of times, and when they once make up their minds not to do a thing, it is my experience that wild horses will not drag them to it. To protest under such circumstances is worse than useless, while to argue is but to admit a limited knowledge of the sex. For the reason, however, that my sister is my only living relative, now that my father and mother are dead, I would not coerce her into marrying a man she did not love, any more than I would attempt to make her pawn the family diamonds to meet the expenses of her presentation dress. So like a prudent man I accepted the inevitable, assured Belgravia of my warmest sympathy, and took Olivia off to Monte Carlo, thence to Venice, intending finally to have my yacht meet me there, and then to take a run out to Japan and back. It is from the time of our arrival in Venice that I date my story proper.

You know, my dear Forsyth, what an epicure I am in the matter of travel. I must have good weather, or I am nowhere. For that reason, I must be in Paris when the leaves are unfolding themselves on the trees in the Luxem-

bourg Gardens; in St Petersburg, between the middle of November and the 15th of December, when the ice is thick upon the Neva; and in Venice, a fortnight before Shrove Tuesday and the Carnival. On this occasion, we caught the latter place to a nicety, and engaged rooms at Galaghetti's. What recollections the mention of that name conjures up! Cannot you see the proprietor with his queer little sallow face, and piercing black eyes, and hear again the atrocious success which greeted his attempts to pronounce your name? He inquired after you immediately we arrived, and begged that I would recall him to your memory when next I saw you. How little did I imagine then that nearly four years would pass before I should shake you by the hand again. For it is three years now since I bade you good-bye, and I quite expect that another year will elapse before I shall return to England.

One thing is certain, to enjoy Venice properly, one must take one's time. The man who imagines that it is possible to come at the heart of the Queen of the Adriatic in a week, would drink Imperial Tokay to assuage his thirst. One must take it in sips, for to rush from place to place, as do so many of our countrymen, in an attempt to take in the Academy—the Frari—Giovanni and Paola—Del Santissimo Redentore, and, shall we say, Francesco della Vigna in a few days, is to have but the poorest remembrance of what one has seen, and to confound Titian's 'Martyrdom of St Lawrence' with the 'Baptism of Christ' by Cima de Conegliano.

Looking back on that visit to Venice, after the lapse of three years, I am struck by one remarkable fact, and that is the quite disproportionate importance of the events which led up to the extraordinary story I am about to tell you. Taken in their chronological order, they consist of the meeting with an objectionable English member of Parliament, a chance conversation at a café table, and an unexpected invitation to spend the evening at the house of an old friend.

The English member must come first, for two reasons. As if the mere presence in this ancient city of such a blatant windbag were not enough, he must needs appropriate my favourite room in the hotel, and also occupy the table in the window overlooking the Grand Canal, from which, as you know, one can just obtain a peep of the Palazzo Rezzonico in the distance, and which is always my own special spot for meals. When I arrived, Galaghetti was good enough to overwhelm me with apologies; he knew my preference for that table, he said, but Mr M'Sweeney (that was the beast's name) had occupied it for the last month, and, as he was at some pains to show me, it would scarcely be fair to turn him out, in order to make room for a new arrival, however old a customer. Naturally, I bade him think no more about the matter. But I must confess that when I was so magnanimous, I had not seen the man who had forestalled me.

At breakfast next morning (and I am still English enough to prefer breakfasting in my own hotel, at the hour surely intended by nature for the meal, to scampering out to cafés when the morning is far spent), I was reading my letters, and awaiting the appearance of Olivia, who, like most of her sex, has never learned to appreciate the difference between the stroke of the hour and five minutes past, when I heard a step behind me, and felt a hand placed upon my shoulder. I looked up in some surprise, half expecting to find myself face to face with an old friend whom I had not thought to meet in Venice. But such was not the case. This person I had never seen before. Standing before me, at least six feet high, broad-shouldered, red-faced, red-haired, and seeming to fill half the room, was an individual whose identity I was able to guess without a second thought.

'Good-morning, my lord,' he said, holding out a ponderous freckled hand for me to shake as he spoke. 'I had no idea you were in Venice until five minutes ago. You remember me, I suppose, George M'Sweeney, Member for Middlesworth?'

Much as I should like to have denied the acquaintance, I had to acknowledge that I *did* remember him perfectly. He was a Liberal Unionist, whose only excuse for a Parliamentary career was a sense of duty that was almost that of a Roman father, an overweening belief in his own importance, an imperviousness to ridicule, and a strange capacity for spoiling the chances of his party by inconsequent oratory whenever he was allowed so to do.

Having once broken the ice, he literally overwhelmed me. There appeared to be no subject under heaven upon which he was not, if I may so put it, over-informed. The great European questions of the day he dismissed in a string of clap-trap phrases; the prospects of the ensuing Parliamentary session he gauged with a keenness of perception that could scarce fail to be inaccurate. And yet, dominating it all, there was a certain sincerity of belief and singleness of purpose about the man that I must confess charmed, while it astonished me. By the time Olivia entered the room, we were comparing the merits of Titian and Pordenone, if you can imagine such a thing, and I was receiving such an exposition of the various limners of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as would have made the bronze horses of S. Mark bow their heads and weep for the consummate vanity of man. In justice to the fellow, I must admit that he had learned his lesson, such as it was, well; but I shall never enter the Scuola di S. Rocco again without feeling oppressed by the remembrance of his glib, self-complacent, criticism. Whatever he may have given to the world, Mr Ruskin, through the medium of the guidebooks, has at least much to answer for in Venice.

M'Sweeney being still beside me when Olivia put in an appearance, nothing remained for me but to introduce him to her. I found a certain enjoyment in doing this, for Olivia's face, as you so well know, is expressive to the last degree. On this occasion, I could see by the way she looked at him that she regarded our countryman with very much the same combination of mild interest and horror that the country vicar's daughter bestows upon a dancing bear. M'Sweeney, on the other hand, behaved

as gentlemen of his stamp invariably do. As an art critic, and when we were alone, he was an amusing anomaly enough; but immediately a third person, and that third person a woman, was imported into the company, he floundered in quicksands of politeness, and made himself an object pitiful to behold. Suffice it that in less than five minutes, two of which he spent in commenting on the weather, and shifting uneasily upon his feet, he had left us to return to his own table, and we were free to commence our meal. Olivia settled herself in her seat with an indescribable shake of her plumage, the meaning of which I know as well as any words. Once I had seen her do it, there was not the slightest necessity for her to tell me that she hoped we should not see very much of Mr M'Sweeney during our stay in Venice. Like Lord Burleigh's nod, her gestures are invariably significant.

Breakfast finished, I was sitting in the hall scanning *Galignani's Messenger* and wondering at the utter absence of news, when Olivia came flying down-stairs. I looked at her in surprise, for, as you are aware, my sister is not prone to excitement. Moreover, she was dressed for walking, and it was only ten o'clock.

'What on earth is the matter?' I asked. 'I did not expect you for at least an hour to come.'

'Get your hat this instant and come with me,' she answered excitedly. 'That friend of yours, M'Sweeney, is looking for you in order to propose an excursion. He stopped me in the corridor up-stairs just now, and informed me that the Admiral had given him permission to visit the arsenal with any friends who might care to accompany him. He inquired where he could find you, and in reply I was wicked enough to insinuate that you were in your bedroom.'

Without more ado, I found my hat, and quickly led the way out of the hotel. Then calling a gondola, I bade the man convey us with all possible speed to the church of S. Rocco. We were only just in time, for as we took our places in the boat and the gondolier gave his first *flirt* of the oar, we saw M'Sweeney appear upon the hotel steps in search of us. Another minute, and we could not possibly have escaped him.

I have narrated this otherwise commonplace incident, not for any interest it contains in itself, but because it seems to me to be the pivot upon which turns all the rest of the curious story I have set myself to tell you. I argue that, had it not been for M'Sweeney's impending invitation, we should not, in all probability, have left the hotel so early, and but for my desire to escape him, I should not have decided upon the church of S. Rocco, which I have seen a dozen times over, but which was the first name that rose upon my tongue, as our destination. In that case we should not have accepted a certain invitation, nor should we have been drawn into the influence of as extraordinary an individual as, I venture to believe, the world has ever seen. Olivia would not be the happy woman she is to-day, and I should not have won—— But there—I must not anticipate. You will find out all that when you have read my story.

In spite of what I have said above, I am inclined to believe that of all the places of worship in beautiful Venice, the church of S. Rocco, next to that of S. Mark, and perhaps Santa Maria della Salute might be included in the category, is the most interesting. Though almost insignificant in its outward appearance, it contains a wealth of art treasures which, with the two exceptions just mentioned, ranks it second to no other church in the city. The Titian in the little chapel to the right of the high-altar, alone is worth a visit.

On reaching the building in question, we bade our gondolier wait for us, and entered it. As far as we could see, with the exception of the sacristan, who was eating his breakfast in a corner, we were its only occupants. Despite the brilliant sunshine outside, the place was very sombre, though here and there long shafts of light penetrated the quaint windows, and fell in zigzag patterns upon the stone floor. There was, however, something so restful about the silence, that an attempt to break it by hurrying would have seemed little better than a sacrilege. For this reason, we examined our Tintorettos quietly, lingered over the miracle at Bethesda, slowly considered the Annunciation in all its lights, and gave even a closer attention than usual to the two incidents depicted in the life of San Rocco. Then leaving the high-altar, we passed into the little chapel on the right. Here even a greater quiet reigned, but there was this difference—one glance round showed us that we were no longer alone.

On the steps leading to the small altar at the further end, a man was kneeling in prayer, while at a short distance another stood watching and patiently waiting for him to rise. For some reason, whether it was a premonition of what was to come, or the result of the extraordinary fascination we afterwards discovered this singular being to possess, I cannot say—I only know that my eyes having once alighted upon him, could scarcely withdraw themselves again. And yet his back was all that I could see.

Presently, while we were examining Titian's marvellous 'Betrayal,' the man I have just referred to rose from his knees and turned towards his companion. As he did so, we were permitted a good view of his face. Though it is upwards of three years now since that moment, I can recall the whole scene as vividly as if it were but yesterday. I can see the half-dark chapel—the glittering altar, Olivia by my side, and this strange individual, who was destined to exercise such a potent influence upon our future lives, standing before us.

Clearly, however, as I can recollect the man's face as I saw it then, I find that when I sit down with my pen in my hand and endeavour to give you a description of it, I am quite nonplussed. A bare outline, setting forth the colour of his skin, eyes, and hair, the contour of his face, and the absence of either beard or moustache, would no more enable you to realise him, than to tell a man who had never been in Venice that the Ponte dei Sospiri spans the Grand Canal would help him to picture for himself the Bridge of Sighs. On the other hand, if you can imagine a man about six feet

two in height, very slimly built, with a pure Venetian face (I say Venetian, as opposed to Italian, for, to my mind, there is a distinction with a decided difference), large and lustrous eyes, a lofty forehead leading up to a mass of wavy black hair, small hands and feet, and a grace of movement that would almost warrant one in using that abominable adjective, fawn-like, you will have derived some faint notion of the man whom I shall consider the hero of my life, and about whom this story is most concerned.

The stranger, whose mere personal appearance had thus exercised such an unwonted fascination over me, said something in an undertone to his companion, who bowed respectfully, and accompanied him from the chapel. As a rule, I fancy my worst enemy could scarcely accuse me of inquisitiveness, but on this occasion I will confess to a strong feeling of curiosity as to who this mysterious individual might be. That the person with him was an inferior it was easy to understand, but even he bore himself with the carriage of a gentleman.

As we left the church in our turn and passed out into the bright sunshine, where our gondola awaited us, I turned to Olivia and inquired if she had been at all impressed by the man we had seen.

'I noticed him, of course,' she replied; 'but I must confess I saw nothing extraordinary about him. It is my experience that Venice teems with such men.'

'I fancy, however, that this particular individual must be a little out of the common,' I replied. 'Did you notice the respect with which his companion addressed him?'

'My dear Instow,' said Olivia, with that quietly superior manner of hers that seldom fails to achieve success, 'you must admit you are endowing this man with all sorts of attributes he is scarcely likely to possess. If you could but know the truth about him you would, in all probability, discover that he is either a member of one of the numerous impoverished noble houses that abound in this city, or a mere adventurer; very probably both.'

'You admit, then, that you set him down in your own mind as a Venetian,' I said, with a chuckle of satisfaction, for I have a respect for Olivia's judgment, and like to find it in accord with my own.

'There could be no possible doubt upon that score,' she answered confidently, and with that we took our places in our gondola again.

In response to the man's inquiry whither he should take us, I directed him to the Piazza S. Marco. When we reached it, and I had paid him his fare, I led the way to a café where, at a small table, we seated ourselves. To my mind, there are few things in the world more pleasant on a bright morning than to sit outside a café on this magnificent Piazza, to sip one's wine or chocolate, smoke one's cigar or cigarette, watch the pigeons of S. Mark's, and talk with one's friends.

On this particular occasion, we had been seated at our table for something like a quarter of an hour before we recognised any one we knew. Then Olivia suddenly leant across the table, and, touching my arm, drew my attention to an exquisitely dressed, dapper little man, with a gray vandyke beard and small moustache, the latter much waxed and curled, who was leaning on his cane, watching through his eyeglass the gambols of two French poodles on the stones before him.

'Surely that is Monsieur de Trailles?' said Olivia; 'I cannot believe that there are two men in the world so much alike.'

Before I had time to reply, the man we were discussing turned, and we were thus enabled to see his full face. As you will have guessed, it *was* De Trailles, looking exactly the same in colour and features as we both remember him the better part of twenty years ago. He recognised us instantly, and assuming his most grandiose manner, which I used to say was without its parallel in Europe, came, hat in hand, to greet us. A minute later he was seated with us, and we were in the full flood-tide of speech. You know his way; we began with old friends and mere acquaintances, married half, and divorced the rest. It was then that I heard, for the first time, of poor De Sarniac's suicide in Florence, and Berthier's marriage in Turin. I was also given three reasons why Flancaurt's widow has not tempted Providence a second time, and was reliably informed as to the events which induced Vocsqual to resign his chamberlainship in Vienna, and to emigrate to Monaco, which is supposed to suit his gout better than the Austrian capital. In fact, to put it in a nutshell, in something less than a quarter of an hour, I was conversant with more than half the scandal of Europe. Personally, I will own to being more than a little afraid of Gustave de Trailles; his tongue is as keen as his invention, and when I am with him, I cannot help entertaining a fear lest it may be my lot to furnish him with food for gossip later on. Olivia, however, thoroughly enjoyed herself. The Countess Flancourt has long been one of her cherished correspondents, and, as you know, she was staying with the Vocsquals when the Prince's health first showed signs of giving way last autumn. Knowing all this, it amused me to see her watching De Trailles through the lace of her parasol as he talked, a little smile hovering round the corners of her mouth meanwhile, and to wonder what she thought of his invention.

If I desired to know the secret of any man in Europe, I should certainly ask De Trailles; and, as I heard him praising or damning half the aristocracy of Venice, I found myself regretting that he had not been with us in the church of S. Rocco an hour before, in order that he might have made us acquainted with the name and history of the man in whom we, or rather I, had been so much interested. Thinking he might possibly be able to help me, I endeavoured to describe the person to him, but I was immediately confronted by the same difficulty as I found in presenting him to you. To speak of a sallow-skinned man with dark hair and eyes—slightly above the middle height, in a place where the majority of inhabitants boasted just such qualifications, was of no possible assistance to a recognition.

'Whoever he is, he seems to have made an impression upon you, *mon cher ami*,' said De

Trailles, when I had finished; 'and, in that case, Venice may claim, as you English say, "to have scored one." For I cannot remember your betraying such interest in a man before.'

'Instow has assuredly got this person upon his brain,' said Olivia, with a slight dash of scorn in her voice. 'For my own part, I must tell you candidly I was not so much impressed. The man looked like an adventurer, and probably *is* one. Are you still bent, my dear brother, on making his acquaintance?'

'I want to know who he is first, of course,' I said. 'But if he should prove, in any way, a respectable member of society, I shall be only too glad to do so.'

'Bravo, British caution' said Olivia, 'faithful to the last. If all else perish, let us retain our respectability.'

'For all we know to the contrary, this fellow may be a member of the Camorra,' continued De Trailles, with an airy wave of his hand, 'or a mad-headed anarchist bent on blowing up the Ponte dei Sospiri.'

I was about to reply in a similar strain, when I chanced to turn my head in the direction of the Campanile. To my astonishment, the man of whom we were speaking and his previous companion were coming in our direction.

'A truce to jesting,' I said, as nervously as a school-miss who sees, when under her duenna's eye, her lover approaching; 'here is the very man himself.'

'This is delightful,' exclaimed De Trailles. 'Now let me see if I know him.'

Closer and closer the two men came. I saw De Trailles put up his glass and look at the man. Having done so, he dropped it again almost as quickly. At the same instant, he jumped to his feet, raised his hat and bowed politely, the mysterious stranger returning the salute with the easy grace of one accustomed to such deference.

As soon as they had passed, and were out of hearing, I turned upon my companion.

'Now that you know the man,' I said, 'possibly you can tell us who he is. I am glad to observe that he seems to have made quite an impression upon you.'

'If I had guessed that he was the person you were inquiring about,' replied De Trailles, 'I should have been the last man in the world to have laughed at your infatuation. I must beg your pardon. Now I can perfectly understand it.'

'This is really excellent comedy,' said Olivia, clapping her hands. 'Who is he? Tell us that. Is he a Prince incognito, a famous singer, a sorcerer, or only an ordinary commonplace tourist like ourselves?'

De Trailles settled himself down in his chair, and polished his eyeglass with his dainty silk handkerchief before he answered.

'You place me, for the moment, in an awkward predicament,' he said, with the air of a man who has his chance, and is determined to make the most of it. 'Who the man really is, in whom you seem to have taken so much interest, that is to say who he is by birth, I can no more tell you, than I can vouch for the name of the designer of the Bronze Horse yonder. I have heard it said that his father was a Frenchman of good family, while his mother was a member of one of the oldest houses of Venice, but of the truth of it I can say nothing. Suffice it, that he is now His Majesty Marie I., King of the Médangs.'

'Médangs?' I cried. 'My dear fellow, I have travelled about the world a good deal, but I must confess to never having heard that there was such a place before; pray where is it?'

'That again I cannot tell you,' our friend replied imperturbably. 'It *must* be somewhere, however, for the reason that he is recognised by France and England, also I believe by Russia; but beyond the fact that it is in Asia, and I believe somewhere between India and China, I have not the remotest notion of its locality.'

'And you say this man is king of the country. As he is not a native, pray how did he bring that about?'

'I believe he chanced to hear of its advantages, discovered that it was villainously governed, went in with but one companion—not the man you saw with him to-day, but another who is still abroad, I fancy—braved all risks and dangers, and when the monarch then seated upon the throne saw fit to pay the debt of nature, mounted it himself and by sheer impudence and force of will proclaimed himself king and remained so. That was five years ago. The marvellous part of the story, to my mind, is that he still lives to hold it.'

'Surely you must be jesting?' said Olivia. 'The story seems too strange to be probable.'

I noticed that her eyes turned, as she spoke, in the direction taken by the man of whom we were talking.

'As far as I can gather, it is perfectly true,' replied De Trailles.

'But do you mean to tell me,' I cried, for I found as much difficulty in believing the story as Olivia did, 'that this man went into a savage country with but one companion, and whether the inhabitants liked it or not, elected himself king?'

'Exactly! That is what I *do* mean,' replied De Trailles. 'He proclaimed himself Marie I., King of the Médangs, and remains so to this present moment. I can quite understand your astonishment. The story seems hardly credible, doesn't it? And yet if you knew the man, you would not find it so difficult to believe. Remember the fascination he has exercised over you; and bear in mind that you have never spoken to him.'

'I am willing to admit both facts. But tell me this, if he is king of this country, as you say, how does it come about that he is here in Venice?'

I thought I had set a nice little trap for my friend, but he was prepared with an answer.

'On that hangs one of the most curious, if not *the* most curious part of the story. At times, I believe, the little kingdom has been sadly put to it for ready money. Incredible as it may seem, this has been supplied by an old woman of Venice.'

'An old woman of Venice! What sort of woman?'

'Ah! That I cannot tell you. I only know

what is known to the world. Do you remember the Palazzo Zuccherini?'

'Perfectly well. Is it likely I shall ever forget it?'

'In that case you will recollect the magnificent dwelling next door.'

'Early Renaissance, with frescoes by Giorgione? Yes, we passed it only this morning.'

'Very well, then. Five years ago it was put up for sale. For many months it remained empty, without an offer being made for it. Magnificent property as it was, one of the finest palaces, it is said, in all Venice, no one would take it. One day, however, it became known that it had been purchased for an enormous sum by an old Hungarian peasant. Who she was, or how she had made her money, nobody knew. At any rate, the house was renovated from top to bottom, and is now, so I am told, for I have not been inside it for nearly twenty years, about the most perfect residence in Venice.'

'And does the present owner not make any use of it?' I asked, seeking for the mystery.

'If living in a garret at the very top of the building and never seeing any one at all can be called making use of it, she does. Otherwise the house stands empty. But once every two years His Majesty of the Médangs visits Europe, when the entire dwelling is placed at his disposal free of charge; the rooms are magnificently furnished, the cuisine becomes second to none, while troops of servants take the place of the one old domestic who at other times attends to the simple wants of the owner.'

'And you think that His Majesty of the Médangs obtains his money from this miserly old person up-stairs?'

'Ah! That I cannot say. But you will do me the justice to admit that it looks like it—does it not?'

'And pray what sort of person *is* His Majesty?' asked Olivia. 'I presume you have spoken to him?'

'On many occasions,' replied De Trailles, who, as you know, makes a point of knowing everybody. 'I can only describe him as fascinating to a boundless degree.'

'Come, come, my dear fellow,' I said, 'we are really growing a little too enthusiastic. You mean that, by virtue of his curious history, he has the gift of exciting and retaining one's attention for rather longer periods than the ordinary run of men.'

'I mean that while you are in his presence, you think of nothing but himself. To sum it all up, he may be described as your English phrase—which so often means nothing, but in this case means everything—has it, *he is every inch a king*.'

'Really, my dear Monsieur de Trailles, you arouse our curiosity to a wonderful degree,' said Olivia. 'We must endeavour to make His Majesty's acquaintance before we leave. A being who can take one out of one's self in the manner you describe, is a godsend at the end of this prosaic nineteenth century.'

'If you *do* get to know him, I pray of you beware,' replied De Trailles, with mock solemnity. 'The consequences of such fascination as he possesses are incredible, and if one plays with fire, one must not grumble if one burns one's fingers. As your Shakespeare has it, "Men were deceivers ever."'

'*Rex non potest fallere nec falli*,' I quoted.

'In this case, *Rex non potest peccare* would perhaps be more to the point,' said Olivia, with a smile, as she rose and began to button her gloves as a signal of dismissal. 'Come, Instow, we must be getting back to our hotel, if we want any lunch.—Good-bye, Monsieur de Trailles, you have made the last hour pass very agreeably, and it is evident you have taken a leaf out of your king's book.'

'I assure you, you would find it difficult to pay me a greater compliment,' replied De Trailles, as he shook hands.

When we left him, we took a gondola at the steps, and made our way by the Rio di S. Luca to our hotel. As we passed through the hall, I glanced at the letter-rack. A square envelope with Olivia's name upon it confronted me. She opened it as she went up-stairs, and on the first landing stopped and turned to speak to me.

'Fate and His Majesty seem to pursue us,' she said, as she handed me the contents of the envelope.

I glanced at the card, and discovered that it was an invitation from Lady Hamerton, who, with her husband, has taken up her permanent abode in Venice, to an 'At Home' the following evening. In bold handwriting, in the top left-hand corner, was this sentence: 'To meet His Majesty, the King of the Médangs.'

## CHILDHOOD AND SCIENCE.

When Mrs Timmins, seated at her escritoire, assumed her ruby-tipped pen, and addressed herself to the composition of that immortal fragment 'On my son, Bungay de Bracy Gashleigh Tymmyns, aged ten months:'

> How beautiful, how beautiful thou seemest,
> My boy, my precious one, my rosy babe!
> Kind angels hover round thee as thou dreamest;
> Soft lashes hide thy beauteous azure eye which gleamest'—

when Mrs Timmins, we say, thus attempted the poetical glorification of her rosy babe, she was following many excellent examples. Ever since Hector

> The glittering terrors from his brow unbound,
> And placed the beaming helmet on the ground,

to relieve his infant's fears, the child has played a part in literature commensurate rather with the honour justly due to the 'father of the man,' than with his physical proportions. But his most splendid triumphs were certainly reserved for the present century, which has given birth to thousands of elaborate schemes for his education, which has brought into existence an enormous literature designed for his exclusive and particular delight, and which has seen great poets wake their lyres into ecstasy in his honour, and beheld the transformation of the laureate of 'Dolores,' that scourge of Popes and tyrants, into a singer who fairly out-babies, as he once out-glittered, all his predecessors. But the crowning achievement of all (and what feat could be greater?),

is that the child has at length secured a firm, and probably a permanent, place, in the serene and unemotional regard of the Man of Science.

How very seriously he has come to be accepted by the *savant*, may be learned from Mr Sully's recent *Studies of Childhood*, a work into which no one can dip without finding something to interest or divert. 'It is hardly too much,' Mr Sully declares, in discussing the 'far-reaching significance of babyhood'—'it is hardly too much to say that it has become one of the most eloquent of nature's phenomena, telling us at once of our affinity to the animal world, and of the forces by which our race has, little by little, lifted itself to so exalted a position above this world.' The style is a little pompous perhaps, but the matter is sound enough, for, in truth, every philosopher with a theory to make good hastens nowadays to put the child into the box, and to extort from him the answers desired. Mr Sully himself has, fortunately, no special axe of his own to grind, and, though his bias seems here and there to be slightly anti-theological, he is content to let the facts speak for themselves. And a most portentous mass of facts it is which he has collected and arranged! Facts procured at first hand, and facts borrowed from the records of others; facts about boys and facts about girls; facts about white children, and black children, and red children; facts bearing on all manner of emotions and passions, on all sorts of qualities, intellectual and moral.

No part, we should imagine, of a child's life has been neglected, no mode of thought has been too subtle or too fleeting to escape Mr Sully's attention. For example, he not only deals, and that fully, with such well-known and familiar characteristics as the repugnance to any alteration in the text of a story, or the fondness for inventing an imaginary companion, irrespective of dolls—a sort of Mrs Harris as it were—of whom the child will make a playmate, and on whom it will confer some inexplicable name; but he has also something suggestive to say upon a much more obscure and less notorious phenomenon; the habit, namely, of ascribing a particular colour to certain sounds, and of picturing numbers, &c., in a certain scheme, or diagrammatic arrangement; the latter, in particular, being a tendency much more frequent and much more lasting than is either suspected or confessed. Probably the best chapters in the book are that on the Young Draughtsman, which, with its quaint reproductions of childish drawings, is extraordinarily copious and instructive, and the chapter on Fear, perhaps the most potent and terrible, both in its immediate operations and in its results, of all the emotions of childhood. A boy of three has been known to conceive a frantic, though luckily not a lasting, terror of the whole canine race, merely in consequence of looking at that most admirable and vivid of all Caldecott's pictures which illustrates the first frenzy of Goldsmith's mad dog. So, too, a friend of the present writer can scarcely to this day open Doré's *Don Quixote* without a shudder, so powerful an impression of indefinable horror did some of the illustrations leave upon him as a boy. The flippant reader may feel inclined to cap these instances by pointing out that the infantile aversion to a cold bath has often been known to continue well into middle life!

But the industry and perseverance necessary to collect and classify this body of evidence do not exhaust Mr Sully's merits; for he also possesses that much rarer gift, the power to sift and to weigh it. He frequently pleads guilty to a healthy scepticism as to the *bona fides* and spontaneity of some of the remarks attributed to children—more especially in the land of wooden nutmegs. Nor does he at all underrate the difficulty of his subject, or the risks involved in drawing even the humblest inferences from premises of so 'kittle' and complicated a nature. His work, in short, despite a touch of pedantry and of grandiloquence, is a most creditable achievement: a model of hard work and clear-headedness.

Yet it is precisely the excellence of Mr Sully's book and this very superiority of conception and performance that bring home to the despondent and depressed reader a keen sense of the futility even of the most rigorous and exact method of inquiry, and make him mournfully ask the question, whether in all such speculations we are not engaged in performing the nicest and most delicate of operations with the clumsiest and most blundering of tools. We are hemming the finest cambric with a canvas-needle; we are casting for trout with the most gigantic of silver doctors; we are attempting an exceptionally difficult hazard with the butt-end of our cue; we are trying to hole an important 'putt' with a niblick. Or so, at least, one is apt to think. Granted that 'Dickens and Victor Hugo have shown us something of the child's delicate quivering heart-strings;' granted that 'Preyer gives a full and almost exhaustive epitome of the various shades of infantile pleasure and pain which grow out of this life of sense and appetite, and has carefully described their physiological accompaniments and their signatures.' But we had rather be excused from such exercises. Enough for us that the child is 'pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw;' we are not to poke, and pry, and probe in the effort to analyse that 'kindly law' of nature. By all means, therefore, let the honour and glory rest undisturbed with 'Pollock's boy,' and 'Binet's girl,' and 'Tiedemann's boy;' no child of ours competes, or claims to be ranked and preferred in respect of a stronger 'anthropocentric tendency' or of superior 'visual space-exploration' or 'colour discrimination,' or of more marked 'nascent groupings of muscular action,' or yet of the more advanced development of 'the higher cortical centres which take part in the co-ordinate and regulative processes of thought and volition.'

Mr Sully suggests that 'in these days of literary collaboration it might not be amiss for a kindergarten teacher to write an account of a child's mind in co-operation with the mother,' whose assistance, he is good enough to own, would be 'quite indispensable.' The kindergarten teacher may possibly hail with enthusiasm this opportunity for getting 'copy;' to how many mothers we wonder will this highly-

organised system of espionage commend itself? No; apart from the direct mischief to the child who, astute to detect that he was being watched, would not hesitate to 'play up,' we are convinced that there is not one honest and competent mother out of a hundred who would not feel that, in thus translating the intangible and uncommunicable traits of her child into the crude and inadequate medium of black and white, she was committing an outrage which, in the imperishable phrase of Mrs Gamp, 'lambs could not forgive, nor worms forget!'

This is not the view cherished by American educationists, who pursue investigations into child-life with as much ardour as Mr Sully, if on somewhat different lines. In the American report of the Commissioner of Education for 1892-3, published at Washington last year, there is a most thorough-going report on 'Child-study,' or, as it is sometimes called, 'Paidology.' A bibliography of about seven pages, in books and articles, shows how much attention has been bestowed on the subject in the United States. Dr Stanley Hill, president of a society for this study, tells us that in 1879 four 'kindergarteners' in Boston took some children aside, and endeavoured to find out the contents of their minds, and the result was published in the *Princeton Review* for 1880. Dr Stanley Hill says: 'Thirty-three per cent. of these children on entering school had never seen a live chicken; fifty-one per cent. had never seen a robin; seventy-five per cent. had never seen a growing strawberry; seventy-one per cent. of the Boston children had never seen growing beans even in Boston. Our school text-books are based on country life, and the city child knows nothing, in the large cities, of real country life.' Here is one instance: a large per cent. of these children, upon being asked how large a cow was, showed that they had little idea. One thought a cow was as large as her cat's tail. Another thought that a cow was as big as her thumb nail. One would like to know if these young folks had never seen the picture of a cow?

The next step taken was to measure the children, when it was found that the average girl is taller and heavier than the average boy from 13 to 14½ years old, but that all the rest of her life she is lighter and smaller. Growth of different parts of the body and organs was found to be an intermittent process, 'even the pupil of the eye has its periods of growth and periods of quiescence.' As the result of a health examination forty-two to sixty per cent. of children were found suffering from defective eyesight. For others it was found necessary to order a milk diet, a rest from school altogether, the attentions of the oculist, or dentist. 'What shall it profit a child,' says Dr Hill, 'if it gains the whole world of knowledge and loses its own health?' No sensible teacher or parent but will agree with this.

Mr C. E. Johnson, of Clark University, in a paper on education by plays and games, gives a list of 440, with an estimate as to their value in mental and physical training. Great men, he thinks, found play in a work, or work in a play that disciplined the powers which made them famous men. 'Dickens playing for days that he was some character of whom he had read; Darwin with his passion for collections; Stephenson with his boilers; Tennyson and Emerson writing rhymes for fun; Washington playing soldier; Kingsley preaching little sermons; Miss Alcott with pencil and paper, are illustrations.

This is all very good and true; but child-study in this country in connection with elementary education is next to impossible in our public schools. The young folks must study to be quiet, and the teacher must try how much education may be 'crammed' into them within a given period, as chickens are crammed for the market. 'Results' are more studied at present than the physical and mental condition of each child.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

By P. L. M'Dermott.

### CHAPTER VII.—CHANGE OF SCENE.

When the morning newspapers announced the astonishing news that Frederick Farmley, the affianced husband of Mary Dalton, had been arrested the night before on the charge of having murdered the late vicar of Crownley, the neighbourhood throbbed with a sensation such as, happily, seldom falls to the lot of a suburb. The local journals, coming out with special issues, enjoyed, in the indulgence of unbounded speculation, the reward of their respectful reticence at the time of Mr Dalton's death.

There was, that morning, more field for speculation than for comment on stated facts. The latter were, for the moment, limited to the two sufficiently startling circumstances that young Farmley had been arrested at Croham station on the point of stepping into a Southampton train, and that when arrested he was carefully disguised with wig, beard, and spectacles, as an elderly gentleman of somewhat infirm appearance. This fact elicited the local comment that Freddie Farmley was well known, in amateur theatrical circles, as being very clever at disguises and impersonations.

The circumstances of the arrest were all that the public as yet knew, and of course these were very suspicious. The arrest was effected quietly at nine o'clock, just as the late train for the south ran into the station. Quietly as it was done, the fact soon got abroad and went like wildfire, so that at ten (or soon after) the news had reached the servants in Mrs Dalton's house. Neither of the ladies heard of the matter till morning.

It so happened that the same was the case with the third individual most interested. Mr Seth Farmley dined in London and only left by the last train, so that when he was letting himself in with a latchkey, he heard the distant clock of St John's Church strike one. The house was still, and Mr Farmley (who was not quite sober) went to bed and was soon asleep.

Perhaps if the couple of domestics in the place had had much sympathy with their master they would have made some communication to

him ; but they had gone to bed, and remained there when they heard him come in. In the morning he knew all the moment he came down. It was in the London newspaper on the table. Seth Farmley was so stunned that (what he habitually avoided early in the day) he had to resort to brandy to compose his senses. He was genuinely astounded, for the remotest suspicion of such a thing would never have entered his mind. He was quite ignorant even of the fact that his son was in England at the date of the vicar's death, quite convinced, on the contrary, that the young man had arrived by the *Ross Castle* on the 12th of July.

Mr Farmley learned from the paper all that was publicly known (the circumstances of the arrest), and his servants informed him the police had been to the house at ten o'clock, or earlier, the night before, to take possession of everything belonging to Mr Frederick.

When he had been able calmly to grasp all the facts of the case, and to arrange them in reference to other matters within his knowledge, Seth Farmley came to certain very decided conclusions that excited to a high temperature all the feelings of a rancorous and combative nature. His son was not in England at all at the time of Mr Dalton's death. That was undoubted. What, then, followed? The fruitless effort of the Croham solicitor to stop the marriage pointed with deadly significance to the only possible conclusion. As a last desperate resort, a conspiracy had been got up to effect the object in view by trumping up a wild charge of murder against young Farmley. Believing, as Seth Farmley did in his heart, that Mr Fairfield would stop at nothing to prevent Mary Dalton and her fortune going to his son, the suggestion of conspiracy at once occurred to a man of his habits of mind. It would be bad if the girl's money should be lost, after having been almost in their hands ; but if the conspiracy could be unmasked and brought home, Seth Farmley would be fully consoled. That revenge would be better than a million of money to his resentful heart. There was more than one score against the Croham solicitor to be wiped out.

With undoubted faith in his own theory, Farmley telegraphed at once to engage the services of the cleverest criminal solicitor he knew in London, and to bring him down at once to Croham. He visited the police-station, and surprised them there by the business-like coolness with which he inquired as to the hour the prisoner would be charged in the court. Not the slightest anxiety appeared in his looks or manner, and he betrayed no curiosity at all to learn the grounds on which the charge was to be based. 'He's a hard 'un,' remarked one of the constables when Farmley went out. 'And a deep 'un, too,' was the comment of another.

He waited at the station, unconcernedly pacing up and down the platform for the benefit of all who felt any interest about him, until the arrival of the train from London that conveyed the lawyer. The two repaired to a neighbouring hotel, and there Seth Farmley laid before the other the facts, and his own conclusions.

'Eh!' exclaimed the London man, with some astonishment, 'but that would be a bold move! Fairfield has a very high standing.'

'It will be all the finer to bring him down. When you know the particulars of this marriage business more fully, you will agree with me. The thing struck me in an instant.'

'I admit,' said the other, with cautious professional appreciation, 'that if we could establish a conspiracy it would be a splendid achievement. We may go upon the idea, at any rate, until we see further. Now, can you tell me what was bringing your son to Southampton—in disguise? Did you know he had such an intention?'

The point from the first had staggered Seth Farmley. He was compelled to admit that he was altogether ignorant. No doubt his son would be able to explain. And he suggested meantime, tentatively, as a possible explanation of the disguise, that 'one never could tell what tricks wild young fellows might be up to—even on the eve of their marriage.' As to this the solicitor offered no opinion.

When Frederick Farmley was brought before the magistrates he was very pale, and, at once fixing his eyes on a desk just under the bench, he did not move them during the proceedings, as though determined to ignore the presence of the spectators. His father sat at the solicitors' table. The proceedings were brief, but startling to Seth Farmley. The information of the police superintendent was read, on which the warrant was issued late the preceding evening. This was to the effect that the deponent, from information received, believed the prisoner to have been present in Crownley Vicarage at or about the time of Mr Dalton's death, and to have had an interest in his death. Evidence was then given of the arrest the night before, and a remand of seven days applied for.

The information possessed an air of ominous reticence, and the circumstances of the arrest were suspicious. It was impossible to do more on the prisoner's behalf, on the present occasion, than to ask for bail—which would be furnished to any reasonable amount—but the application was refused. The gravity of the charge, and the attempted flight in disguise, were ample justification for this refusal. The prisoner was remanded for seven days, and withdrew without a single glance to see who were present.

Seth Farmley had been greatly startled by the positive and wholly unexpected assertion that his son had been at the vicarage at the hour of Mr Dalton's death. On subsequent reflection he was reminded of instances in his own experience when, in critical situations, a bold stroke had been effective. He had himself never wanted courage in such emergencies, and the reflection raised his courage now. That allegation was a daring *coup*, and one that was calculated, even if defeated, to leave its effects after it on the nervous minds of women. In that sense it was well conceived, even if it fell to the ground on the first examination. Now on his side Mr Seth Farmley formed the resolution to be equally bold. He had no doubt of being able to establish at once the fact that his son was not in England on the 5th of July ; and although, for the purpose of drawing the toils more effectively around the

conspiracy, it might be politic to elicit more of it through further proceedings, he had personal reasons for desiring to bring the proceedings to an early end. A motive had been hinted at, which could only have reference to the money; and Seth Farmley had an instinctive and very well-grounded reluctance to stand in a witness-box on any matter having financial relations.

'I've concluded,' he announced, when the solicitor came back to the hotel after obtaining further particulars of the evidence, 'I've concluded that, on the whole, it is best to smash them at once. It might suit our purpose better to let the thing go on—but again, it might not; I have private reasons. The proof that he came to England by the *Ross Castle*, which arrived the 12th of July, will at once knock the bottom out of the conspiracy. After that, we must go, tooth and nail, for the conspiracy itself.'

He was very emphatic, very confident. The other lawyer heard him in silence, and was busy opening some papers.

'For the present, Mr Farmley,' he said, rather drily, 'we may let the conspiracy alone, and attend to more serious matters. It is as black-looking a case as I have ever had to do with—unless, indeed, your conspiracy is a marvellously elaborate one.'

'Why—what's up?' demanded Seth Farmley, changing colour.

'They say your son did not come to England by the *Ross Castle*, but by another steamship that arrived the 30th of June. That would enable him to be in Crownley on the 5th of July, wouldn't it? As to this latter allegation, they have as yet no witness—beyond the curious evidence of a photograph.'

'A photograph?'

'A rambling photographer, who, it seems, makes a living by taking views of places and afterwards selling them among the residents, was following his business in Crownley on that 5th of July. They have the man now in Croham, where he left a number of his views for sale at a stationer's shop yesterday morning. Oddly enough,' continued the solicitor, sharpening a lead-pencil, 'your son saw the pictures, and bought all the views of the church at Crownley—except one. The superintendent of police had been interested by this one, and took it, and found the artist, and the negative. I have seen it, and here is a copy. You will observe the time of day by the church clock.'

Seth Farmley took the picture, and examined it in silence. There was the vicarage facing him, with the church a short way aside in the background. The clock pointed to twenty minutes past three. This was all he succeeded in taking in, and thinking a moment, he asked:

'What does this prove? The clock is at twenty minutes past three every day in the year?'

'But that woman doesn't look out of the window every day in the year.'

With a nervous start, he examined the picture again, and noticed (what had escaped him before) the female figure half revealed within the window. He had to obtain the aid of his glasses, as the picture was rather dim, but whilst he was putting them on he remembered that the window in question looked out of the dining-room, where the vicar came by his death.

Seth Farmley held the photograph up to the light, and after one glance let it drop, with an imprecation. Perspiration broke out on his ashy face. The face at the vicarage window, peering cautiously and earnestly (how well the camera had caught the expression!) in the direction of the roadway, was that of Frederick Farmley. There was no disguise upon the features at that unfortunate and unguarded moment when they became fixed, with instantaneous fidelity, on the photographer's plate.

Seth Farmley was a man of hardened nerve, but this was too much for him. He was stunned, and his dry lips moved in spasmodic efforts to speak. The other lawyer, observing his condition, rang for brandy and water.

'Come,' he said, pouring out a glass of the liquor, 'swallow that. Will you come with me to the police-station? I must see him and learn what I can from him.'

'Is there anything more?' Farmley was able to ask at last.

'I believe there is, but I don't know yet. There is a man named Brock.'

'Fairfield's clerk?'

'The same. His evidence is regarded as so important—or the man himself as so uncertain—that they have him watched. Let us go and see if the prisoner himself can give us any help.'

'It's all very well,' said Farmley, getting his faculties under the influence of more brandy, 'but they have to establish a motive. That will be the critical point. He was engaged to that girl before he went away, and had promised to come back—we can make her prove that, to the hilt—and it was notorious she was to have her uncle's money. What motive could he have had, under such circumstances?'

'We shall see,' replied the other, whose confidence was not so easily aroused.

Frederick Farmley was prepared for this interview, and his coolness was amazing. In the calmest manner in the world, he first of all politely deprecated any parental emotion.

'This isn't the place for so fine a quality, father. Let us get to business and be brief. Mr Picklock has undertaken the defence?'

Mr Picklock assented, wondering in private what might come next.

'Very good. I understand the value of frankness between solicitor and client, and in order to place you, Mr Picklock, in the best position to make the most of your case, I owe it to you to make the whole matter perfectly clear. Knowing everything, your management of the defence will then afford an interesting study to the individual in the dock.'

Mr Seth Farmley's face was a picture of amazement, but the other lawyer was more accustomed to this line of business, and preparing the paper to write, he said:

'Be very careful, though, not to mislead me on any point. It would be better not to speak at all.'

'Don't fear,' the young man replied, with a

smile. 'You see, I already know the end, so that I can give you, as it were, a dispassionate bird's-eye view. When you know you are beaten, it's wonderfully easy, after all, to bear it.'

'That's philosophy.'

'Nonsense! It's common-sense—merely human nature. When you're certain you are broke, father, you quite naturally adapt yourself to the fact.'

'Never mind me,' exclaimed Mr Farmley, resenting the *argumentum ad hominem;* 'go on with your statement.'

'Firstly, then,' continued the prisoner, stiffening himself up a little, and pointing to the photograph which he saw amongst the other papers on the table, 'that's me. I was there—and did it.'

Even the lawyer gave a visible start, which jerked the ink over the sheet. Mr Seth Farmley dropped his hands on his knees and stared.

'When I received a telegram from my father early in June'—a movement on the father's part caused a moment's pause, but nothing came of it—'warning me to come back at once or the doctor would cut me out with the lady—he was making the running at a pace—I took my resolution. I wrote that I would come by the *Ross Castle* on the 25th of June. I thought it wiser to come by an earlier steamer, and quietly examine how the land lay before showing myself—so I came by the *Negro* instead.'

'That is known,' the lawyer remarked.

Farmley raised his eyebrows in some surprise, and suggested 'Brock?'

'Perhaps—but there will be the steamship agents as well. But Brock is giving evidence.'

'I expected that. I will tell you all he can say. I arrived quietly in London the first of July, and sent him a message. I had done him a service before I went, in the financial line, which I reckoned on turning to account. Brock possesses a very grateful nature, and he had reason to be grateful. I told him, feelingly, that it was the girl I had come back for—that I couldn't exist without her—that having booked a passage by the *Ross Castle* I had not patience to wait for it, and in order to avoid looking ridiculous I must now lie low till that vessel arrived. The good fellow sympathised deeply. He is an honest man enough, but his feelings are his weakness, and perhaps he thought there was no great breach of confidence in telling me that the vicar had just executed a second will, completely cutting out his niece if she married me. You see, he had heard I was coming back—and he was not all charity. I doubted Brock, but he assured me he had witnessed the execution of the document himself—he and the schoolmaster—at the vicarage, and that it was deposited there, in a drawer of the vicar's writing-desk.'

He stopped at this point, as though to give his hearers the indulgence of a couple of minutes' reflection. The lawyer looked up and said, a little sharply:

'Well? Go on.'

'Oh, well,' he continued nonchalantly, 'the rest is mere detail. Utilising my knowledge of domestic ways at the vicarage, I waited in the church till the servants went out on their Saturday marketing, and slipped in by the kitchen. The study, as I expected, was unoccupied, and the parson dozing in the dining-room, with the back of his chair towards the door. A few seconds transferred the interesting paper to my possession, and then—then,' he added, with appalling *sang-froid*, 'then (as mostly happens, after all) I made two mistakes. Seeing the wine at his elbow, I decided to use the quieter means, and forgot the pistol that I laid on the table while doing so. Then I glanced out of the window, and then retired. Afterwards, I remembered with regret that the weapon bore the maker's name, so that there will be no difficulty in tracing it. That is all, I think, that is material.'

Mr Picklock finished his notes and drew a deep respiration, which signified a great deal indeed. Seth Farmley was literally stricken dumb.

'There's nothing more?'

'I think not. By-the-by, yes—just a little matter, which will bring the ladies into the box, I daresay. I took a sheet of note-paper from the vicarage, and indited myself a little note, dated the day before, from Mr Dalton, asking my pardon for some unspecified wrong he had been doing me, but which he had repented of and undone. You see, this pointed clearly to the destruction of the will, and the letter told with excellent effect—as you know, father—with the mother and daughter at Herne Bay. It almost won the cash for us,' he added unfeelingly, 'but I hope you will wriggle out of your difficulties without it. At all events, I shall be no longer a burden to you.'

After that remarkable interview the two gentlemen walked in silence to the railway station. A London train was on the point of leaving, and as Mr Picklock stepped in, he said:

'I will instruct young Blacker for the defence. The case will just suit him.'

Mr Farmley had never heard of 'young Blacker,' but appeared quite satisfied. The barrister in question was nearly forty, and had never had a chance yet of showing what he was able to do. Mr Picklock regarded Farmley's defence as just the thing; young Blacker would have everything to stimulate him, no witnesses for the defence, and a singularly compact and unassailable case for the Crown; and if he failed in doing credit to himself, he was in no danger of doing injury to the prisoner. From this it will appear that Mr Picklock was a patron of undiscovered merit. But besides, he also had a daughter, whom Mr Blacker admired, and there were four others; and it would be useful to discover whether Blacker had anything in him worth giving a start to. All things in this world, the lawyer reflected on his way back to London, may be made subservient to some good purpose; and at this moral elevation he viewed the case of Frederick Farmley.

Very different were the reflections of Mr Seth Farmley. These, in brief, may be summed up in the statement that as his son's situation was hopeless, it was better to direct his solicitude to his own. That fact of the telegram to Africa (which they would unfailingly discover) would

bring him into an awkward connection with the case. And in addition to other troubles, the affairs of the Popular Bank, and of certain affiliated enterprises, were heavy on his thoughts, and had lately deprived him of healthy sleep.

## 'DECLINING' FARMING.

Beneath the autumn sky of high white cloud and pale blue, the land lies glorious in all the rich colouring of October; great stretches of variegated woodland, glowing brightly in the occasional gleams of the morning sun; golden stubble-fields side by side with broad pastures; and deep purple-brown squares and polygons where the iron of the ploughshare has already buried from sight all sign of the recently garnered crop. The air has that crisp freshness so welcome after the heat of September. The autumn rain has not yet come in earnest. The roads are dry and firm; and in the hedge-bottoms and ditches, and among the trees of park and coppice the ever-increasing store of leaves which have fallen, fluttering down singly, or in gentle pattering showers, or swept in clouds from their hold by the west wind, is dry and rustling, and very pleasant to walk among. They are falling gently now from the elms which border the up and down road which winds round the hill, and which the traveller may follow with the certainty of presently arriving at some village of local importance, led by the line of telegraph posts supporting a solitary wire which left its companions at the roadside station to pursue its lonely course across country.

The wire ends at last. The road makes a sudden dip into a hollow, where a noisy mill-stream chatters, and then climbs the quiet street of what one hesitates whether to call a large village or a small—a very small—town. We, who know our county history, give it the latter title and can tell how it once possessed a flourishing market and sent two duly elected members to sit at Westminster. The stranger finds it hard to realise this latter fact of a place where a few loafing dogs and a child, too small as yet even to rank with the 'infants' of the school, are among the most prominent signs of life in the streets.

But to-day it is not my intention to loiter among the quaint old black and white houses which are scattered with such profusion through the place, nor to linger at the cheery inn where the old landlord suns himself on the bench at the yard-door. Knowing me and my tastes pretty well by this time, for here I have often 'taken mine ease in mine inn,' he supposes I am going to the church to decipher old brasses and ascend the worn stairs of the tower, and offers to 'step across' the street and borrow for my pleasure a pair of field-glasses, wherewith to examine the minutiæ of the bird's-eye view. But I explain my reasons for a haste which I rarely exhibit in this old-world spot, and leave him. There is regret on both sides; for the old man loves a chat on the sunny bench or in the snug bar, with one who will tell him a few simple details of modern news, and he is always ready to launch out in return into garrulous reminiscences of the country-side; reminiscences which I never find tedious.

A mile of byroad running through meadows where, in the shade of the tall hedgerows, the dew still lingers on the grass, brings me to a square red-brick farm-house, standing in a sheltered hollow, and turning its back on roomy folds and long ranges of buildings. Since my leaving the village two or three dogcarts have passed me on the road, and as I approach the farm there are further signs of something astir. A continuous lowing and bleating greets my ear; not the casual cry of contented grazing animals, but of creatures driven or penned.

Coming to the homestead, it is easy to see what is going forward. The big fold-yard is full of cattle, white-faced and spreading-horned; and on one hind-quarter of each beast is a small round ticket bearing a number. Passing the stable, through the open door of which there is a constant coming and going, I can see the tails of some dozen or more cart-horses, not swishing lazily to and fro, but straw-plaited and stiff. Were further evidence needed, it would be found on the cover of a catalogue which a lad tenders me; the legend is to the effect that 'Messrs Hammer & Rostrum, having received instructions from Mr Blank, who is declining farming, will, on the twenty-first of October, sell without reserve, the whole of the valuable live and dead farming stock—viz.:' &c.

As I read, certain words of a character in *Old Mortality* come irresistibly to my mind, 'A total scattering.' Spoken of those who take the sword, yet they may be fitly used of the human and brute wielders of the ploughshare and the reaping-hook. A few short hours of an autumn day; the fall of the hammer, final and unrepealable, on some few hundred lots; and horses and cattle, wains and ploughs, all the 'old familiar faces'—who shall say that the worn-out old wagon, mouldering behind the barn, has no face to the eye of affection?—all shall be scattered to the four winds of heaven.

There is a 'sadness of farewell' in all 'flittings,' even those of town and suburban dwellers. As the days which still remain to us under the old roof slip by; as we do things 'for the last time—here,' we cease to grumble at the inconveniences which we are leaving, or rail at the thousand and one demerits which we know so well. A silent, insidious sorrow steals upon us; when the last day comes, and the empty rooms re-echo mournfully the shutting of doors, and the footfalls on carpetless floors, we would go back—many of us—if we could. But we cannot; so we smother a sigh and follow our household gods.

What must it be then to the farmer? He has perhaps been born and bred there. Morning after morning, for fifty years and more, he has seen the sun rise over the park woods before the house, and set in frosty haze or golden summer glory, sinking below the long range of

distant mountains. His school-days were passed at the Cathedral city twelve miles away, but he came home each Saturday. Here he brought his bride from across the county boundary; here all the events of his life have happened; I doubt if he has spent fifty Sundays from home in as many years; for it is rarely that a farmer of the old school takes an autumn holiday. There is no occupation more difficult for the master to leave than farming. Perhaps every three or four years he will get a few days at the sea, but seldom oftener.

Every animal, every cart and implement on the farm, is as familiar to him as are the faces of his own children. The horses are mostly of his own breeding, and he has reminiscences of dams, grand-dams, and great grand-dams. The white-faced cattle were noted in the time of his grandfather; portraits of equine and bovine celebrities, the work of itinerant artists who flourished before the days of the photographer, adorn the panelled walls of the parlour. The worn-out chaise or spring-cart is not sold when done with, but wheeled away into the dusky recesses of an outhouse, and forms a favourite resting-place for hens, dissatisfied with the poultry-house and stackyard. But now everything must go; the sale brings all such forgotten lumber to light.

A bell rings, and there are cries of 'This way, please, this way.' In the croft or 'home' meadow, the carts, implements, food cutters, and harness are drawn up in rows; a threshing machine and engine are there; together with hurdles and tubs, hencoops and sheep-troughs; and the hundred-and-one odds and ends which come within the description of 'sundries—in lots.' Higher up the meadow the sheep are hurdled; the ewes and wethers 'drawn' into pens of five and ten, the stock rams numbered singly.

Business commences with the 'sundries;' no one would stay for these, were the sheep, cattle, and horses sold first. The auctioneer mounts a wheelbarrow or some suitable elevation; there is a short speech, plain-spokenly eulogistic of the gentleman who is 'declining' farming, and commendatory of the 'magnificent lot of stock which our excellent friend has, by many years of careful and judicious breeding and purchase, got together.' The auctioneer would especially remind some of his younger friends whom he sees round him, and also gentlemen whom he has the pleasure of welcoming as comparative new-comers in the county, that *now* is an unusual opportunity of obtaining some of the best and most approved blood, both in sheep and cattle. Of the horses he need not speak. Every one knows Mr Blank's teams by sight and by repute. To this peroration, Mr Blank, who is standing near, usually adds his testimony that nothing is 'got up' for sale; the stock is grass-fed, and the horses were at work up to yesterday.

After an hour or two's selling, there is an adjournment for luncheon, which is supplied 'by ticket.' When possible, this precedes the sale which would commence about one o'clock; for it is difficult to get many good buyers together before noon. No one is less inclined to hurry himself unduly than the farmer; and besides, it is certainly desirable to devote most of the morning to setting his men to work, even if he does drive ten miles to a sale later on. But to-day, the lots are numerous, and the hours of daylight short. So the luncheon intervenes instead of preceding.

Some hundred and fifty sit down under the presidency of the auctioneer in the granary, which is lighted up with oil-lamps. The great barn would be airier and lighter; but farmers, who spend more than half their time in the open air, prefer snugness when once they are indoors. There is bountiful provision of cold joints and poultry. Carvers are at a premium; there is much joking and good-humoured shoving to avoid the vacant seat before a huge round of beef, for the post will be no sinecure. Huge cans of beer and cider circulate swiftly; your glass is filled over your shoulder as soon as empty.

There are neither toasts nor set speeches to-day, for time is precious. Outside, fresh comers are arriving every minute; their phaetons, dog-carts, gigs, and pony traps are adding to the long row drawn up in the lane, and their horses fill all available standing-room in the stables and cow-houses. It is a harvest-time for the great army of drovers and nondescript loafers who flock to farm sales. They pick up innumerable coppers for holding, unharnessing, or generally 'seeing to' horses, and later on get a job of 'droving' from some purchaser.

The hammer is falling again, now over the sheep. Each lot or 'draft' is driven into a temporary sale-ring of hurdles, and walked round for inspection. The shepherd, a 'very old ancient man,' to quote Mr Hardy, is arrayed in a spotless smock, a pleasant sight; the polished iron head of his crook shines in the afternoon sunlight. His dim eyes scan the faces of the throng anxiously, as pen after pen is knocked down. He shakes his head dolefully at his 'boy' when some of the ewes which he has tended from birth, find an owner whose ways with sheep are not his ways, or whose shepherd is an unprofessional person, between a bailiff and a workman, and has not been born and bred a shepherd, and nothing else. But probably the old fellow's thoughts return to his own doubtful future. The incoming tenant is bringing his own shepherd. Even if at his age he can find fresh employment, he will be like an uprooted tree. He is past seventy, and, were it quoted to him, would certainly approve old Adam's dictum, that

> At seventeen years many their fortunes seek,
> But at fourscore, it is too late a week.

The flock is dispersed, and the crowd gathers round the yard where the cattle move restlessly about, and gaze on the ring of faces with eyes full of questioning doubt. The bullocks are sold in pairs; the cows singly, or with their calves, each name announced with flourish of pedigree, sire and dam, grandsire and grand-dam, receding into the vista of twenty, thirty, and forty years back. Alas! there is a lull in the demand for 'blood' for the States; the echo of the applause which greeted the purchasing bid of a thousand guineas for a 'whitefaced' sire, has died away; and to-day

the daughter of half a score of 'Lords' fetches little more than a nameless heifer, who passes to the hands of the butcher at the weekly market.

Then come the horses: 'Boxer,' 'Bowler,' 'Bonny,' 'Darling,' and the rest. Their feet strike hard on the stones of the lane, as one after the other shows his or her paces. The setting sun sends level rays from beneath the clouds which overhang the line of hills. The departing beams light up the golden stacks, the rich orange of the roof tiles, the gray walls which re-echo the clear strident voice of the auctioneer, the crowd of faces which his keen eye roves over, detecting and acknowledging the least nod or wink which 'means business.' Then the hammer falls for the last time, and the light fades away from the scene; only the western clouds are a blaze of colour in the rays of the hidden sun.

In the gathering dusk, all is bustle and confusion of departure. The auctioneer's clerks are besieged by farmers, eager to settle, and get home before their men 'knock off' work. Drovers are taking the road with such animals as have but a few miles' journey to make. There is a ceaseless rattle of departing wheels. A few friends will spend the evening with their old companion perhaps. The night falls on empty stables and deserted folds. No gentle stirring of cattle among the straw, no rattle of chains in the stable will greet the ear in the silence. There will be no teams going afield at early morning, no calls from the milking-shed to slow-paced cows. The farmer's work is ended; the daily occupations of nearly half a century are gone.

To the onlooker there is a profound melancholy in such a scene. The farmer is retiring from work, honourably and with a modest competence. There has been no failure, no 'difficulties.' Nor is there in this case any group of wistful black-clothed children in the garden or at the windows, to give a sadder explanation of the scene. And yet, there is a feeling of sadness which makes the fading beauties of the autumn day peculiarly and pathetically appropriate.

For this man's life will henceforth run in a narrower, straighter track. Instead of the old home, with wide, panelled rooms and spacious hearths, some trim, semi-detached suburban villa. The open-handed hospitality which would welcome two or three casual callers and press them to 'stay the night—plenty of room up-stairs,' must give place to a scale of housekeeping necessarily limited by capacity of villa larders and bedrooms. No more will our friend be master of a couple of hacks, with a promising three-year-old or two 'coming on,' and a 'four-wheel' gig and pony trap in the coach-house; but at most, a single horse and trap must suffice for this man whose voice was wont to call for his horse when he had half a mile to go. So many of the farmer's pleasures and luxuries are inseparably connected with his calling—the roomy house, the abundant garden, orchard and poultry-yard, and the well-filled stables—that 'retiring' has for him not the unalloyed idea of rest which it carries with it to other workers.

He will have his compensations, however. From the retreat of his suburban fireside, tiled and 'slow combustion,' he can contemplate the struggles of his agricultural brethren with sympathy and thankfulness. He can congratulate himself on having brought up his children under the old roof, and started them in life with unblemished name and good principle; and in having himself emerged safely from a struggle in which the few now keep their heads above water, while the many sink, overwhelmed in disaster and ruin.

## THE RETURN OF THE TERRENEUVIERS.

It is autumn in High Brittany, and in the towns, and villages, and in the numberless scattered homesteads of the country about St Malo, standing amid their fields of blood-red buckwheat stubble, and surrounded by their perfumed and heavy-laden apple-trees, the thoughts of all are anxiously fixed on the return of the fishing-fleet from the far-away banks of Newfoundland. The return of the fleet is an important event in all the country-side, as thousands of the men are engaged in it, and spend the whole summer amid the storms and fogs, year after year, from boyhood to advanced age.

It is a terrible life to them, to leave their beloved country and all their home belongings, and go to the fishing, where the life is hard, and rest and sleep insufficient; but hardest of all to the light-hearted Frenchman are the days spent in the sullen silence of the almost constant fogs. No wonder that many men are lost from insufficient watchfulness for sudden squalls when, in the deadly embrace of the silent fog, even the brain itself sometimes gives way and the man becomes mad. But now is the time of the returning home, and all are awaiting the arrival of the first *goelettes*, or schooners, with the news of the fishing. If it has been good there will be more pay to be divided amongst the crew; but if it has been bad there will be nothing to add to what was advanced in the spring, and the men will have to live on what their wives make, or what they can pick up by doing odd jobs about the farms till the first advance is paid in February, when they sign on for the next season's fishing. Soon the first of the boats begin to arrive, and the docks of St Malo which have been empty all summer gradually take on a more animated appearance. It is a busy scene, and interesting to watch, provided that one's olfactory organs are not too easily offended by the all-pervading smell of salt fish. As the boats come in from the bay and one by one take up their berths by the quayside, the women crowd down to meet their husbands and relatives, all anxious to hear the news and how they have fared. It is a good-natured, jostling crowd, mingling in which one sees numerous blue-cloaked customs officers, eager to prevent any landing of forbidden articles.

The first greetings over, the men commence getting their personal belongings on shore, and the search begins in earnest, as of all tobacco or other articles found, the officer finding them is rewarded with one-half of the seizure for

his own use. Besides his huge sea-chest, each *Terreneuvier* has a private supply of salt cod which is packed in a kind of 'creel' or basket, and secured by wrappings of tarpaulin and numerous bands of rope. Through each of these the customs officer passes an auger like a gigantic cheese-scoop in the endeavour to detect hidden tobacco or spirits. When the huge chests are slung on shore and opened up, the eye is struck by the heterogeneous mass they contain, while the awful smell of fish is markedly increased. Everything conceivable appears to have been thrust in pell-mell—hats, coats, boots, trousers are all crushed in anyhow, and even amongst the clothes there are additional bundles of fish, a packet of smoked *capelines*, or a box of salted cod's tongues, which are considered extra dainties. The inside of the lid is always decorated with a picture of the Virgin, with often a prayer roughly written around it, and in addition there is generally a picture of the owner's patron saint, and perhaps one or two extra attempts at ornamentation. The amount of talking quite deafens one as each is loudly telling his adventures to his own little circle of friends, and shouting greetings to all and sundry, overjoyed at being back once more in France. All down the quays at this time are numerous coaches whose drivers add to the general confusion by calling their destination or the names of the different villages they will proceed to, as soon as they have got together a sufficient number all going in the one direction. And all round one meets in quiet country roads an occasional diligence crowded outside and in by a party of returned *Terreneuviers*, whose singing sounds far through the still clear air. Here and there also passes slowly one of the long narrow farm carts, drawn by a string of three or more sturdy Breton horses, harnessed in single file, and filled with a number of the now familiar, huge sea-chests, and bundles of fish on their way to the distant country homes of their owners.

But if there is gaiety and mirth in many houses there are also some every year which have to mourn for those who have gone out never to return, whose fate is often a mystery —whose wives may long watch by the cross on the rocky point for the ship that will never return. Sometimes it happens that the ship is lost with all hands, in one of the frequent tempests, perhaps going down within sight of others, as last year — when one was seen to founder with the whole crew on deck singing to the Virgin—the Protectress of mariners—their own peculiar hymn, the *Ave, Maris Stella*. Or else it chances that some of the small boats or 'Dorys,' in which the men go out fishing in pairs, leave the vessel never to be again heard of, lost in a sudden storm or drifted away in the fogs. Occasionally but rarely it occurs that a boat's crew drifted off in that way may be picked up by a passing steamer, and after having been given up as lost, the men at length return to their own emerald coast.

At this time of year there are women who watch day by day for the incoming boats, and when they arrive there is none there to greet them; husbands, sons, or sweethearts, the Bank keeps them, and there is no word, no certainty, for these 'Widows of the Sea.' And on All-Saints' Day, when the priest walks in procession to the cemetery to pray for and bless the dead; when, as the people here believe, those who lie in their graves rise on their elbows to listen to the prayers said for them, and to pass, if it may be, from purgatory to paradise; how many of those who pray look afar to where the sea lies broad and shining, when they join in the psalm, 'Out of the deep have I called to thee, O Lord!'

## OLD ENGLISH TOBACCO-PIPES.

Whether the honour of having introduced tobacco into this country belongs to Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir John Hawkins, or to Mr Ralph Lane, sometime Governor of Virginia; or whether the claims of the colonists of Virginia (brought back by Drake in 1586), or of Captains Amidas and Barlow (of Sir Walter's first expedition in 1584), to the same distinction can be definitely adjusted, one thing is certain—namely, that smoking was undoubtedly indulged in before the arrival of the famous 'weed.'

Long before the period of the introduction of tobacco, herbs and leaves were smoked for medicinal purposes, and to this day, in some parts of England, colt's-foot, yarrow, and other plants are still used in the same way, with evident relish and belief in their efficacy.

Of the pipes of the ante-tobacco period, we know little or nothing; the earliest specimens to be found in collections dating from the time of Queen Elizabeth, during whose reign tobacco was introduced.

That tobacco-pipes were manufactured at an early date in this country, is proved by the incorporation of the craft of tobacco-pipe makers in 1619 by James I., in the seventeenth year of his reign, and their privileges were confirmed both by Charles I. and Charles II. The Pipe-makers' Company consisted of a master, four wardens, and about twenty-four assistants. The arms of the company are described by Allen, in his *History of London*, as '*Argent*, on a mount in base *vert*, three plants of tobacco, growing and flowering, all *proper*. Crest—A Moor, in his dexter hand a tobacco-pipe, in his sinister a roll of tobacco, all *proper*. Supporters—Two young Moors, *proper*, wreathed about the loins with tobacco leaves, *vert*. Motto—"Let brotherly love continue."'

Hentzer, a German lawyer and traveller, who visited this country in Queen Elizabeth's reign, was much astonished to see Englishmen 'draw the smoke into their mouths (through pipes of clay), which they puff out again through their nostrils like funnels.' The pipes of this period have very small barrel-shaped bowls, and are usually of a better clay and make than those of succeeding reigns. In the time of James I. and Charles I., the bowls slightly increased in size, but the form remained pretty much the same.

These ancient pipes, so often turned up by the spade during digging or draining operations, are called by the country-people in England 'fairy pipes,' and in Scotland 'Celtic' or 'Elfin

pipes;' whilst by the Irish peasantry they are attributed to mischievous demons, named 'Cluricaunes,' and are destroyed as soon as discovered. In England, however, they are carefully preserved, the rustics firmly believing that they bring good luck to the finder.

The pipes in vogue during the Commonwealth and the reigns of Charles II. and James II., still retained the barrel-shaped bowl, but in an enlarged form. Some of these early pipes are furnished with a projection, having a flat base, which enables the pipe when placed on the table to remain in an upright position. This flat base or 'spur,' as it is termed, is often stamped with the maker's mark, of which marks there is a large variety. Sometimes the name of the maker is stamped in full; at other times it is abbreviated, whilst more frequently we find the initials only, or a device. A favourite mark is a wheel, in a variety of forms, which suggests the probability of St Catherine being the patron saint of the company. On some of the pipes the initials S. D. (supposed to be those of Samuel Decon, who was living in 1729) occur, together with a gauntlet; and seeing that Aubrey (1680) describes pipes made in his time by a maker named Gauntlett, who marked the spurs with a gauntlet, from which they were called Gauntlet-pipes, it is thought that Decon might have learned the art of pipe-making from him, adopting the mark and adding his own initials.

Aubrey also states that pipes were made of silver, and for ordinary purposes of a walnut-shell and straw; these were passed round from smoker to smoker.

During the years of the Great Plague (1644 to 1666) smoking increased to a very considerable extent owing to a general belief in tobacco as a disinfectant. A large number of the pipes found in London belong to this period.

That most entertaining diarist, Pepys, relates how, on seeing some houses in Drury Lane (the 7th of June 1665) marked with the red cross and the pitiful prayer, 'Lord, have mercy upon us,' he was so much upset that he went into a tobacconist's close by, and purchased a pound of tobacco, not to smoke, it is true, but to 'smell to and chaw.'

A few years later, the short pipe, known in Ireland as the 'dudeen,' and in Scotland as the 'cutty-pipe,' was in use at the same time as the ordinary barrel-shape with long stem. A writer of the period (1682) describes the soldiers,

> With pipes black as their mouths,
> And short as their pay.

Barrel-shaped pipes ceased to be the fashion with the reign of James II., when the elongated bowl of the time of William and Mary came into favour.

A number of these pipes have been found on the site where the troops of William III. encamped, previous to their embarkation for Ireland; and also on the battlefield of the Boyne at Dunkirk, conclusively proving the period of their production. These long-bowled pipes with curved stems may be seen in the pictures of Franz van Mieris, a Dutch painter, who flourished in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Hogarth in his drawings depicts the favourite form of pipe of the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. With the introduction of the Dutch type of tobacco-pipe the flat-spur disappeared, as did the barrel-shaped bowl, to be succeeded by one of more prominence if of less utility, and makers' marks and initials are stamped upon the sides of the spur instead of on the base.

Old tobacco-pipes are usually plain, with the exception of a milled border impressed by hand running round the mouth. Ornamental pipes are occasionally found, but are very rare. Pipes were also made of iron and brass in the reign of William III., but were not commonly used.

Broseley, in Staffordshire, has long been famous for its tobacco-pipes, by far the largest number coming from that town, where factories existed as early as 1575, and have continued to the present day. Pipes were also made at Winchester, Vauxhall, Derby, and Bath, as well as at other places in the kingdom; those of Winchester being mentioned by Ben Johnson as great favourites in his time. In the early days of pipe-making, nearly all the work was done by the master of the works, and the largest quantity burned at one time in the kiln was from twenty to twenty-four gross. Each pipe rested upon its bowl, and the stem was supported by rings of clay, the result being that a large proportion was warped or broken. Now the most delicate work is done by women; the pipes are placed in 'saggers,' after the Dutch fashion, as many as 350 to 400 gross being burned at a time, while the breakage does not exceed one per cent.

## HY-BRASAIL.

### THE ISLE OF THE BLEST.

'Neath the pale moon's tranquil beam,
And the myriad stars that gleam
On the Atlantic's shining breast,
Glides our boat, to voice of song
(While the sweet hours steal along)
To the island of the blest.

Swift and free our good oars play
On the blue, moon-lighted bay,
Looking to the fateful west;
To the sunset blows the gale,
To the sunset lies Brasail,
The dim island of the blest.

All things fair and lovely here
Fade, while falls the mortal tear;
But, in that dear land of rest,
Life is long and gay and sweet,
And our fathers we shall meet
In the island of the blest.

Row beneath propitious star,
To the sunset land afar—
We must ne'er resign our quest;
There the brave and great and free,
Ruled by love, live merrily,
In the island of the blest.

William Cowan.

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## BETTING AND BETTING MEN.

Lord Beaconsfield said once, 'The Turf is a gigantic engine of national demoralisation.' If these words were ever true (which we shall not discuss here), they must be so to-day, for betting on the turf was never more widespread in England than it is now. One of the large Birmingham bookmakers, who is not given to boasting, admitted the other day that his business had a 'turn-over' of £250,000 a year, and this must be small in comparison with the sums which are handled by some of the 'leviathans' who have their headquarters in the metropolis. The most notable point about these figures is that they are composed of an infinitely large number of small sums. At one period in the history of racing—say thirty to forty years ago—there was a class of rich men ('plungers' they were called) who lost and won immense sums. Sir Joseph Hawley was one of the most famous and successful; the Marquis of Hastings had the most riotous and tragic career; the late Sir Robert Peel was one of the most recent survivors. But the days of gigantic turf speculation by individuals are over. A bet is seldom taken in thousands, and, even in connection with the biggest races, for an owner to 'put on' £5000 amongst several bookmakers would be considered very heavy business. Such things were nothing like uncommon in the last generation. Reminiscences of those days were stirred for a moment eight or nine years ago, when a person, known as 'the Jubilee Plunger,' managed to rid himself of a quarter of a million of money in the course of eighteen months. But the vastly greater proportion of the enormous stream of money, which flows backwards and forwards in connection with the race-course and its doings to-day, is provided from the pockets of 'all sorts and conditions of men.' It comes from the sporting aristocrat, the idle man of means, the merchant, the doctor, the shop-assistant, the artisan, the actor, the farmer, the barber, the waiter, the cabman, and even the boy who sells newspapers in the street. And not from one sex only, for that the passion for betting has ramifications amongst all classes of women is only too well established; and if female bookmakers are not to be seen on the course itself, they can be found in all large cities. Women who bet are notoriously the most reckless and infatuated of all gamblers.

Racing and betting men have a peculiar and extensive vocabulary which is used to meet the special requirements of their pursuit. It is pretty generally known that the 'bookmaker' is the person who lays the odds against the different horses, which may vary from 'even money' to as high as two hundred to one, according to the chance which each runner is supposed to possess and the amount of money which is being invested upon its prospects. Unless a bookmaker has private information which leads him to lay short or long odds against a particular horse, the 'price,' as it is called, is regulated by the demand for it amongst the backers, who are commonly known as the 'punters.' Thus the horse which is generally regarded as most likely to win has the shortest odds laid against it, or the backers may even be required to lay odds on its chance; if the betting, say, is 'two to one on,' they will have to risk two pounds in order to win one. When a betting man wishes to express his absolute confidence in a horse being successful, he refers to it as a 'pinch' or a 'snip;' it is also spoken of as a 'moral,' a handy abbreviation of 'moral certainty.' In endeavouring to escape from the monotony of terms which the restricted interests of their subject inflict upon them, sporting writers take to a variety of synonyms. The bookmakers appear in alternate sentences as 'layers,' 'pencillers,' and 'fielders,' and collectively as 'the ring.' The 'books' in which their transactions are entered similarly become 'volumes.' These are specially ruled and printed for the peculiar class of calculations which are necessary for the bookmaker's business. Not only is each bet noted down as it is made, but

in the same line the whole extent of his transactions over the particular horse is carried forward, so that he can see how he will be affected by its success or defeat. The system, which it would be difficult to explain in a few words, is a very ingenious one, and is priceless to the bookmaker, who, as he stands on the course, betting large sums in rapid succession, requires to know at each moment what his position is, in order that he may vary the odds on different horses, so as to preserve his margin of profit.

There is nothing essentially dishonest about the bookmaker's ways of doing business, except in so far as all betting is to be condemned. The qualifications for the calling are a general experience of racing affairs, a knowledge of the recent performances and reputation of the horses in a race (as a guide to what the public are likely to 'fancy'), a head for figures, plenty of nerve and coolness, and the ordinary gifts demanded by any speculative business. He must have a character for honesty in paying his bets, or he could not carry on his occupation for a day. The public hear occasionally of 'welshers,' who make bets and decamp without paying them, but these are simply ordinary thieves, who take to any form of dishonesty which offers itself. The professional bookmaker, who makes his living from the vocation, may and usually does have a fair share of human failings, but his honour in the ring must be unimpeachable, for it is the corner-stone of his position. It will be all the better for him if he has a good gentlemanly presence; and he finds it a distinct advantage to have a pair of lungs that will enable him to shout the odds with as much volume of sound as his rivals. The betting on any race usually follows the same routine. When the numbers of the horses which are to run are exhibited upon the board, the 'ring' begins to offer at the pitch of its voice certain odds 'on the field.' This means that they will bet at the rate mentioned against any horse that backers like to name; and if the odds are liberal enough, there will generally be a rush to back some particular animal which is highly thought of, and which thereupon becomes the 'favourite.' If there are six or seven horses running, for instance, 'two to one on the field' will not improbably be offered, and a number of people will excitedly rush to accept this rate about A. If the favourite comes into greater demand than was expected, the odds will presently be shortened to 'seven to four' or 'six to four,' and meanwhile the bookmakers will begin to shout perhaps 'four to one bar one,' which means that they are open to bet four to one against anything except the favourite. Admirers of B and C will possibly be found ready to do business on these terms, and one or other may be supported so strongly that his 'price' becomes reduced to 'seven to two' or 'three to one,' for obviously the bookmaker does not wish to risk losing more on one horse than will be repaid by his winnings from the others. Offers of five or six to one will possibly find response from a few that attach themselves to the chances of D, E, or F, and there being no symptom of a desire to befriend the claims of G, offers of ten to one will be forthcoming for the accommodation of any stray gambler who dissents from the views of the majority. A horse which few are anxious to back is known as an 'outsider,' and if it should win, those who have made it their champion congratulate themselves on having 'pulled off a long shot.' The noise and excitement of a crowded betting ring constitute a strange scene. The odds fluctuate as each horse comes in greater or less demand, and the throng sways like an angry sea now and then when a report goes round favourable to the chances of some candidate. Occasionally a commission is thrown on the market for what has been an outsider in the early stages of the betting, and in an instant, half-a-dozen agents are all over the place, negotiating every bet they can, the odds shortening as they go, and an eager crowd following at their heels. On the other hand, a report detrimental to the favourite may get abroad—perhaps the owner or the jockey does not intend that he shall win, and one or two bookmakers have been instructed to lay against him on their behalf—and a longer and longer price is offered against it, to the serious misgiving of those who have accepted a short rate. In such a case the horse is said to be 'knocked out.' When the race is over and the jockey's weight is announced to be 'all right,' the bookmakers pay those who have backed the winner, on receiving the numbered tickets which have been given as evidence of the transactions. Disputes over payment are very exceptional, and the settlement usually passes over in a very quiet and business-like fashion. The bookmaker receives the backer's money when the bet is made, and only those who have won come to him after the race to have their own stake returned and receive the odds. The larger bookmakers bet with their regular customers on credit, accounts being settled every Monday; but the amount of ready money in Tattersall's Ring (the principal enclosure) at an important race-meeting is very large, and many of them carry two or three thousand pounds on their persons in gold and notes for such transactions.

The bookmakers frame the odds in such a way that they must win in the long run, but they often lose on individual races. The theory of betting is a little abstruse, but a simple illustration may be given of the advantage which the bookmakers hold. If there were three horses in a race, and all held equal chances, each would have one chance in three, or in other words, there would be one chance in its favour and two against it; that is, the odds against it would be two to one. Let us suppose the actual chances possessed by the three are in the ratios of three, two, and one. The just odds will then be calculated as follows: A has a chance (three) exactly equal to that of the other two put together (two and one). Therefore its chances of success or defeat are even. B has two chances of winning against four pos-

sessed by its rivals (three and one), as that the odds against it are four to two or two to one. C has only one chance against the five held by the others conjointly (three and two), so that the odds against it are five to one. The proper odds would therefore be: Evens A, two to one against B, five to one against C. But the odds laid by the bookmakers would be something like this: Evens A, six to four B, four to one C. Represented in another way, the chances of A, B, and C, as we have estimated them, are $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, and $\frac{1}{6}$ of the whole chance of winning, and added together, they make an exact unit. At the odds laid by the bookmakers, they are credited with chances of $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{2}{5}$, and $\frac{1}{5}$, which, added together make $1\frac{1}{10}$, and the odd tenth is the bookmaker's profit. On this principle the layers of odds are bound to win upon the average, but they frequently bet more heavily against the favourite at the outset than they are able to cover by their other transactions, and if it wins, they are out of pocket. Strange to say, the bookmakers win most heavily by the success of horses against which the longest odds are quoted in the market, the reason being that they have few backers to pay; and now and then a horse wins which no one has backed at all, so that they win all bets and pay away nothing. This agreeable experience is known in the expressive language of the ring as 'skinning the lamb.'

The great majority of people cannot attend race-meetings, except once or twice a year, when these take place in the district in which they reside. But they can bet upon them none the less to the fullest extent. The great modern development of betting has sprung up under what is known as the 'starting-price' system. Any one living in Birmingham, say, who wishes to back a horse which is running in a race at York, goes to a starting-price bookmaker and deposits his stake, which is the amount he will lose if the horse runs unsuccessfully. If the horse wins, he receives the odds laid against it at the moment of the race starting, which are accurately reported in the newspapers. Nine-tenths of all the betting in the country is done in this way, and the numbers who patronise the system are enormous. The well-to-do man who bets in sovereigns, communicates with his bookmaker by letter, telegraph, or telephone, or perhaps meets him at a club. The small bookmakers who subsist upon the shillings of working-men, do their business in the streets, where they are constantly pounced upon by the police, to be brought up and fined. The men who do what might be termed a middle-class trade in sums ranging from half-a-crown to half-a-sovereign have agents in various guises. The backer hands his five shillings perhaps to a restaurant waiter, who conveys it to a harmless-looking tailor's shop a little way along the street, and the tailor's boy transmits it to the bookmaker wherever the latter's quiet retreat may be. The vigorous and well-intentioned efforts of public authorities to repress betting cannot be said to have had, in the aggregate, any very substantial effect. As fast as one channel is stopped, another ingenious device takes its place; and, although it may be driven under the surface, its volume is not really diminished. It can only be hoped that, as other vices in social history have done, it is only running a temporary course, to become attenuated and pass away, ultimately, like some spent epidemic.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER II.—LADY HAMMERTON'S 'AT HOME.'

WHEN we were both younger, and more prone to speak disrespectfully of our elders, you will remember that we invariably referred to Lady Hammerton's residence at the Palazzo Contagli-oni, as Nebuchadnezzar's Caravanserai, for the reason that at her receptions, held every Thursday evening from nine o'clock till midnight, one met 'all people, nations, and languages.' I believe at the time we found those formal gatherings slow enough in all conscience, but looking back on them now, at the end of twenty years, I am touched with a sort of, what might almost be called pathetic reminiscence, at any rate something that is half a pleasure, half a pain, difficult to describe, but not unlike that conjured up in the poetic mind by the odour of *pot-pourri*. Poor old Lady Hammerton, she is dead and gone now; and all the frailties and inconsistencies of her extraordinary life must lie in the tomb forgotten, with that painted, bedizened, addled old pate; while, contrary to the general rule and strangely enough, considering her career, her unceasing charity and boundless good-nature are alone remembered by the world. So may it fare with all of us.

The hands of my watch pointed to a quarter past nine as our gondolier brought us to the steps of the palace. We disembarked, and, when I had assisted Olivia with her train, made our way up the steps into the hall. What a hall it was, hung with tapestry, and decorated with fifteenth century armour, the value of which was priceless! Here the servants, English every man Jack of them, and attired in the Hammerton livery which, handsome though it may be, always sets my teeth on edge, relieved us of our wraps, and then escorted us up-stairs to the drawing-room, where our hostess was receiving her guests.

As soon as our names were announced, she hastened forward to meet us, her poor cranky old head painted like a mask, and surmounted by a plume of feathers, like a Zulu warrior.

'My dear Lady Olivia,' she cried, taking my sister's hand in both of hers and shaking it heartily, 'how much too good of you to come.' Then turning to me, 'and you too, Lord Instow. I did not for a moment expect you. Hammerton heard that you only arrived in Venice yesterday morning.'

'We arrived on Tuesday,' said Olivia, unfurling her fan, and looking at her hostess over it. 'Had you not so kindly invited us to-night, we should have called to pay our respects to you to-morrow.'

'I protest you are kindness itself,' replied our hostess, mincing her words in her most artificial eighteenth-century manner.

As she spoke, her husband, Sir John, put in an appearance. I tell you, Forsyth, he looked for all the world as when we saw him last,

not a day older (he must have been seventy-nine if a year), and not a day younger. His hair was as black and thick as my father remembered it at Eton; his eyes were as bright and keen as the day he shot Von Ollerswitz in Paris more than fifty years ago. He also is gone now. He caught cold, they tell me, at his wife's funeral six months after we left Venice, and followed her to their atrocious family vault a week later. But he was juvenile to the last. I heard that he pinched his waist, painted his face, and dyed his hair on the morning of the day that he expired.

His first action, after greeting us, was to pay Olivia one of his customary compliments, capping it with a Virgilian quotation that was certainly, if perhaps a little wanting in the niceties of taste, at least *à propos* of the occasion.

'I am rejoiced that you are able to give us the honour of your company, my lord,' he said, turning to me, 'for I flatter myself that to-night I shall be able to act the part of a showman for once in my life to advantage. Our guest on this occasion, as you are aware, is His Majesty, the King of the Médangs, a personage whose character and career are alike worth studying.'

'I look forward with considerable pleasure to being presented to His Majesty,' I answered, with a smile at what I then considered, God knows how erroneously, the ludicrousness of the situation.

The man was certainly a king, that is, if all I had been told were true, but even then of what a state, and of what a country? A wild tract peopled by an uncivilised community, where might was right and the weakest went to the wall. I endeavoured to pump Sir John concerning him, but just as he was about to satisfy my curiosity, a servant entered to inform him that the king had arrived. Sir John immediately begged me to excuse him, and went off to receive his guest, while Olivia and I remained by our hostess's side, at her request, to assist her in welcoming him.

Here I must record a curious experience. As you know I have, all my life, been more or less favoured with opportunities of being in the royal presence, and for this reason I have, in a great degree, become exempt from that peculiar sensation of nervousness which afflicts so many unfortunates prior to the entrance of a sovereign. To my astonishment, however, I discovered that on this occasion I was conscious of a decided quickening of the pulse as I stood beside my hostess and watched for the incoming of the King of the Médangs.

When he *did* enter the room, accompanied by his aide-de-camp (a Greek, whose name I afterwards learned was Conrad Manolaki, and whom I recognised as being the man I had seen waiting for him in the church of S. Rocco the previous morning), he did not look about him, but made his way instantly across to where his hostess was standing, just as if he had known, previous to seeing her, the exact spot where he would find her. Whether it was the adventurous story I had been told of his career, the remembrance of his extraordinary nerve and pluck, or the fascination of his mere presence, that moved me, I cannot say, but I know that it seemed to me as he stood before us then, that I had never in my life before seen so majestic—I use the word advisedly—a figure as he presented. He was attired in the perfection of evening dress, but with a neatness the like of which I had never before encountered. A parti-coloured ribbon, denoting some order, that of Marie I., I discovered later, crossed his chest, and gave a little variety to his sombre appearance; otherwise he was without ornament or decoration of any sort or description. Taken altogether, from the soles of his elegant patent leather shoes to the topmost hair of his well-brushed head, he bore the unmistakable impress of a gentleman, a little foreign, perhaps, but still a gentleman.

'Your Majesty does us great honour,' said Lady Hammerton in Italian, as she welcomed him.

'I assure you it gives me the greatest pleasure to come,' he answered in the same tongue. 'You are one of those who have shown me great kindness, Lady Hammerton.'

I saw the old lady thrill with pleasure at this mark of his esteem, then turning to the king again, she said: 'If your Majesty will permit me, I should like to introduce to you the daughter of one of my oldest friends, Lady Olivia Wokingham.'

Olivia curtsied, as no other woman in England, or Europe for that matter, can, and I saw the colour rise on her cheek.

'I remember Lady Olivia Wokingham perfectly,' said the king in English, with a faint smile upon his face, 'though I fancy she is hardly able to recall the circumstances under which we met.'

'Your Majesty's face seems strangely familiar to me,' answered Olivia. 'I saw you yesterday in the church of S. Rocco, but I feel sure that I have met you somewhere else before that. In fact, I said so to my brother only this evening.'

'You will be the better able to appreciate the compliment I pay you then,' he answered, 'when I say that, while you have forgotten the circumstance, I, who have been here, there, and everywhere since that night, have retained a vivid remembrance of it. Can you recall a journey you made in the Orient Express, when the train stopped at midnight on the Turkish frontier? You wished to make a request to a railway official. The man, however, did not understand English, and some one in the carriage had the pleasure of interpreting.'

'I recollect the incident perfectly now,' cried Olivia; 'and so your Majesty is the gentleman who behaved so kindly to me on that exasperating occasion?'

'It must be very unpleasant not to be able to speak the language of the country one is travelling in,' he replied gravely. 'For my part, alas, I am compelled to be able to converse fluently in an almost Pentecostal number of tongues, and often a patois of each. My subjects, you see, embrace some of almost every Asiatic nation, besides representatives of a great many European ones.'

At this moment, Lady Hammerton begged permission to present me to him. On hearing

my name, the king turned sharply round, and singling me out from the gentlemen among whom I was standing, held out his hand.

'Lord Instow,' he said, 'this is a great and unexpected pleasure. It delights me to meet you at last, and to be able to thank you in person for the service you have rendered the world in general, and myself in particular, by giving it *The Making of Nations*. What your book has been to me, I cannot tell you. I value it beyond measure.'

'Your Majesty flatters me,' I said, with an inexplicable feeling of delight at his praise. 'I am grateful, indeed, to think that you should have found it useful.'

'Useful is scarcely the term,' he answered, looking at me with his great dark eyes that had such a wonderful fascination in them. Then, with peculiar emphasis, he continued: 'Your book, sir, has helped to make me what I am. Upwards of a million people at this present moment have good cause to laud your name. Pray, are you remaining long in Venice?'

'For another week, I expect,' I answered, wondering why he asked the question.

'Indeed! In that case, if you will permit me, I will do myself the honour of calling upon you. I should like to have a long talk with you on certain matters connected with your volume. When you leave here, it will be to return to England, I presume?'

'No! When my sister and I say good-bye to Venice, we leave Europe in my yacht for the East. We have neither of us seen Japan yet, and we are thinking of taking a long holiday in that direction.'

'You could scarcely choose a more charming place,' he answered, and then turned to his hostess, who had some more friends she was desirous of introducing to him. Half an hour or so later, he encountered Olivia standing by one of the open windows.

'Since you visit it so often, I presume you are fond of Venice, Lady Olivia?' he said, in his low musical voice. 'But there, I need not ask the question, how could one help loving it? What other city has such a history wrapped up in its every stone? I sometimes stand at the window of my own house at night, and look out upon the water. Then it seems to me I see the slow ground ages go floating by on the tide. See, the window is open; may I conduct you outside and ask *you* what *you* see?'

He led her through the open window into the balcony. Once there, they stood side by side looking down on the waters of the Grand Canal. It was a lovely night, a young moon showed faintly above the opposite housetops, touching the water in the centre of the canal with its uncanny light; but on the far side, all was wrapped in deepest shadow. A little farther to the left the Ponte di Rialto showed gray and ghostlike in the semi-darkness. At intervals, a gondola shot out of some side-street and darted round a corner with a cry of warning from the gondolier, otherwise the canal was deserted.

'Listen to the water,' said the king, during a pause in the music in the room behind them, placing his hands on the ironwork of the balcony and looking down. 'What a song it is singing of days gone by. Songs of Anguish, and songs of Triumph, hymns of Victory, and the death-chant of a nation that thought itself so strong that it could never fall, and yet crumbled into dust before those whom it had once boasted it had crushed for ever. What a lesson, what a lesson!'

For more than a minute, he stood looking away towards the rising moon. Olivia confessed to me afterwards, when she gave me a recital of the conversation I am now setting down, that the expression of his face, as he spoke, was almost unearthly. It haunted her memory for hours afterwards. At last, he found his voice again, and began to recite:

> 'I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,
> A palace and a prison on each hand.
> I saw from out the wave her structures rise
> As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand.
> A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
> Around me, and a dying glory smiles
> O'er the far times when many a subject land
> Looked to the winged Lion's marble piles,
> Where Venice sat in state, throned on her hundred isles.

'Oh, if one could only see it as it used to be,' he said, 'and learn a lesson from it! Think, Lady Olivia, of what this city has been. Think of it first a wind-tossed group of islands, where the streams of the Alps and Tyrol had their meeting, and only the sea-birds found a dwelling-place. It is possible that on this very island, upon which this house now stands, some half-savage king of the Veneti may have stood, and, looking out over the water, have dreamed as I am dreaming now. If only it could have been possible for him to see the glory of the place as it was to be. When driven out of the Euganean hills by his conquerors, he came to build his hut, and dwell in safety on these yellow sands. It was not for him to know the grandeur that was to be its portion in years to come, when Angelo Partecipazio should have completed his gigantic work, and wrested the islands from the treacherous sea. If only he could have watched the fleets of the new Republic ploughing the waters of the Mediterranean, bearing merchandise to all the great nations of the earth. If he could but have witnessed its ships of war sailing off to the conquest of the Turks, the Saracens, and the Genoese; and have seen its pride growing more and more insufferable each year, what would he not have tried to do to avert the catastrophe? Thirteen hundred years of greatness, and then a fall such as the world has never seen. Heavens! what a lesson could be learned from every ripple and every stone if only they could speak.'

There was something in the man's face that seized upon Olivia's pity. Hitherto she had been almost cold to him, now she leant forward, and placed her hand upon his arm, hardly conscious that she had done so.

'But, sir,' she said, 'you forget that there is another side to the picture. Had it not been for the overweening pride you speak of, and such careless statesmanship as men would scarce believe, Venice might be the centre of the

world's commerce to-day, as she was five hundred years ago.'

The king stooped a little towards her. His eyes shone in the bright light like diamonds, and his voice, when he spoke, had a clearer ring than it had yet possessed.

'You are right,' he said; 'you are quite right. It is the sin of pride, of overweening confidence in one's self, that a ruler must guard against, more than masterstrokes of diplomacy. Oh for one hour's prevision of my country's future! What would I not give for it! Lady Olivia, in all your brilliant life, your social conquests, there is one sweet you have not tasted. You do not know the joy of winning a kingdom against enormous odds, and establishing a dynasty for one's self. I doubt even if you, clever as you are, understand what it means to an ambitious man like myself to know that I have done it by the strength of my own right arm. Indeed, I doubt very much if I know exactly the extent of my own feelings.'

'I think I can hazard a very good guess.'

'You have heard my story, then?'

'I have heard what was supposed to be your story, but whether it is the correct version I cannot of course tell. You see I have no means of judging.'

'Well, some day, if you will allow me, I will tell you my history myself. I think you will say that you have never heard a stranger.'

'But you have the satisfaction of knowing that you have succeeded. No one can rob you of that.'

'I have succeeded up to the present, but the question that haunts me day and night is, shall I continue to do so? There are so many difficulties in the way, and sometimes the path lies over such steep hills, that it seems hopeless to expect that one will ever arrive at the top.'

'That is not the account I have heard of you. Only to-day I had you described to me as a man of dauntless energy, whose boast it is that he does not know the meaning of the word "fail!"'

'Ah, I fear your informant flattered me. But I agree with you that is what the man who is to succeed must be. I must rouse myself, I must throw off this depression which has seized me, and play the part of a man. The truth is, I have been ill; I was only induced to leave my country when it became absolutely certain that unless I did so I should die. I went to Hong-kong, but they advised me to come home to Europe and consult a specialist. I came here, and next week I am to learn my fate. One tries not to be a coward, Lady Olivia, but one cannot help dreading what one may be told. So much depends upon my life, you see, the happiness of thousands, the fate of a new throne, even the independence of a country.'

Olivia looked up into the pale, handsome face of the king, and, as she did so, she heaved a heavy sigh.

'Will you believe me when I say how much I pity you?' she asked. 'I sympathise with you from the bottom of my heart.'

'I thank you,' he answered. 'When I interpreted for you on the Turkish frontier that dark night years ago, I was leaving Europe with all the world before me. My future was a blank page, on which I had then to write my name. It is a strange coincidence that, when I return to Europe, my name assured, you should be the first woman to whom I unbare my soul. But I must not detain you here. The night is growing cold, and our hostess will be wondering where we are.'

Olivia rose with a little shiver. Whether it was the damp night air, or the effect of the king's words, she could not say, but she felt more miserable than she had done for some time past. Inside the drawing-room the musicians were playing a selection from Gounod's *Faust;* and the plaintive melody seemed in keeping with her thoughts. She could not divest herself of the idea that it was all unreal. It was like a dream, vivid while it lasted, but from which she might expect any moment to awake. The moon rising above the house-tops, the dark shadow of the buildings opposite, the cries of the gondoliers as they turned into the narrow streets to right and left, the music in the room behind, and the mysterious King of the Médangs standing beside her, telling her of his throne, and the jeopardy in which his life was placed.

He pushed open the window for her, and escorted her into the room, where they found their hostess near the door, talking to the English consul. Bidding her good-night, and thanking her for her hospitality, the king accompanied Sir John down-stairs, followed by his aide-de-camp. On the stairs I encountered them.

'Good-night, my lord,' said the king, pausing for a moment to speak to me. 'I must repeat what a pleasure it has been to me to meet you. Perhaps, if you can spare the time, you will pay me a visit before you leave Venice; I shall be so glad to see you.'

'I will do myself the honour of waiting upon your Majesty whenever it will be most convenient to you to see me,' I answered.

'Shall we say on Saturday, then? At three o'clock, if that will suit you.'

'Three o'clock will suit me admirably,' I answered. 'I will be sure not to keep your majesty waiting.'

'I thank you. Good-night.'

I bade him good-night, and then went on up-stairs to the drawing-room, in search of Olivia. When I had found her, we made our *adieux*, thanked our hostess for the honour she had done us in introducing us to the king, and took our departure. One thing impressed me immediately, and that was my sister's quietness. We were no sooner under weigh than I rallied her on the subject by inquiring, now that she had seen His Majesty, the King of the Médangs, what she thought of him.

'I don't know what to think,' she answered. 'Victor, there is something very extraordinary about the man. Some magnetic quality that I cannot understand. Since I have spoken to him, I can only say that I do not at all wonder he has succeeded. He is the sort of man who would carry any enterprise through, however difficult. But I fancy he is very ill.'

'Ill?'

'Yes, very ill. He told me that that was the reason of his being here now. He is very despondent, and the way he spoke of the future of his country, if anything should happen to himself, almost brought the tears to my eyes.'

'He has asked me to call upon him on Saturday. I shall do so, but to-morrow I shall write to Blenkinson and ask him to let me hear by return of post all he knows of him. If there is a man in the world who is likely to know—he is that one.'

'Doesn't that seem a little as if we hardly trusted him?' asked Olivia. 'Ought we to make inquiries in that way, do you think?'

I looked at her in surprise. Could this be the same woman who, only that morning, had spoken of him as a mere adventurer? Verily, I thought to myself, if this is a sample of what he can do, His Majesty has indeed the power of converting his opponents to his own side. But whatever I may have thought, I was too wise in my generation to say anything to Olivia on the subject.

## MORE ABOUT HORSELESS CARRIAGES.*

In Eastern fairy tale, when a man wanted to transport his body from one place to another, he unrolled a square of carpet, seated himself upon it, uttered a few mystic words, and in a twinkling was at the particular haven where he would be. This is certainly the simplest form of locomotion ever conceived, but unfortunately its secret has been lost. It is a pity that romance has, in this case, outstripped reality, for there is in human nature a restlessness which inspires a man to be on the move, and the quicker he can travel the better he likes it. To a child even, the prospect of a ride, a drive, a journey on the railway, or a lift on brother Tom's bicycle, is an event to be looked forward to with the greatest zest. There is a sense of exhilaration in being carried rapidly over the ground without self-exertion, and as it is a luxury which hitherto few could command, it has become customary to regard those who can afford to maintain a coach-house and stable as a race apart, who are distinguished from their less fortunate fellows by the appellation 'carriage-folk.' It is true that the gulf which formerly separated them from the common herd has been partly bridged by the bicycle, but still the man who keeps his own conveyance is 'a somebody.'

The thoughtful know full well that the keeping of horses brings with it anxiety, trouble, and expense, from which the man who is obliged to content himself with 'shanks's mare' is altogether exempt. Hence it comes about that the possibility of possessing a vehicle which shall be quite independent of animal power for its action—a little carriage which requires only the touch of a handle to set it bowling along at ten miles an hour or so—is a most tempting thing to hold out to those whose aspirations have never reached higher than an omnibus, tramcar, or, on state occasions, a cab. The power of purchasing such a vehicle seems to bring one very near the flying carpet of the Eastern magician; and there is no romance about it, for the time is most surely near at hand when such vehicles will become comparatively common on our highways. Let us consider the present position of this important new departure.

Owing to legislative restrictions under which any vehicle which carries its own means of propulsion is regarded in the same light as a heavy traction engine, the horseless carriage industry in this country is held in abeyance. This enforced quietude must not be regarded as an unmitigated misfortune, although there are many who deplore the start given to foreign manufacturers by the freedom which they enjoy from any such restraint.

But it should be remembered that the manufacture of horseless carriages is as yet in its extreme infancy, and it must go through some years of probation before the best types are decided upon. As matters at present stand, we are looking on, while other nations are doing a vast amount of pioneer work, from which we presently shall reap much advantage without paying the premium of costly experiments. Recent exhibitions have made the public acquainted with the outward form of some of these new vehicles, and it must be apparent to most observers that they are at the best clumsy constructions which are capable of vast improvement. There is no necessity that they should slavishly follow the models supplied by the carriage-builder, and although this is the case at present, as it was for years in the matter of railway carriage design, we may feel sure that ultimately a new and distinct form will be found for these horseless vehicles, a form which will combine both strength and elegance.

Many forms of motive-power have been tried for road vehicles. They have been driven by wind, carrying sails like a ship; by coiled springs; by the expansion of gas, generally ammonia, or carbonic acid; and by ordinary coal-gas, compressed in cylinder, or carried in huge bellows. All these methods we may at once consign to oblivion, by reason of their impracticability. There remain three methods of propulsion which come within the bounds of things practical—and these are by electricity, by oil-engine, and by steam. We shall briefly consider the claims of each.

It may be thought that because tramways and railways are now being successfully worked by electricity, the same agent is applicable to highway use for other vehicles. But this is not so. In electric railways the heavy machinery and its attendant steam-engine for the generation of the current is stationary, and the electricity is conveyed to the vehicles through the medium of the rails, or from an overhead wire. To use the current for a vehicle independent of rails, we must carry secondary batteries or accumulators, and the weight of these is so excessive in comparison with the energy they afford, that the carriage becomes heavy in structure and most unwieldy. Moreover, the use of such carriages presupposes stations in every town where spent batteries can be exchanged for

* See also *Journal* for 1895, page 563.

freshly charged ones. It may certainly become possible in the distant future to establish overhead lines on our highways which will supply currents to any vehicle hooking on to them, but at present this can only be regarded as a dream. We may therefore at once put electricity out of court, except as an agent for igniting the explosive vapour in an oil-engine, the next method of propulsion which comes under review.

An oil-engine is, in point of fact, a gas-engine, for the oil which it carries is vaporised—that is, turned into gas and mixed with a certain proportion of air before it can be utilised. This mixture, when exploded, in most cases by an electric spark, gives energy to a piston in a cylinder, and motion is obtained by a crank in the familiar manner. No boiler is necessary; the working parts are few and simple, and we may at once say that the system is admirably adapted to a light vehicle for the use of one or two persons. Such a vehicle is said to have travelled on one occasion at the rate of sixty miles per hour. But it is obvious to any mechanician that a speed so high, if desirable, could only be possible for an extremely short distance, on account of the rapid heating of the working parts. Speed, however, is not a first requisite, and it stands to reason that, for the sake of pedestrians and others, the rate at which these autocars travel must be regulated within well-defined limits.

For heavy work no motive-power has been found so tractable and satisfactory in every way as steam, although engineers have not yet learned how to utilise more than ten per cent. of the energy expended in raising it. And what applies to the steam-engine employed for other purposes, applies equally well to steam as a driver of horseless carriages. But the popular idea of a steam locomotive, which may be tersely summed up in the formula 'Puffing Billy,' must be at once dismissed from the mind. It is a new type of engine altogether which will invade our highways.

It will have a smokeless fire, and its boiler will consist of coiled tubes, kept at a low red heat, into which a little water will be injected periodically, to be instantly converted into superheated steam. On rough, hilly ground, a slight increase in the water-supply will make additional steam, so that the energy at command can be doubled or trebled, and the hill conquered without difficulty or reduction of speed. And it is here, especially, that the steam-engine compares so favourably with engines of the petroleum kind; for the latter have no reserve power to fall back upon when additional force is needed. Another advantage in favour of steam is that coke and water are obtainable everywhere, except, perhaps, in the desert of Sahara.

In the suburbs of Paris there are several tramways which are already worked by steam, as they are in various towns in England. But in Paris the Serpollet, or tubular boiler, is used exclusively, and the cars are driven at high rates of speed. These tubular boilers, it is asserted, are quite free from any risk of explosion, and they are officially allowed to be worked up to a pressure of ninety-four atmospheres—which is equal to more than one thousand four hundred pounds, the tubes having been first tested to more than double that pressure.

It is not generally known that the use of steam on our high-roads is no novelty. At the beginning of the century many vehicles driven by steam were tried as rivals to the stage-coach, and some of them ran at a fair speed, and carried passengers from town to town. There was much opposition to them, and all kinds of obstacles—including such solid ones as heaps of stones laid across the roads—were placed in their way. A few unfortunate accidents, added to other difficulties, eventually signed their death-warrant, and the traffic came to an end. But now, as we have already indicated, the use of the steam-engine is placed upon an entirely new footing. Owing to the introduction of mild steel, it is possible to combine in one vehicle great lightness and extreme strength. The bicycle is a splendid example of what can be done in this way, and, in addition to strength of construction, we have mild steel as a material for tubular boilers. It is fair to assume that the future autocar, instead of being a copy of the coach-builders' model, will be something quite different. It would be well for intending manufacturers to offer prizes for the best designs sent in for horseless vehicles, making it a condition that neither the modern carriage nor the railway coach shall be taken as a model. Designers have now the opportunity of offering us something of a novel character, and they should bear in mind, in drawing out their plans, that they have in modern steel, and in aluminium and its alloys, materials which readily lend themselves to strength and lightness.

The bill which is now before Parliament will probably become law before many months have passed, for no opposition to its passage is anticipated. It provides that the new vehicles shall be placed on exactly the same footing as horse-drawn carriages; but, of course, the altered conditions of their construction require special regulations. For instance, the petroleum which is necessary to many of them comes under the head of an explosive, and great care has to be exercised in dealing with it. It is true that some of the vehicles are adapted for the use of heavy, non-explosive oils; but these compounds are generally so objectionable by reason of their strong odour, that they will never come into common use. The liquid mostly used is known as benzine, and as it gives off an inflammable vapour at ordinary temperatures, it is certainly a dangerous thing to deal with, and must never be handled except by daylight. The new bill makes suitable provisions as to the storage and use of this treacherous agent, and the Secretary of State is empowered to issue instructions with regard to it. The maximum weight of a horseless carriage is to be four tons; it must never be left without control, it must not whistle or make any other disagreeable noise, and its construction must be of an unobjectionable nature. These are the principal provisions of the bill, which has already been read a second time in the House of Lords, and which, there is every reason to believe, will meet with equal support in the House of Commons.

An important amendment on the bill has been made when before the standing committee, to the effect that there be left out of the bill the prohibition against the light locomotive drawing any vehicle, and to insert a provision that one vehicle might be drawn, which should not exceed with the locomotive, weight unladen, four tons.

A new industry is pretty sure to attract that ubiquitous individual known as the Company promoter. No sooner is a discovery made, a new thing patented, or an old one revived or improved, than it is scented by these vultures of the financial world. The horseless carriage is no exception to the rule, and Companies are already flaunting their banners, in the form of prospectuses, before the public eye, in the hope of raising capital with which to work out their plans. But let the public hesitate before investing their money in projects which are, at present, in quite an experimental stage. Even if the whole enterprise were cut and dried, and if the most perfect form of motor and vehicle had been achieved, it is a grave question whether any Company promotion is necessary. In no country in the world are better carriages built, or more wonderful engineering feats achieved, than in Britain, and it may safely be assumed that we have scores of firms who are competent enough and wealthy enough to build any kind of autocar which public demand may call for. As soon as the bill now before Parliament becomes law, manufacturers will vie with one another in the production of efficient horseless carriages, and the public will have many to choose from. We need hardly say that the great natural law of the survival of the fittest will apply here as in other things.

## A LOCAL VIEW.

### CHAPTER VII. (*continued*).

THERE is one case, at least, in which to be grateful on account of a fellow-creature's death calls for a high form of human charity. Frederick Farmley furnished such a case. Nature forestalled the law in exacting her debt. When the day of execution arrived, the condemned man was in the delirium of rheumatic fever, and before the lapse of the respite, he was dead. It is right to state that the event was almost universally lamented, and the general feeling, far beyond the small limits of Crownley, was that the law had been unfairly cheated of its due.

Two persons alone were glad that death had intervened. We need not inquire into their motives. They were Mary Dalton and her mother, who learned of the condemned man's death far from England, and shrouded his dark memory with their gentle charity. Mr Seth Farmley, also in voluntary exile, heard the news as an unexpected 'bit of luck.' To that extent it gratified him. Mr Seth Farmley's place of exile, it need hardly be added, is Argentina, where he proposes to settle for good.

The lapse of a year, assisted by the absence of those most nearly connected with the events of this story, removed these events back into local history. It was known that Mrs Dalton and her daughter would never return to Crownley; and not long after their departure for Italy, the house they had lived in was sold by the trustees, together with all its contents. They corresponded for a while with one or two friends in the parish, and then the letters ceased, and they passed out of local interest.

Maitland was generous enough not to be wounded by a formal farewell, in the presence of others, and by an apparent forgetfulness of him which they showed after leaving Crownley. Yet, he asked himself, why should either mother or daughter write to him from abroad? The latter would hardly do so, and the former could have no wish to do what might revive hopes now past realisation. All was over; and instead of indulging vain regrets, Dr Maitland shut them up in a secret tabernacle of his breast, and applied himself with greater earnestness to his work.

One afternoon in late September, the two ladies sat in the drawing-room of a quiet Kensington hotel. They had returned to England two months earlier, and had spent the interval at a western sea-side place. They were not much changed, outwardly, except that Mrs Dalton looked stronger, and her daughter, if a little older now and settled by trial, gained rather than suffered in point of beauty by the experience. They were discussing the project of a place of future residence, for of travelling and hotel life both had had enough.

'A new house, with everything in it also new, takes a good while to make into a home, Mary,' said Mrs Dalton.

'It is a pity everything was sold at Crownley,' was the answer, regretfully spoken.

After a silence, the girl added:

'Would it not save Mr Fairfield's time, mamma, if we went to him this evening, instead of bringing him here?'

'I think it would, Mary; Mr Fairfield's time is of value. Send him a little telegram that we are coming to call.'

The alacrity with which Mary proceeded to send the message was hardly needed to show Mrs Dalton the secret wish that underlay her daughter's suggestion. They went to Croham, and spent half an hour with the solicitor; and then, as they were leaving, the suggestion was softly made by Mary Dalton that they should walk quietly as far as Crownley, and take one look at the place.

And so they went, recognised by none, until they came in view of the church. For some little time they remained gazing silently. Strangers occupied the vicarage now, and they —the visitors—felt like ghosts of the past who had no right to intrude in those precincts. They knew there was an affectionate tablet in

the church to the late vicar's memory, because they had a photograph of it.

Turning back by another road, they saw a short way before them a certain detached corner house. The girl was the first to recognise it, and to hesitate. It was the house Dr Maitland had taken, fifteen months before—and how long ago it seemed!

'What ought we to do, mamma?' she whispered anxiously. 'I—I should not like to pass. Shall we go back?'

'I think not, Mary, and I am sure you do not wish to do so unkind an act,' said Mrs Dalton, who suspected more than she put in words. 'Don't you remember,' she added, dropping her voice as they slowly approached the house, 'the promise we once made, to come and see his new house? We have not fulfilled it.'

The girl lowered her face and made no reply. They were at the door, and they did not notice that it bore no brass plate. A maid answered the bell.

'Dr Maitland?' the servant answered, with surprise. 'No, ma'am; I believe the doctor once lived here, but he is not in the neighbourhood now. He went away.'

They went quickly back to the station, and returned to London. Neither mother nor daughter said a word about Dr Maitland during the whole journey—and very few words about anything else. Their silence told the tale of their disappointment, and of much more. Wherever Maitland now might be, he certainly filled the thoughts of those two, to the exclusion of all else, and made them both unhappy.

'Mamma,' said Mary, late in the evening, 'don't you think London is the best place to settle in? There is so much—so much to interest one, every day, in London.'

'As you wish, darling,' said the mother tenderly. She understood her daughter's feeling. 'And I see your wrist is swelling again, Mary, and we must show it to an English surgeon. I don't half trust foreign doctors—though they may be clever enough.'

Mary Dalton pulled up the sleeve off her white wrist, and looked at it carelessly. It had received a sprain some months before. It was undoubtedly swollen.

'Yes,' she answered, 'we will go to a doctor in the morning. There is one close by, in the square, for I noticed the lamp.'

There is no more to be told, excepting an incident connected with this consultation. On ringing the bell, and learning that the doctor was in, the servant, for some reason, showed them into the doctor's study instead of the usual waiting-room, and closed the door.

'Mamma!'

Mrs Dalton was equally startled. The old vicarage study seemed reproduced (points of difference being at first unnoticed) by the table, the writing-desk, the arm-chair, the very books even (for many of them were here, on the old shelves), the portrait over the mantel-piece, and, in the same position, beyond the hearthrug, the cosy little chair her uncle had kept in his study for Mary's own use.

Before they could ask themselves the meaning of all this, the servant came back.

'The doctor is in the consulting-room,' she said; 'will you please come this way?'

Mary Dalton followed the maid, and did not notice, until she was entering the consulting-room, that her mother had not accompanied them. As the door was at once closed by the maid, there was no time to think about it.

Mrs Dalton sat down and waited. In a few minutes she heard them coming, and turned an expectant face to the door. The doctor entered, laughing, along with the young lady.

'Dr Maitland! I am so—glad!' Mrs Dalton exclaimed, blushing with happiness, and standing up with extended hands.

The doctor not only pressed the two small hands within his own, but, most unprofessionally, bent down and kissed her forehead. Mary Dalton, meantime, shyly looked on.

'We thought, when we called yesterday at your old house,' said Mrs Dalton, tears and smiles mingling on her face, 'that we had—we had lost you! And it is only by a mere chance—because of Mary's wrist'—— The recollection seemed to bring her back to a more serious vein, which perhaps was only assumed. 'By the way, what do you think of Mary's wrist?'

Dr Maitland was obliged to confess, with a smile, that this was the first he had heard of the trouble. Mary held it out to him now, averting her face with very pretty shame, and the doctor examined the white wrist as attentively as circumstances allowed. But, in all probability, the result proved eventually satisfactory.

THE END.

## THE SPECTROSCOPE: ITS ACHIEVEMENTS.

Of all instruments of scientific research, the most subtle is certainly the spectroscope. It outstrips the telescope itself in the investigation of the nature of the heavenly bodies and phenomena of interstellar space, and far surpasses the microscope in the detection of infinitesimal particles of matter. Until within a few years the telescope was the only instrument by which astronomical investigations could be carried on, but it was unable to do more than give information as to the form, size, and colour of the fixed stars and nebulæ—those hazy patches in the sky whose nature had hitherto puzzled astronomers. With the aid of the spectroscope, however, not only is the nature of these celestial bodies revealed, but also their condition as regards relative age, temperature, and motion towards or away from the solar system.

The spectroscope is an instrument for analysing light. It consists essentially of a triangular bit of glass through which the light to be analysed and examined is passed. The three-sided prisms often seen hanging around gasaliers, vases, &c., and which attract our attention by the resplendent colours into which light passing through them is decomposed, are really spectroscopes in the rough. Glass shaped after the

fashion of these prismatic drops has the power, as Newton showed long ago, of separating a ray of light which is a blend of various colours into the colours which compose it. White light, Newton proved, was such a blend, and not a pure colour, as had hitherto been believed. But that philosopher was unable, though he made the attempt, to detect what was of far more importance from a practical point of view than the separation of light into its constituent colours—namely, dark spaces or gaps in the colours so separated. These spaces or gaps are the essential objects of study in spectrum analysis. The honour of first observing them falls to Wollaston, who used sunlight as did Newton, but experimented in a different manner. Wollaston employed a fine slit—the other necessary part of the spectroscope—through which he first passed a ray of light before allowing it to fall on the prism. He did not, however, recognise the value of his discovery, probably regarding it as peculiar rather than important; nor could he have imagined for a moment that the study of these dark spaces or lines—for they are really images of the slit—would subsequently reveal the constitution of the sun to us. In 1814, Fraunhofer, a Munich optician, examined and mapped the positions of five hundred and seventy-six of these lines, which have ever since been called Fraunhofer's lines, though they have now increased to three thousand. The importance of these lines as a means of investigation is at once apparent when it is mentioned that every simple or elementary substance, when heated till it becomes a glowing vapour or gas, possesses a set of lines peculiar to itself whose positions remain fixed. By an examination of the light from glowing gases, then, the nature of the gases is instantly revealed, and their composition unerringly detected. The decision of the spectroscope is almost infallible.

The surpassing delicacy of this instrument renders it indispensable in the domain of chemical research, in regard to the constitution of rare substances occurring in such minute quantities that ordinary means of measurement and analysis by chemical processes are altogether out of the question. When every other means of research is exhausted, one look into the spectroscope is sufficient to reveal the presence of a substance. The mere clapping of the hands or the striking together of the pages of a dusty book in the presence of a gas-jet is sufficient to produce a certain line of yellow light—the unfailing sign of the presence of the metal sodium, the chief constituent of common table salt—in a spectroscope placed at some distance. Sodium is a constituent of a great number of organic substances, but it occurs in such minute proportions that, even were it isolated, the microscope would be quite out of court in the detection of the metal; yet by simply burning a substance containing it, even in infinitesimal quantities, its presence is shown by the spectroscope without the possibility of a mistake.

By the employment of spectrum analysis, that is, analysis by means of the spectroscope, a number of elementary metals have been discovered. The German physicists Bunsen and Kirchhoff were the first to make a discovery of this kind. Cæsium and rubidium were discovered by them, to which were soon added thallium by Crookes and indium by Reich and Richter; then a fifth, gallium, by Lecoq de Boisbaudran. All these metals are somewhat rare, and would in all probability have escaped detection for a long time to come but for this comparatively new method of research.

Quite recently the spectroscope played an important part in the discovery of the new gas, argon, which has been found by Lord Rayleigh and Professor Ramsay to form about one-hundredth part of the earth's atmosphere. And only the other day, as a result of extended researches on the above gas, the spectroscope is responsible for the announcement made by one of the above-mentioned scientists, Professor Ramsay, that he has discovered in company with the new gas, obtained from a rare Norwegian mineral, the substance helium—a mysterious substance which had hitherto only been observed by the spectroscope to exist in the sun, and whose occurrence on earth or anywhere else was problematical. These are a few of the triumphs of this exquisite instrument as a potent weapon of discovery in the regions of chemistry and physics.

But wonderful as have been the achievements of the spectroscope in the examination and discovery of terrestrial substances, they have been even more remarkable in the domain of astronomy, and, as results of its work, celestial chemistry and physics have arisen as branches of that science. By a comparison of the 'spectrum' or lines observed in sunlight with the spectra of substances found on earth, Kirchhoff demonstrated that a large number of terrestrial elements exist in the sun, amongst which are the well-known substances, hydrogen, iron, nickel, zinc, copper, lead, and aluminium. It appears to be an extraordinary fact that oxygen, which is so lavishly prevalent on earth, seems to have deserted the sun altogether—none being observable in that luminary. For an element to attest its presence in the spectroscope, it must not only be present in considerable relative quantity, and in the gaseous form, but must occupy a position in the sun's atmosphere where its spectrum may be made manifest by the light from the body of the sun shining through it. Thus it is probable that all terrestrial elements exist in the sun, but are not in a condition to make themselves evident. Further, the spectroscope shows that there are substances in the sun, and still more in the fixed stars, which have not yet been met with on earth.

The sun consists of two distinct portions—the body of the sun, which is called the photosphere; and a layer of gaseous matter which envelops it, called the chromosphere. Spectroscopic examination indicates that the photo-

sphere is an extremely hot solid or liquid mass; while the chromosphere consists chiefly of glowing hydrogen and helium rising in huge tongues of flame to a height of from five to ten thousand miles, or in the form of vast overhanging clouds, connected with the photosphere by columns or stems like colossal waterspouts, reaching from ten to one hundred and fifty thousand miles above the sun's surface. Sun spots, the spectroscope shows, are either relatively cooler portions of the sun's body, or matters in the sun's atmosphere which intercept and absorb the light from the photosphere. The corona, that haze which is seen to surround the sun like a halo during a total eclipse, is shown to be mainly due to sunlight reflected from the meteoric dust which surrounds the sun on all sides.

While the planets give the same spectra as sunlight, the spectra of the fixed stars are distinctly different from that of the sun, confirming the surmise that they do not shine by reflected sunlight, but are suns themselves, and self-luminous. But 'one star differeth from another in glory.' Though there are numerous lines in the light of the stars observed coincident with those in sunlight, showing that many substances which are present in our sun and on earth exist also in those other far-away suns, there are many lines which have no counterpart in the solar spectrum. This is to be attributed, however, not so much to a difference in their constitution as to a difference in their condition as regards temperature; and it is highly probable that all celestial bodies differ not at all in the stuff they are made of.

An exceedingly interesting application of the spectroscope has been its employment in a determination of the rate of recession or approach of the so-called 'fixed' stars. By the nature of light, the lines in the spectra of a luminous body are shifted from their normal position to one side or another, according as the body is receding from or approaching the observer. Using this delicate method of observing the motions of stars, it has been found that a number of these suns are approaching ours, while others are receding. The same method has been successfully employed in determining the movements of the clouds of hydrogen in the solar atmosphere; and filaments of glowing vapour have been observed to rush upwards to a height of two hundred thousand miles above the sun's surface, at the rate of one hundred and sixty-six miles per second. Other examples of this striking application of spectrum analysis has been the determination of the sun's rotation, the rotation of Jupiter, and the motion of Venus in the line of sight.

The answer given by the spectroscope in regard to the nature of nebulæ is that, while some of these curious shreds and patches of light are clusters of stars, others are masses of luminous gas, chiefly nitrogen and hydrogen. It has been unable, however, to give any decisive verdict as to the constitution of comets, meteors, and the aurora or 'northern lights,' the extreme faintness of the light in one instance, and the short duration in the other, rendering the investigation of these objects one of great difficulty. But further developments of the instrument, and more perfect methods of observing, will undoubtedly in the near future bring these strange phenomena well within the sphere of spectrum analysis.

## GEORDIE'S JUSTICE.

By A. M'F. Cleland.

### I.

Those who have ever had the misfortune to travel by road or by rail through the 'Black Country' will not have failed to notice here and there strange piles of buildings, surmounted by numerous squat chimneys belching forth rolling clouds of thick smoke. At the base of each chimney stands an open furnace, dull-red in appearance when viewed in mid-day light—or what passes for such in those parts—but glowing with a brilliant brightness at night-time, and casting lurid beams athwart the murky atmosphere.

It has occasionally happened that a traveller has had the still greater misfortune to be detained, for a few minutes, opposite such a pile of buildings contiguous to the railway. He may have then observed numerous black figures, like imps in Purgatory, flitting about the mouths of the furnaces, snatching therefrom glowing masses of material that hissed and sparkled and sent shooting-stars of light far and wide, which morsels the imps forthwith conveyed to the maws of repulsive ogres standing near by. These would seize the fiery titbits in their revolving teeth, with horrid clangour, noise, and din, masticate them well and then expectorate them as plates or bars or rods of blue-gray iron, which would be speedily carried away and deposited in assorted heaps in various parts of the yard, where they would cause the surrounding air to vibrate for hours after.

It is such a factory, or rolling-mill, that is the scene of our story. The particular rolling-mill we are interested in had had for three months now a specially busy and profitable time. The firm had secured a large contract for plates and what not, required for some most important bridge-work in India, and all hands had been working nearly night and day for some weeks back. So anxious, indeed, were the Indian engineers to have the contract completed in time that they had promised the firm a premium of five hundred pounds if the order were executed by the date agreed upon. The manager of the mill in his turn had offered each man a bonus of two pounds, over and above the good wage he had been drawing since the order came in, if the firm should gain the premium. Loyalty, hard work, and united effort seemed as if they would win the day; the last week of the allotted time had been entered upon, and so far the work was not an hour behind.

Now in every body of men there are some malcontents and grumblers. And so surely as one drop of quicksilver runs into another, so does one disaffected man seek a second, and together they bemoan their hard fate.

In Top Lane Works, Blacktown, the mill in question, the disaffected ones had all amalgamated into one gang, that in charge of No. 4 Train. Each gang numbered five men, and in the one specially attached to No. 4 Train were Bob Rowe and Sam Tappit, with three others, all grumblers more or less.

What were the primary causes, real or imaginary, of their disaffection it would have been useless to inquire. Some men are born grumblers. Perhaps it originated with the newly-appointed manager, who, as Sam Tappit said, 'was a sight too tight with them' in his ideas of discipline, and always insisted on getting a shilling's worth of work for a shilling's worth of wage.

This 'tightness' on the part of the manager would not, in itself, have led to anything serious, for, as a rule, a British employer of labour deals with his hands in a fair and equitable manner, and the members of No. 4 gang would, in time, have bowed to circumstances and done their allotted portion of work perforce, though grudgingly.

Unfortunately, before this good time arrived they made an ingenious attempt to swell the daily weight of iron passing through their hands, which formed the basis of their rate of pay, by treating it in an imaginative or fictitious manner. Their hypothetical multiplications and additions being detected caused a loss of a week's wage, and likewise made them the laughing-stock of the whole mill. Then they felt they had a grievance.

Now when the British workman has a grievance—writ large, in capital letters—he does not stick at trifles. The members of No. 4 gang smarted under the daily ridicule they were subjected to, and to such a height had the tide of their ill-humour risen that it threatened to swamp their loyalty to the firm and their fellow-workmen. So little pleased were they, apparently, with the good and regular wage they had been drawing for so long a period, with the exception of that one unfortunate week, that they were actually casting about for means whereby they might prevent the punctual completion of the contract.

They would thus be able to spite the firm, the manager, and the men. The firm would forfeit the premium; the manager would lose a certain amount of credit; and the men would lose their bonuses. Of course, Bob and his friends would also lose their bonuses; but for that they did not care a button, so long as they could find a vent for their spleen.

At length a likely suggestion was made by Bob, eagerly taken up by Sam and the rest of the gang, and between them they had shortly concocted a nice little plot.

The plot suggested was simple enough as plots go. In all manufactories where there is much machinery, one man, one boy even, can work incalculable mischief if he be so minded. The only difficulty is to avoid detection at the time or discovery afterwards.

Now none of the precious members constituting No. 4 gang had any desire, or intention, to be detected if they could possibly avoid it. The employees at Top Lane Works were exceedingly democratic in their tendencies. They would be sure to take a perverted view of the proposed action of the malcontents, perhaps misunderstand their motives. The result, in case of discovery, would be one exceedingly painful to the feelings of Rowe, Tappit, and Company. Therefore it behoved them to be exceedingly cautious.

Each gang had attached to it a boy of thirteen to fifteen years of age, whose main duties were to look after the men's breakfast and dinner cans, and frequently, far too frequently in fact, to bring them huge bottles of freshly-drawn beer, the work of a rolling-mill being of an exceeding hot and dusty nature. He had also to be at work every morning half an hour before the men, in order to oil and clean the machine.

Now Bob's idea was for their boy, or 'nipper' as he was called, to place a piece of iron about the size of his fist among the cog-wheels of No. 4 train, as he was cleaning it, in such a position that on the first revolution of the rollers the wheels would break. The delay so caused—a couple of days at least—would lose the firm the premium. The plot was laid on Saturday, and was to be put into execution on the following Monday morning. The time allowed for the contract terminated on Tuesday at five in the afternoon; the work turned out from No. 4 train was the most important of all; if No. 4 broke down the premium was off. 'Bootiful,' cried Bob, giving his huge thigh a resounding smack. 'Tom-may!' he bellowed out; and at his cry, Tommy, 'nipper' in ordinary to No. 4, came running towards where the group composing the gang was standing.

Bob Rowe was the strongest, biggest, and most brutal man of any in the yard, where all were strong and big, and not a few, alas! brutal. Only too well did Tommy know him to be a gentleman who would not allow his 'nippers' to keep him waiting long. So he hurried up and stood in the midst of the group of five swarthy, bare-armed, leathern-aproned men, gazing inquiringly from one face to another.

'Tommy, lad,' said Sam Tappit, 'you're fillin' out fine. You'll soon have a gang o' your own, boy.'

Sam Tappit was a man whose sole aim in life was to get as much 'brass' as possible with as little effort as might be. The long spell of hard work under the present contract had disgusted him, more especially as Geordie Donce, the foreman, had kept a sharp eye on No. 4 gang, and gave them no chance for idling.

'Here, nipper, here's a tanner for you,' said another of the five, pitching a sixpenny-piece across to Tommy; 'that old grannie o' yourn don't give you many such, I reckon.'

Now Tommy was only fifteen years old, and not over big at that. He had never attended either day, night, or Sunday school, nor had he ever entered a church. His clothes were somewhat tattered and excessively grimy. Tommy's

face, too, looked as if it would benefit by an introduction to Mistress Soap and her children, Water and Towel. And yet, beneath the grime, an acute observer might have seen somewhat of an angel, although by no means an orthodox one.

As before stated, Tommy had never yet seen the inside of a place of worship. His mother had died when he was a three-months' baby. Shortly after his father was killed, scalded by molten iron, through an accident at a foundry in another part of the town. So Tommy's life had all along been a hard one, spent with his sole relation, his grannie, who, poor body, drew a precarious income. A little charing and an occasional job as caretaker in some empty house, plus Tommy's weekly wage—five shillings—had to keep them both. Her ideas on matters of worship were somewhat in want of repair.

'No, lad,' she would say, 'we'se can't go to churches or chapelses; such isn't for the likes o' us. 'Tis only gentlefolks go there.'

There was no bitterness in this. It was to her one of the facts of life she accepted, without troubling to understand it, just as she accepted her general poverty and hard lot.

'But, Tommy,' she would continue, laying her wrinkled hand on his shoulder, and bringing her dim eyes to bear on his, 'them as does go to churches and such like, and them as mus'n't go, er all to do the same thing; they're all got to act square.'

And that was all Tommy's theology and dogma, all his creed and articles of belief: to act square, which he understood to mean that he was never to scow or idle, or scamp his work; and never fight, unless with a lad of his own size or bigger. Swear he did hourly, and likewise loved ratting and dog-fighting, and on rare occasions a pull at the men's beer; but lie or steal he would not.

Had you asked him to repeat the eighth commandment he would have stared at you blankly, and perhaps with some suspicion that you were 'takin' 'im out for a holiday!' But had you asked him why he did not steal, he would instantly have replied, 'cos it ain't square.'

There was also a good bit of native shrewdness in his character, so that his suspicions were at once aroused by Sam's compliments and the unexpected and most unusual offer of a sixpence. He kept his fists in his breeches' pockets, and shifted about his heavy clogs, between the tops of which and the bottoms of his rather skimpy trousers his grimy sockless shanks appeared.

'Wot d'yer want?' he asked shortly, looking at them from under his shaggy red hair.

Sam Tappit explained the plot in detail, and told him how and when they expected him to carry out his part of it.

'Why, yow'd lose yer bonuses,' he exclaimed contemptuously.

'Bonus be hanged! What's a matter o' two quid?' burst out bully Bob, aiming a kick at the nipper, which Tommy nimbly avoided. 'Are yow goin' to do it or arn't yo?'

'No, I'll not,' said Tommy boldly; 'it's a —— shame.'

Thereupon he was threatened with fearful penalties if he refused. He should, they told him, be kicked and cuffed, though, in common with all the nippers, he had plenty of that every day. He should be made to sit on hot bars; he should work double time in front of the furnaces; and in short, as Mr Rowe put it with native elegance, 'they'd pull his —— soul out of his —— body' if he refused to do their bidding.

Then Tommy thought in his crafty little brain, if he should promise to do it on Monday morning and not keep his word, the machines would not be stopped again till Tuesday night at five, when he and all the yard hoped premium and bonuses would be gained. So at last he consented and was released, with threats of what would happen to him if he showed the white feather.

Monday morning came, and with it, promptly at six o'clock, came Bob and his gang, with Nipper Tommy. All was eager expectation in the gang; everything was ready; the men were at their posts, and Geordie Donce superintending.

Geordie, as he was always fond of telling visitors, had been with the firm forty years. He habitually wore a waistcoat that had once been of fur, but looked now like a piece of old leather. The first three fingers of his left hand were missing, having been cut off, nearly thirty years ago, as an act of revengeful spite on the part of a fellow-worker. 'But we squared matters,' Geordie would say, with a savage grind of his teeth, 'we settled up all reet;' and looking at the stern old man, with his short, thick crop of iron-gray hair, keen blue eyes, and straight-cut mouth and thin lips, one felt sure that the balance of that account would be on his side.

Shortly after six all the machines, No. 4 included, began anew their weekly grind. Round went the rollers Bob and his men were so interested in with never a hitch. To Geordie's surprise the men stopped and gaped and looked so foolish that he called out to know if anything was wrong. Tommy grinned in spite of himself, whereupon Bob, in passing, aimed a blow at him with his fist. It missed the boy as his kick of Saturday had done, but the attempt was not unobserved by Geordie. Now Geordie had a good heart beneath that fur waistcoat, and always tried to stop wanton cruelty towards any of the boys, who in return gave him loyal service.

'Od rot ye, Bob; keep yer hands off the nipper; he's doin' nowt to ye.'

No nipper ever thought of taking liberties with 'Mister' Donce; such would have been followed by curses and peradventure by laying on of blows. But the life of a nipper in a busy iron manufacturing establishment is one that induces a preternatural degree of sharpness in those humble workers, and they were not slow to detect a heart which held a soft core beneath that old leathern waistcoat. A word now and then a little less gruff than usual, a half smile playing round the thin straight lips, or a kindly look in the keen blue eyes were sufficient for them; and as a consequence they were imbued with a spirit of loyalty to Geordie from their greasy caps to their iron-shod clogs.

He was about the dirtiest man in the whole yard. In fact, he was wont to say when some one might ask if he'd washed himself that week: 'No, lad, I've done wi'out soap fur twenty year, and I'll do wi'out it till I die; they can wesh me then if they like.'

Tommy quaked, however, at dinner-hour, and kept out of the way of Bob and his friends. In fact he did not seek their company all that day, nor the next. Nothing was said, to his great delight, and he fondly hoped the matter would pass over. Tuesday night came and the premium was won, with great rejoicings on the part of all the men. Wednesday and the rest of the week passed, and still nothing was mentioned by either Bob Rowe or Sam Tappit. Saturday came round in course, and Tommy was making his way across the shed on his way home, happy, and with his five shillings in his pocket, when he heard a heavy tread behind him and felt a heavy hand laid on his shoulder, whilst the deep voice of Sam growled in his ear:

'Nipper, yo're wanted.'

With the heavy hand still on his shoulders, Tommy was led to the end of the shed, and there found the rest of the gang assembled. He was placed in the midst; and, looking first at one brutal face and then another, wondered with fear what they would want him to do this time.

'Well, nipper,' said Bob, 'yo thought yo'd diddle us, did yo? Blame me, yo'll find Monday mornin's work was the worst yo ever did.'

Tommy set his teeth, whilst his heart beat quick and fast. Plainly they meant business now.

'We're not goin' to be hard on yo', Tommy; but yer owe it to us to do summat to make up for the shabby trick yo played us.'

This was from another of the gang, whose heart was not quite so hard as those of the others, and who was inclined to be lenient.

'Yes, by G——,' burst out Bob, 'and he'd better pay up soon, too.'

They then told him that, in order to show them that he was sorry for the fraud he had practised on them, and in order to teach him to obey orders in future, he was to take the earliest opportunity of poisoning the 'gaffer's nag.'

Poor Tommy; this was touching him in a very tender place indeed.

Next to his mill, the manager loved his noble brown mare that bore him proudly from his home to the works, and back again from the works to his home, regularly every morning and evening. During the day she was stabled at the works, and condescended to munch at the hay and oats provided for her, excellent of their kind, but with surroundings such as she disapproved of strongly.

Often in the dinner-hour Tommy would steal into the shed that formed her stable, and gently stroke her soft glossy sides, and she would rattle her chain and turn her beautiful neck round and gaze at him with soft eyes. Then he would rub her velvety nose, and she would bend one clear-cut ear towards him and dilate her moist red nostrils, and even take white oats out of his grimy hand. So that a strange and curious affection had sprung up between these two creatures: the human, ragged and ill-fed; the brute, waited on by two men and a boy, warmly housed, never hungry.

Tears started to Tommy's eyes, and ran in brown channels down his dirty cheeks, as he begged and implored the hard men around him to ask him to do anything rather than that. But no; the more he begged the more obdurate they became. Sam produced a poisoned ball, coated with sugar, which he said Tommy was to give the mare on Monday morning.

No: the boy could not do it, let the consequences be what they might. But when they told him that, if he refused, they would tie him to a plate and put him through one of the mills, his courage nearly failed him. True, he did not think they would actually kill him, but many a boy had been maimed for life by such brutal men as those he had to deal with. One boy he knew had had all his hair burnt off by a man 'in joke' bringing a red-hot bar close to it; and others he had heard of who had suffered, some to a greater, some to a less degree. Still he could not kill that beautiful creature, who always seemed to be expecting him every day he entered the stable.

'Come along then,' said Sam, 'put him through.'

They seized him and strapped him down on a piece of iron plate, stretching his left arm along the plate above his head and binding the other to his side. Then, carrying the plate to one of the machines standing behind a great heap of bars, they placed it on the table in front, whilst Sam went to the starting lever and Bob took hold of the plate and pushed it up to the rollers. They really intended then to put him in. He should have to give way. But just then he heard the familiar 'trot, trot' of the mare, as she swept past the end of the shed which abutted on the high-road, bearing the manager on his way to his happy home and her respectable stable. No, a thousand times no; he would be killed himself rather than kill her.

'Will yo do it?' asked Bob, bringing his cruel eyes down close to the terror-stricken orbs of the courageous lad.

'No'—the reply came in a dry, thin voice.

'Set her goin', Sam,' Bob called out.

Sam pulled the lever and the roller slowly began to revolve. The plate was gradually dragged in till a space of but two feet intervened between the rollers and the outstretched fingers. They creaked on—the machine was an old-fashioned one and seldom used—and the distance became eighteen inches. Turning his head a little, Tommy could see the top roller moving down, the bottom one creeping up, and the distance now only a foot; nine inches; six inches.

'Yes, yes, I'll do it,' he sobbed; 'oh! take me off, take me off.'

'Stop her, Sam.'

Sam pulled at the lever. It would not move a hair's-breadth. The rollers still creaked on. Three inches only were left.

'Blast yo, stop her, stop her!' shouted Bob frantically; 'he'll be in, sure as death!'

The other men rushed to help Sam, but the lever would not budge, tug at it as they might.

One inch; half an inch! Then, as he felt the cold rollers touch his fingers, one piercing shriek reverberated through the length of the shed.

(*To be continued.*)

## THE DECLINE OF THE MALAGA RAISIN TRADE.

THESE are sad times for Malaga. Twenty years ago, five million boxes of dessert raisins were produced and shipped. Nowadays scarcely a tenth part of that quantity is grown, while the difficulty of sale is increasing yearly. The falling-off is due to two causes. First, the phylloxera, which wrought terrible havoc in the vineyards, and left the luxuriant hillsides bare. Possibly the trade might have recovered from this blow with the replanting of the vines, had not the Malagueños themselves chosen a delightfully characteristic way of fatally injuring it. Finding they received larger orders than they could cope with, they ingenuously commenced shipping short weight, and exported eighteen pounds of raisins in boxes which, by rights, should contain twenty-two, and eighteen pounds of more or less rubbish at that. Naturally, this state of things could not last. Malaga fruit got a bad name in the world's markets, and similar raisins began to be grown elsewhere. Denia (near Valencia), which previously only produced the common pudding raisin, took to growing the dessert fruit. Australia also started, and finally California became the worst competitor of all. So that, by the time the Malagueños came to the conclusion—based on experience, not on innate morality—that honesty is the best policy, they found that it was too late. The second reason for the decrease is the competition caused by the canning of fresh fruit in Canada and the United States. Raisins used to be nearly the only dessert obtainable in England in the early months of the year; now there are so many kinds of preserved fruit that they are all but forgotten.

For all that, the Malaga district is busy enough in autumn. Without describing the production of raisins too minutely, we may say that when the grapes — white, not black, as many people imagine—are ripe at the end of August or the beginning of September, they are spread out in the sun on the drying grounds (paseros) attached to each farm. The great question then is for them to get sufficient sunshine; if, as occasionally happens at that time of year, the sky is overcast, they have to be dried by means of ovens, to their very great detriment. Once sufficiently cured, they are packed in boxes, the loose raisins by themselves, the others according to the beauty and size of the bunches and the fruit. The finest are arranged in artificial bunches with the most exquisite skill, and a clever labourer can only prepare one or two of these boxes in a day. From the farms they are transported on donkeys to the town, and there stored in warehouses, whence they are sold to the merchants for shipment abroad. Perhaps the most curious fact connected with them is that, beyond the shippers, nobody appears to make a penny out of the fruit. The farmer grows his crop at a steady deficit, the warehouseman in town has generally advanced more money to the farmer than he ever gets back; while the dealer, be it in England, America, or on the Continent, simply buys raisins because his customers for more profitable articles expect him to keep them in stock against an occasional order.

As may be imagined, many farmers have already abandoned raisins in despair. A worthy Colonial, who came to Malaga with a view to learning something about their cultivation, and applying his knowledge in Australia, was thereby led to write a pamphlet, showing how fine an opening was offered to English farmers in Spain. Land and vines were to be had for a song. All they had to do was to go south, apply their knowledge and superior intelligence to raisin growing, and after a few years return to England with their fortunes made. The pamphlet was cordially received by Foreign Office officials as wise as its author, and was immediately published by Government. Fortunately, it attracted but little attention. Still, the writer is acquainted with one young Englishman who eagerly embraced the scheme, only to discover, on his arrival in Malaga, what every one there already knew — namely, that Spanish farmers understood more about raisins than he, the Englishman, would learn in a lifetime, and secondly, that wheat-growing in England meant a gold-mine compared to fruit-farming in Spain. So, wisely desisting from his project, he took to growing vegetables for the English market instead, and was rewarded by dropping scarcely half the money he would have lost had he gone in for raisins. This, considering the present state of agriculture in Spain, may be called a highly creditable result.

## UNSPOKEN.

AH, never doubt my love is true
That not in speech it flows,
For, dear, I cannot tell it you,
My heart no language knows,
And still can only yearn and ache
In silence, though it break.

But not by any speech is known
The hidden lore of deep and height;
The sea has nothing but a moan,
The dark is silent, and the light:
The grandest music needs no word
To make its meaning heard.

You dwell amidst my daily strife,
A thing apart, divine,
And all that's noblest in my life
Is incense at your shrine,
For every worthy deed I do
Is done for love of you.

A. ST JOHN ADCOCK.

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## IN DISTRESSFUL SPAIN.

He who has lately made Spain his play-ground cannot fail to have been sadly impressed, and to have reluctantly added to the list of the distressful countries of the world a land which yields to none in its wealth of romantic and historical associations, or in its own natural fertility and capabilities. Everybody's first visit to Spain is made in the spirit of realising a life-long dream. The most ordinarily impressionable nature becomes imprinted in childhood and youth with the association of Spain with sunshine, and song, and dance; with stately buildings and grand scenery, so that the shock is doubly severe when realisation presents the stately buildings and the sunshine, but little else. Perhaps the most striking impression, and that which disappoints the most, is the sadness of the Spanish people. We are taught to accept a stately gravity of demeanour as the proper characteristic of the Spanish grandee, but under such bright skies and in such a nature-blessed land one looks for cheerfulness amongst the people. But, making due allowance for the two causes which at the present moment are unnaturally depressing the heart of Spain—the burden of the miserable and seemingly endless war in Cuba, and the almost total ruin of every harvest but that of the vineyard by an unprecedented drought, we are assured that under the most hopeful circumstances the Spaniard is never thoroughly cheerful, and we had ample opportunities of observing that he takes his pleasure quite as sadly as the traditional Englishman.

If the unusual melancholy of the Spaniard of 1896 was the mere sternness of activity and energy in the work of remedy and reform, it might claim our respect; but as it accompanies listlessness, inertness, and hopelessness, it moves that pity which is closely allied to contempt. No sadder example does the world offer of the fallaciousness of trading upon tradition and faded prestige than does Spain offer at the present day. The Spaniard, be he grandee or peasant, is the proudest of men. There are scores of gentlemen bearing names renowned in the most glorious periods of Spanish history who are content to starve themselves in the attics of their ancestral homes rather than put their hands to work of any kind. How they live is a problem, but they appear regularly upon sunny afternoons on the places of fashionable resort, correctly attired to all outward appearance, although a near inspection reveals frayed linen, and a general buttoning up which suggests a mask for deficiencies beneath, comporting themselves with the most finished air of independent well-to-do-ness.

In Burgos, not many weeks back, the writer, prowling about the fine old mansions which were once the homes of the local nobility, but are now sadly fallen from their high estate, and are let out to cheap lodgers and petty tradesmen, was attracted by a peculiarly quaint and fine knocker on the majestic door, surmounted by a many-quartered coat of arms. Upon inquiry about the house, and if it was possible to see over it, the answer was that permission could only be obtained from the Count H——, naming one of the most historical families in Spain, who lived on the 'fourth floor back.' Respect, however, for the poor gentleman's feelings forbade me from passing through the majestic hall, now a mule stable, and up the stately, but shattered marble staircase to the regions above; and I was told that not only Burgos, but all the once famous old Spanish towns such as Toledo, Cordoba, Segovia, Valladolid, and Salamanca, were full of these fallen representatives of ancient families. The man of the people possesses equal pride, and treats you, if not with the condescension of a superior, with the ease of an equal; sells you a box of matches with the air of conferring a favour, and is to be addressed as '*Señor*.'

*Pan y Toros!* 'Bread and Bullfights.'

These three little words, scribbled upon many a Spanish wall, are full of significance at

the present time, and are a veritable sermon upon the condition, or rather upon the disposition of a large section of the people; for by them we are reminded of the desperate, heedless cry of the Roman people, when the Empire was in its last throes, for *Panis et Circenses!* Let it not be understood that one who writes simply from the point of view of a traveller would for a moment hint that the present condition of Spain is at all to be compared for hopelessness and helplessness with that of Rome, when the cry ran for Bread and the Games; yet, when a people, ground almost beyond endurance by taxation, paralysed by the incessant drain of a costly and inglorious war, and with little hope of help, at any rate for the present year, from a kindly Nature which has rarely refused help before, speaks words like these—and wall-scribblings are often the voice of the people—one secret of Spain's present unenviable condition is revealed.

'Bread and the Bulls!' With an empty exchequer, with a country-side burned to dust, despite Image processions and prayers for rain, with poverty and distress blatant on every side, the Sunday Bull Ring is always crowded. Starvation for to-day is preferable to being debarred from the two hours' luxury of a seat, even in the *Sol*—in the fierce glare of the afternoon sun—never mind after to-morrow! Never mind the importunate creditor, the landlord, and the tax-collector! Never mind the children crying round the empty larder! Are not Guerrita and Reverte the *espadas* of to-morrow's *Corrida;* and are they not to despatch half a dozen of the finest bulls of the most famous Andalusian *ganaderos.*

All over Spain, except at such centres of commerce as Barcelona, Bilbao, Malaga, and Cadiz, we see but too clearly the results of this national apathy and indifference to the future.

Nowhere in the world are there more magnificent historical monuments than in Spain. Nowhere in the world are magnificent historical monuments in such a condition of neglect and filth. Even the Alhambra at Granada is far from being kept as it should be; and if we excuse the tardiness in the progress of needful restoration and repair on the plea that a nation, sore-pressed to find money to pay its army, can hardly be expected to spare much for the execution of sentimental work, there is no reason why the halls, and chambers, and gardens of the most fascinating group of buildings in the world should not be kept ordinarily clean, especially when we remember that the city of Granada, annually visited by thousands of money-spending strangers, must be almost well-to-do, if not rich.

Cathedrals such as those at Toledo and Burgos, and the glorious mosque at Cordoba, are in the filthiest and most neglected condition. The dust of long years lies unstirred upon their matchless ironwork and their wood-carving; the marble pavements are discoloured with dirt; repairs seem to be never dreamed of; if a cornice or an ornament shows signs of decay, it remains until it falls, and lies when it falls; grass and weeds grow apace between the stones of the delightful old Moorish *patios* or courts, scaffoldings tottering from long existence, and crumbling walls remain to vex the eye and mar the scene; and yet—there are gold and silver, and a wealth of gorgeous vestments in the sacristies of which the value is incalculable.

It is when one sees Spain at such a time as the present, when the national vices of apathy and dilatoriness are rich in their most hurtful fruits, that the genius of the Moors stands forth in mighty pre-eminence. The fanatic hatred of the Christian for the Moslem accounts fairly enough for wholesale destruction or obliteration by alteration of such Moorish buildings as mosques and palaces, or even of private houses; but it cannot be adduced as a satisfactory reason for the wholesale neglect by Spaniards of the wonderful works of public utility with which the Moor covered the land. Without going so far as to say that the terrible results of the drought of this year might have been staved off altogether, it is quite certain that they might have been very appreciably minimised if Spain had only troubled, in times past and present, to keep in repair the irrigating system which the Moors left behind them. At any rate, it is historically true that very many of those vast, desolate, featureless, melancholy tracts of country, through which the Spanish trains creep on their weary way during long days and nights, were, under the Moorish rule, olive-gardens, vineyards, and cornfields. Remains of these irrigating works, of mills, of aqueducts, of canals, of storehouses, are to be seen everywhere. No hand is ever stirred to repair them, so that during the past spring, there has been a waste of superabundant water in such favoured places as Granada, whilst the country, for hundreds of miles around, has been turned to dust for lack of a proper distribution of the precious fluid. If to the student of the Past and the lover of the beautiful in Art it is distressing to note how the Spaniards have despoiled and defaced, where they have not utterly destroyed, it is sad for the ordinary traveller to see how wilfully the practical benefits bestowed on the land by the Moors have been allowed to fall into uselessness. One instance out of a score which we might quote will suffice. In Moorish Cordoba there were nine hundred public baths. In Spanish Cordoba there is not one.

So far we have dwelt upon the effects of Spanish inertness in the Spaniards themselves as are apparent to the eye of the ordinary traveller; let us now see how it affects the latter.

Spain has always been a land of beggars. Now, it would seem, beggars are more than a very strong minority in the population. Leisurely attention to the objects of interest is rendered a veritable penance by the importunities of all sorts and conditions of beggar men, women, and children at all times and at all places. The old-time beggar had generally something heart-touching to show in order to loosen purse-strings—he was blind, or maimed, or age-bowed, or fitted out in scanty rags. But the beggar of to-day is, as often as not, a decently clothed and well-fed individual. The mere appearance of a man is no guarantee of his respectability. If you are sketching, let us say, and one who is apparently a well-to-do-

tradesman or artisan takes a polite and intelligent interest in your work, you are affable with him, and perhaps encourage him to talk by asking questions and making remarks, but do not be surprised if, when you have completed your sketch and are raising your hat to wish him good-morning, he puts out his hand and asks a trifle of you for the love of God! Men beg with cigarettes between their lips, women with loaves of bread under their arms, children with their mouths so full that they can hardly articulate *cinco centimos*. In Seville and Toledo the plague is bad enough, but in Granada it is so virulent that it goes a long way toward driving visitors away from a city in which they would fain linger for some time. Yet the proud Spanish gentleman sees the poor foreign visitor thus waylaid, and pestered, and tormented, and feels not a spark of shame for his countrymen; and indeed would probably endorse the Spanish mendicant creed that he who gives is doing himself spiritual good exactly in the ratio that he is physically benefiting the recipient.

Again, extortion is rife, and the tipping system has developed into a positive curse, although for this we who tip must be held primarily responsible.

'My poor carabineers must live somehow: their pay is next to nothing!' replied a Cadiz custom-house official of position to a visitor, who had complained that after his luggage had actually passed examination, a carabineer had pounced on it, insisting upon it being re-examined. By which he clearly meant that all inconvenience and unpleasantness might have been avoided by the judicious outlay of a *peseta*.

The one consoling feature of the tipping plague in Spain is that the Spaniard is satisfied with a very little. The uniformed official whose counterpart at home would not condescend to accept a tip, gives a hearty *muches gracias* for a couple of reals—fivepence. One grand exception to a general rule, however, must be made. Priests in cathedrals, liveried officials in museums and show-places, railway officers—all look for tips, but the men of the civil guard—that fine, smart body of picked military police, without the existence of which, life and property in Spain would not be safe, are incorruptible. The extortion to which the visitor is exposed is principally practised by the hotel-keepers. Some sort of excuse perhaps may be made for the custom amongst Seville landlords of doubling their rates during Holy Week, and the annual four days' Fair; but why Granada, a long day's journey off, should follow suit, it is difficult to comprehend.

Hotels have much improved in Spain outside Madrid and Seville during the last few years, although very much remains to be done before strangers can be induced to remain in such towns as Burgos, Segovia, Salamanca and Valladolid for an hour longer than is absolutely necessary for the seeing of the sights there. But first-class rates are charged for what is nothing more than third-class accommodation, and often for what is very much worse. Two reasons explain this. First, the all-devouring Cuban war, which means heavy taxation upon all householders; Second, monopoly. In very few cities, except the great centres of business and pleasure, is there more than one hotel at which a civilised traveller can put up, and the owners of these hotels, knowing the fact, gather in their harvest. Trains in Spain usually start at unholy hours of the morning, and the hotel-landlords take advantage of this fact to carry out the national 'to-morrow' creed with adroitness. Guests who intend to leave by the four or six A.M. train, usually demand their bills over-night, but some excuse is invariably forthcoming which enables the landlord to present his bill the next morning when it is half dark, and the departing guest is but half awake, and the railway omnibus is at the door, and every minute is precious: the result being that the victim pays just what is put down, unless he chooses to argue the case and lose his train—as often as not the only one of the day.

A rule which should never be neglected, is to have your agreement for prices to be paid thoroughly understood beforehand. Generally it is advisable to write for rooms ahead, so that an answer in black and white is received which effectually checks the extortion which will assuredly be attempted.

That all these evils should exist to militate against the comfort of travelling in Spain is a thousand pities. A little energy, a little foresight, a little smothering of the national contempt for anybody who is not Spanish, would mean the opening up of a country second to none in point of human interest, however lacking it may be in natural beauty, to thousands of tourists who are justly deterred from making Spain a holiday ground by travellers' tales which are, in this case, but too true. Assuredly Spanish pride need not be affronted by imitating the examples of other European countries, which have realised that a very sensible national benefit accrues from offering every inducement for strangers with money, and ready to spend it, to come annually. There are places on the Spanish coasts which, with outlay and enterprise, would rival the famous Riviera resorts of which people are beginning to tire. There are pleasant cities and towns in Spain, which might be made the centres of foreign residential colonies.

As it is, positively no inducements are offered. The Spanish railway service, except the tri-weekly Sud-Express—is simply execrable. A journey of two hundred miles occupies an entire day, so slowly does the train creep along the single line of rails; and if the carriages are well enough, comfortable travelling in them is entirely nullified by the fact that smoking is allowed in every compartment but one or two in each train. As for the Spanish Post-office, and its Poste Restante arrangements, and its system of losing letters, and the utter indifference of its officials to complaints and reclamations—the less said about it the better.

Still, Spain will always fascinate the traveller. Indeed, by some enthusiasts for the old order of things everywhere but in their own immediate world, the very drawbacks we have enumerated make a recommendation for those who are weary of the new-fangled, luxurious science of modern travel. 'Sir,' said an American to the writer, 'I would not have a beggar the less in Spain. I've always read that beggars

were a feature of old Spain as well as of modern: I've come to see one country on God's earth where things are as they were, and Spain's the locality.' The next minute he was wildly cursing a horde of beggars who had sniffed him out, and declaring that the plague demanded Government interference.

Summing up. Spain is a charming holiday-land for hardy young men, for ladies who do not mind putting up with a certain amount of discomfort, and above all, for those travellers who are not pressed for time. But not yet for delicate ladies, much less for invalids.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER III.—I HELP THE KING.

In placing before you the circumstances which brought about the curious adventure which it is the purpose of this narrative to relate, my one dread is, that you may not see it in the light I intend, and that you may therefore set down the action as being too precipitate to be likely to influence a man of my admittedly peculiar temperament. If you *do* come to this conclusion I will forgive you. Indeed, I will go even further than that, and confess that you have every excuse for so thinking, for now that I come to look through what I have written, myself, I find that it impresses me in the same way to a very large extent. In reality, however, short as was our acquaintance with the curious individual who had constituted himself King of the Médangs by such romantic, though unorthodox means, we found ourselves, by the time we had met him a dozen times, regarding him with just that sort of friendliness we should feel for a person whom we had known all our lives long. Having told you this, it would seem trite to describe him as a man of extraordinary parts, for, to be plain with you, I have never met such another in the whole course of my experience.

During my first interview with him, as arranged at Lady Hammerton's 'At Home,' I was permitted an opportunity of studying his character more carefully than I had yet done. I found him diplomatic in his utterances, very reserved as to his own opinions, if possible a little too prone to look for interested motives in others, and yet with it all, if such an anomaly can be understood, generous and impetuous to the last degree. His territory, so I gathered, lay somewhere in the *hinterland* of Annam, a fertile region clearly capable, if his account could be relied on, of great developments. Of his earlier exploits in the country he said not a word, nor did he tell me any of his adventures connected with the usurpation of the throne. He spoke modestly of his own achievements, but referred with gratitude to the help he had received from the white men he had imported later on. As far as I could gather, the chief thorns in his side were the Jesuit priests who, though they had welcomed him as king in the beginning, and had derived considerable benefit from his rule, seemed determined to leave no stone unturned to harass and annoy him. He also accused them of trafficking with his neighbours the French, whose Government you must understand had tacitly recognised him as monarch of the country. For nearly two hours we sat in the balcony of his house talking and looking down on the canal, and during every minute of that time I seemed to be coming nearer and nearer to a proper understanding of the man. I may tell you that the fascination he had exercised over me since I had first set eyes on him had in no way abated, and I was now doing my utmost to strengthen it by a sincere admiration. When I rose to go, he held out his hand.

'Good-bye, my lord,' he said. 'I have to thank you for your call. I have enjoyed my conversation with you immensely.' Then, as if an afterthought had struck him, he added, 'I trust your sister, Lady Olivia, is quite well?'

'Thank you, she is in the best of health,' I answered. 'She has met some English acquaintances this afternoon, and is showing them the sights of Venice. I think my sister informed me that your Majesty intended to obtain an opinion from a doctor here regarding your own health?'

'I am to see him on Monday next,' he answered, with a look in his eyes that at the time I did not understand; 'then I shall know my fate. I find that it takes all the fortitude one possesses to meet it bravely. When one is playing for such high stakes, it seems so hard to have to run the risk of losing all through ill-health, does it not?'

'But perhaps there is nothing really wrong with you. Some little disorder which will soon be set right. We must pray for you, and hope for the best.'

'I should be grateful for your prayers,' he answered, with that literal seriousness which I soon discovered was characteristic of the man. 'God knows I want to live. I have so much work before me. When do you leave Venice; have you decided yet?'

'We have made up our minds to remain for a week longer,' I replied. 'I am having some improvements made on board my yacht, and she will not be ready before that time.'

'Then I trust I may be able to persuade you to give me the pleasure of your company again. Your society is both pleasant and profitable to me.'

'Your Majesty honours me, I am sure,' I answered. 'I shall place myself at your disposal whenever you care to see me. Good-bye.'

We shook hands, and I went down-stairs.

As De Trailles had said, the owner of the house, whoever or whatever he or she may have been, furnished and managed it superbly while the king was in it. A more beautiful residence could not have been desired, and as I made my way down the stairs, and saw the crowd of lackeys spring to attention in the hall, I could only use the old expression familiar to our childhood, and say that it was a palace 'fit for a king.' I felt, however, that I would have given something to have known the secret of it all.

When I reached the Hotel Galaghetti, I found

Olivia already returned from her excursion. She inquired after the king's health, and I noticed that when she spoke of him, there was a different look upon her face than it had worn that day when we met him for the first time in the church of S. Rocco. And yet Olivia has not the reputation of being, by any manner of means, a woman easily impressed.

'You seem to be very much interested in the King of the Médangs, Olivia,' I said, with a smile, after I had described my visit.

'Could one help being so when one had once met him?' she answered. 'It irritates me now to think that I ever scoffed at him. When do you expect to hear from Lord Blenkinson?'

'On Monday, I hope.'

'You will let me know what he says, will you not?'

'I think I may very safely promise to do that,' I answered. Then, as if on an afterthought, I turned to her and took her hand. 'Olivia,' I said, 'I hope, my dear, you will forgive me for what I am about to say—but—but—well, to put it bluntly, you know the extraordinary fascination this man exercises over people. There is no fear of'——?

'Of my falling in love with him, I suppose you are going to say,' she cried, her cheeks flaming. 'You need not exercise yourself on that score. I am not a schoolgirl that I should fall in love with every man with whom I am brought in contact.'

'I should be miserable if I thought I had offended you, dear,' I said, as I placed my arm round her waist. 'I had no other intention than to warn you. For there can be no denying the fact, the man is undeniably handsome; he has also just that savour of romance about him that appeals with such irresistible force to the majority of women.'

'Thank you,' she answered, a little haughtily. 'I hope you will not include me in the category. His Majesty is most charming, I admit, still I fancy I have met a sufficiency of charming men to be able to steel my heart against his fascinations. It is hard upon a woman that she cannot sympathise with a man who has set his heart upon great deeds, without its being supposed that she must necessarily fall in love with him. I cannot help thinking you are unjust, Instow.'

With this Parthian shot, she rose from her chair, and left the room. That I had offended her I had no doubt, and that I was sorry I had done so was equally certain, but at the same time, I could not help congratulating myself, should there have been anything of the sort in trail, on my astuteness in having warned her in time. I loved my sister, and I am also immensely proud of her; and, however romantic and fascinating the King of the Médangs might prove, I had no desire that he should spoil her life for her.

The thought that Olivia's heart might prove susceptible to His Majesty's influence had hitherto been the one thing which had prevented me from cultivating his acquaintance as thoroughly as I should like to have done. Now, however, that I was reassured on that point, I resolved to avail myself, as far as was possible, of all the opportunities which presented themselves of seeing him. There was not the slightest difficulty in this, and by the time Blenkinson's letter arrived, which was on the Tuesday following the conversation above narrated, I began to think I was as familiar with his character as one man could well be with another's. The letter ran as follows:

'The Foreign Office, 12*th March* 18—.

'Dear Instow—My hearty thanks are due to you for your letter of Wednesday last. I should have replied to it sooner had I been able to lay my hand at once upon the papers connected with the matter to which you refer. You ask me what information I can give you regarding one Marie David de Méraut, who styles himself King of the Médangs. The following is, I imagine, all that is generally known concerning that romantic, and, if a Foreign Minister may so far commit himself, very interesting personage.

'From what is known of him, it is supposed that Méraut made his first appearance in the East, during the years 1880 and 1881, in the French Colony of Tonquin, where he saw service in guerilla warfare against the Chinese pirates that abound along the coast. In 1883 he left the French, and joined the Dutch, fought against the Atchinese, and proved himself made of such good metal that he was entrusted with the command of a regiment employed on special duty. In 1885 he turned up in Hong-kong, where he remained for a week, and then vanished in the direction of Japan, staying there six months or thereabouts, eventually returning to Tonquin on some mysterious errand, the exact importance of which was by no means understood then. Eighteen months later, however, it was announced that he had invaded a country at the back of Annam, inhabited by a tribe called the Médangs, and had appointed himself Regent for the imbecile king, then upon the throne. Early in 1888 we were officially informed that he had declared himself king, with the full and free consent of the people; had signed treaties with the adjoining tribes, was fast developing the country, and more extraordinary still, by the exercise of almost superhuman impudence and diplomacy, had induced his big neighbour, France, to accept him at his own valuation. Since then it is understood he has proved himself a beneficent ruler; the country has made wonderful progress, its industries are being developed in every direction, and if only the present ruler remains at the head of affairs, which is always a matter of chance in those regions, and the French do not see fit to change their present line of action as far as he is concerned, there is no saying what his future may not be. One glance at the map will show you that beyond a contingent interest in the welfare of Siam, England has no share in the question, France, China, and Siam being the only nations brought into close contact with the Médangs. For this reason, we neither countenance nor oppose him. I trust my information may be of service to you. If I can help you in any other way, you know how gladly I will do so. With kind regards to Lady Olivia and yourself, believe me, my dear Instow, always cordially yours, Blenkinson.'

I read the letter carefully through, and then placed it in my pocket. The man's career, as here set forth, agreed very well with what I had been told. I felt glad that there was nothing in it of which any one could feel ashamed. His personality had interested me more than anything had done for years past; and I should have been sorry indeed had I found him out in anything discreditable. When I was with him I seemed to partake of his enthusiasm, to catch a glimpse of the object of his life, and to feel rising up in my heart the thrill of the most deadly of all ambitions, that of throne creating.

When Olivia came down to breakfast, I showed her the letter I had received. She read it in silence, and after she had finished it, handed it back to me. I waited for her to speak, but it was some moments before she did so.

'If I were His Majesty, I think I should be a very proud man,' she said, with a sparkle in her eye that I could not help noticing. 'How many kings can claim to have accomplished so much in so short a time?'

'If what Blenkinson says is true, and I have no reason to suppose it is not, he is a wonderful man indeed,' I answered; and then changed the subject by inquiring what she intended doing with herself that morning. She replied that she had arranged to call upon Lady Hammerton at eleven, in order to go shopping with her. I was glad of this, for I wanted to be alone to write some letters, and to execute some business at the English Consulate.

While she was speaking, a servant approached us. He informed me that a person of the name of Wells was in the hall, and desired to speak to me.

'Wells? Then the yacht has arrived,' I said, turning to Olivia. 'Now we must make up our minds when we shall leave Venice.'

I thought that Olivia's face suddenly turned a little pale, but for several reasons I did not comment on it. I rather let her go to her room, and went out into the hall to find my skipper. He informed me that the repairs I had authorised to be made in the yacht had been effected sooner than he expected, and that everything was now in readiness for the voyage to the East, whenever I was prepared to start. I told him I would communicate with him later on in the day, and then returned to my daily paper.

It was nearly half-past eleven by the time Olivia was ready to go out. I hailed a gondola for her, and put her into it, and then set off on my own concerns. On reaching Sir John's residence, she went up the steps, and inquired from the butler if Lady Hammerton were at home.

'Her ladyship is in, my lady,' answered the man, 'but I fear she cannot see you. Her ladyship, I regret to say, is indisposed to-day, and is confined to her bed.'

'I am exceedingly sorry to hear it,' said Olivia. 'Will you please give her my love and inform her that I called.'

'I will be sure to do so, my lady,' replied the man; and Olivia was turning to go down the steps to her gondola again, when she became aware of a man who had just disembarked, and was coming up. One glance told her that it was the King of the Médangs. He raised his hat, and as he did so, Olivia noticed how haggard and worn his face had grown.

'Good-morning, Lady Olivia,' he said. 'Have you been calling upon Lady Hammerton?'

'I was going shopping with her this morning,' Olivia replied, 'but I have just been informed that she is not well, and is unable to leave her room to-day. I am the more sorry as I fear it may be the last chance I shall have of seeing her.'

'Indeed. Are you then contemplating leaving Venice so soon?'

'We may leave at any moment now,' she answered. 'The yacht arrived this morning, and I fancy my brother is eager to be off.'

The King was silent for a few moments. Then he said, very slowly:

'I am sorry to hear that you are going. It seems my fate to make new friends only to lose them again as quickly. I wonder if you would dismiss your gondola, and permit me to walk back with you to your hotel? You were kind enough last week to say that you would like to hear my doctor's report. I have received it to-day.'

She looked up at him and coloured a little as she acceded to his request. He accordingly dismissed both gondolas, and returning to my sister's side, escorted her down the river towards the Rialto Bridge.

'And what has your doctor told you?' asked Olivia, as they walked along. 'I hope he has relieved you of some of your anxiety.'

'He *has* relieved me of my anxiety, I must confess,' replied the other with a grim smile. 'But hardly in the way I understand you to mean. I have no longer the dread uncertainty hanging over me, for I know my fate!'

She hesitated a little before she put her next question.

'And what has he told you?'

'Ah! can you not guess?' he asked. 'The sum total of his report is that under ordinary circumstances I have not two years to live.'

Olivia uttered a little cry of horror. She could hardly believe that she heard aright. Apart from his thin face and large sunken eyes, the man looked strong and well enough. Seeing her consternation, he was quick to express his sorrow.

'I should not have told you so abruptly,' he said. 'It was wrong of me, and I ask your pardon. In the presence of one's own misfortune, one forgets to think of others. Can you forgive me?'

'There is nothing to forgive,' she answered. 'But oh, I cannot believe that it is as bad as you say. Surely you must have misunderstood what was said to you. There are other doctors in Europe. See them. Try Paris—try London—try Berlin. Seek the cleverest men; they may tell you differently.'

He only shook his head.

'I have seen so many now,' he said, 'and though they differ in one or two minor details, they agree in the main essentials. No, Lady Olivia, I know the bitter truth at last. Hard as he has worked, terribly as he has toiled, I fear Marie the First's reign is nearly at an

end. Another two years, and the kingdom I have devoted my life to building up, will fall again to the ground like a house of cards. I have been ploughing in sand, that is all.'

She saw that he was quite unstrung, and with quick womanly tact, endeavoured to divert his thoughts into another channel. She was too artistic, however, to do so by changing the subject altogether.

'I suppose in this case you will soon be thinking of returning to your country?' she said.

'God knows,' he answered. 'Now that I have learned the truth, I hardly know whether I shall ever go back. What can I do there?'

'But you *must* go back,' she cried, pressing her advantage. 'The country requires you more than ever.'

'The country will soon have to do without me altogether,' he replied. 'But there, Lady Olivia, I must not talk to you any more about my wretched self, or you will set me down as a coward. You do not think I have proved myself one so far, do you?'

'I shall never think you a coward,' she answered. 'Have I not heard your story?'

She could scarcely have paid him a more delicate compliment, and it was evident he appreciated it at its full value.

## OUR IMPORTED VEGETABLES.

By R. Hedger Wallace.

Is this subject of any importance? some may ask, for the import of fruit and vegetables must be small on account of their perishable nature! When in reply it is pointed out that we pay away over *one hundred and sixty-six thousand pounds sterling weekly* for fruit and vegetables, as was done in 1895, it is surely of considerable importance, and that a little inquiry into the subject will not be misspent. In 1895 was spent, under this head, altogether over 8½ millions, and in 1894 over 9 millons sterling, the reduction last year being due to our smaller importations of apples, cherries, plums, and pears. From what countries do we draw our supplies? In our endeavour to answer this interesting question we will at first restrict ourselves to three items in our trade and navigation returns — to the imports of raw onions, potatoes, and unenumerated raw vegetables, under which head are included peas, French beans, cauliflowers, spinach, beetroot, radishes, turnips, and cucumbers. As regards onions, Egypt, Spain, and Holland send us over a million bushels each. France sends over half a million bushels, and Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Turkey, and the United States send us smaller quantities. From Malta we get about 50,000 bushels, and from other British possessions about 3000 bushels. When we turn to potatoes, the Channel Islands lead the way by exporting hither about 57,000 tons, followed by France with 45,000 tons. We also import from Holland, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Canary Islands, Malta, and Spain in quantities varying from 13,000 tons to 700 tons. Turning now to the figures of raw, unenumerated vegetables, we find that we are indebted to most of the chief countries of Europe for our supplies.

The market for imported fruit and vegetables is in London, even such a town as Glasgow drawing a large proportion of its supplies from the metropolis. We are apt to think there is only one market in London, the well-known Covent Garden, but in reality there are three. Covent Garden is the best emporium for luxuries and rarities; but Spitalfields is in some respects the most important of the London markets, and is amply supplied with the plainer kinds of green food, immense quantities of potatoes, peas, cabbage, and every conceivable vegetable finding their way hither. Similar to Spitalfields is the 'Borough' market on the south side of the Thames, and there is also a small market at Farringdon Road. Covent Garden is held under a charter granted in 1661 by Charles II., and the same monarch granted a charter for Spitalfields in 1682. The 'Borough' market is established by virtue of a charter granted by Edward VI. These markets deal in gigantic quantities; it is as easy to buy in them 20 tons of grapes or tomatoes as 100 tons of potatoes. The wholesale fruit and vegetable markets of London are exceptional in their resources; it is stated that in no other country in the world is the accommodation so ample, and that nowhere are supplies dealt with and handled on such an extensive scale. It is interesting to note how the foreign trade in vegetables and fruit seems to be in Hebrew hands, and this applies not only to the auctioneers and salesmen in Covent Garden, but to large dealers in London and other towns, even as far north as Glasgow.

That the supplies of foreign produce compete with the early produce of our farmers and market gardeners cannot be gainsaid. Our own farmers compete with market gardeners as regards greens and cabbages, with this advantage that when the market is glutted they can feed their stock with the green stuff. A few farmers also who are favourably situated as regards accessibility to a good steady market, grow for the vegetable market peas, beans, turnips, and early potatoes. But what our market gardeners feel in this competition with foreign produce is that the fancy prices given for early produce goes into the foreigners' pockets, as their early vegetables and salads are now imported some weeks before those grown in England are ready for market. Among the expensive dainties obtainable in London this year in February were asparagus, new green peas (from France), French beans, and the pale greenish haricots, called flageolets. Early turnips, carrots, peas, and French beans come from France, the Canary Islands, Madeira, and Algeria long before the earliest crops are ready here. Lettuces are imported in large quantities from France and the Canary Islands as early as January. In France, crops of lettuce and endive are systematically raised in succession, but similar methods, as far as we are aware, are not attempted here. Along with their lettuce the French send us a somewhat ungainly bulbous root called celeriac which West-end *chefs* use in soup, when celery is not to be had, seeing that it has the same flavour. Bona

fide market gardeners at one time looked upon celery as a very paying crop; now it is grown by farmers especially upon sewage farms, and markets are over supplied. Large quantities are grown in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. Cucumbers are now imported so largely from Holland, and are usually so plentiful and cheap, that most market gardeners have ceased to grow them. A large quantity of cucumbers are sold to go to Lancashire and Yorkshire, for towns like Leeds and Bradford. Our own growers send their cucumbers to Germany, and this trade, which is on the increase, is due to the care taken in grading and packing, and using a suitable and uniform package. From Holland, also, large importations of beetroot and red cabbage for pickling are made. The consumption of table beetroot has increased enormously, and hundreds of tons are used in the manufacture of high-class dog-biscuits, as it improves the food, and allays the heating of the animal's skin. This is not mangel-wurzel or Suffolk beet, but table beet, which is more tender and of superior texture. As the consumption of table beet has increased, the sale of Jerusalem artichokes has declined. It is now an unfashionable tuber, and few retailers will venture to stock it. Radishes, a profitable crop, are now imported in large quantities from February to April from Paris, St Malo, and the Channel Islands, completely forestalling the English produce. Asparagus also produced a considerable profit, but the importations from Toulouse, Dijon, Paris, and parts of Spain, which begins in January, and continues till the English asparagus is ready, has rendered the crop less profitable.

Asparagus, packed carefully in fresh grass, is one of the vegetables which lends itself well to locomotion, and travels as easily from Brittany as from Twickenham or Isleworth. Again, in severe winters when English savoys and broccoli have succumbed, Italy and Algiers send us cauliflowers, but on account of long carriage they are costly. This year, in January and February, few Italian cauliflowers reached this country, and, owing to the mildness of the winter, Brittany cauliflowers, which are splendid specimens, ousted the smaller southern cauliflowers from popular favour, while a large proportion of our supply came from Cornwall.

Perhaps some idea will be gained of our foreign importations if we simply note the fruits and vegetables offered for sale in London one day this year, the second of April, for example. The unenumerated vegetables came from Holland, France, Belgium, Bristol, West Indies, Italy, Germany, Mauritius, and the United States; onions from Germany, Holland, Egypt, France, Belgium, and Spain; garlic from Spain; tomatoes from Italy, France, Spain, and the Canaries; and potatoes from Malta, Germany, France, Belgium, and the Canaries. As regards fruit, there were lemons from Spain, France, and Italy; oranges from Asiatic Turkey, Spain, and France; bananas from Madeira and the Canaries; pine-apple from St Michael's and Singapore; grapes from the Cape and Guernsey; almonds from Teneriffe, Portugal, Spain, and Italy; walnuts from France; figs from Italy; green figs from Guernsey; apples from Canada and Tasmania; cocoa-nuts from Ceylon and the East and West Indies; ginger from Hong-kong and Japan; olives from France; rasp pulp from Melbourne: peanuts from the States and Japan; and small nuts from Germany, France, Spain, and Asiatic Turkey.

Let us carry our inquiry a step further. We have scanned the shipping list for arrivals at nine of our seaports, and find that at the same date—on April second—there were vessels at these ports with flowers, fruit, and vegetables from the following sources. At Harwich, from Rotterdam, with cut flowers, flower roots, onions, grass seed, and vegetables; from Antwerp with fruit, new potatoes, apples, clover-seed, and vegetables; and from Hamburg with potatoes and vegetables. At Folkestone, from Boulogne, there were packages of new potatoes, cut flowers, plants, vegetables, and onions. At Newhaven, from Dieppe, were landed packages of apples, plants, new potatoes, vegetables, oranges, cut flowers, fruit, clover-seed, and onions; from St Nazaire, apples, plants, and vegetables; and from Caen, apples, plants, dried fruit, trees, and onions. At Dover, from Calais, there were packages of cut flowers, vegetables, fruit, plants and dates; and from Ostend, cut flowers. At Bristol there were onions from Valencia and Boulogne, vegetables from Amsterdam, potatoes from Hamburg, and oranges from Castellon. At Hull were landed packages of onions, vegetables, cut flowers, cabbages, and apples from Rotterdam; vegetables, cut flowers, onions, and cut fruit from Boulogne; oranges and onions from Valencia; flowers from Amsterdam; almonds from Bari; nuts, oranges, and lemons from Messina, and fruit from Palermo. At Southampton, there were from Jersey, vegetables, cut flowers, new potatoes, figs, and grapes; from Guernsey, vegetables, new potatoes, cut flowers, green figs, and new grapes; from Cape Town, tomatoes, grapes, and pears; from Madeira, bananas and French beans; from Rotterdam, onions, plants, and beans; from St Malo, vegetables; from Pernambuco, plants; from Honfleur, cut flowers, spring cabbages, broccoli, apples, onions, clover, and grass seed; from Havre, vegetables and plants; from Cherbourg, broccoli and spring cabbages; from Tréguier, potatoes; from New York, oranges, apples, and bananas; from Granville, fruit; and from Dominica, limes. At Liverpool were landed oranges from Burriana, Smyrna, Bordeaux, Castellon, and Oporto; onions from Smyrna and Oporto; apples from St Nazaire, St John (N.B.), Boston, Portland (Maine), Halifax, and New York; vegetables from Amsterdam; peas from Hamburg; nuts from New York; potatoes from Portland (Maine); and prunes, plums, tomatoes, walnuts, and mushrooms from Bordeaux. Last of all, at London, there were cut flowers, prunes, monkey nuts, oranges, new potatoes, walnuts, orchids, pine-apples, plums, tomatoes, onions, bananas, almonds, pistachios, cabbages, apricots, garlic, cut fruit, lemons, and herbs. Among the various ports of origin for some of these consignments are Flushing, Bordeaux, Singapore, New York, Tréport, Teneriffe, Ostend, Rotterdam, Las Palmas, Madeira, Naples, Messina, Palermo, Boulogne, Valencia, Havre,

Amsterdam, Alexandria, Gibraltar, and Lisbon. The imports of fruits and vegetables to Manchester by the Ship Canal, in 1895, were 22,000 tons of oranges, 3400 tons of potatoes, 700 tons of lemons, 200 tons of apples, 200 tons of pomegranates, 500 tons of tomatoes, 100 tons of melons, 160 tons of grapes, 13,400 tons of onions, and 5200 tons of dried fruit.

There are two vegetables which call for special attention—namely, potatoes and onions. As regards potatoes, the British-grown tuber holds its own. During the past twenty-five years, the character of the potato trade has undergone a great and significant change, and the volume of imported potatoes has decreased considerably. For the three years ending 1875, the average annual importation was 268,157 tons. For the three years ending 1895, the annual average importation was 154,835 tons.

As we write, the current price for potatoes is £1 per ton, and we know farmers in Lincolnshire who will be glad to get 10s. per ton, and be clear of their stock. Yet in the poor districts of London, potatoes are retailed by the shopkeepers and costermongers at the rate of 4 lb. for 2d., which amounts to £4, 5s. per ton for inferior and small potatoes, the best kinds of which are retailed in the West End to private families, hotels, and large firms of caterers at prices that give £6 per ton. The importation of German potatoes has greatly declined, yet some years ago the German redskins held a high place in the market. The Belgian kidney used to be the very best potato in the market during September, now it has no longer a place in the market reports for that month. The growing of early varieties of potatoes was formerly an important source of profit to the British market gardener, but it is not so now, owing to the steady supply from the south of Europe. The arrivals of new potatoes commence about Christmas-time and continue in increasing quantities till May, when the Channel Islands' season begins, and then they carry on the importation till August.

When we turn to onions, we find there has latterly been a most extraordinary increase in the importations. Onions, some years ago, were regarded as a safe-paying crop, but latterly, owing to foreign competition, it is a crop by which growers have lost heavily. Some profit, however, is still made from young 'bunching' onions in May and June, as onions are not imported in this form. Twenty years ago, Holland was the largest exporting country for onions, but our imports from this source have now considerably decreased, while they have much increased from Germany, France, and Spain, and have been more than quadrupled from Egypt. To describe the foreign bulb in a few words, it may be stated that Belgium, the north of France, and Germany supply the small kind of pale-coloured flat onion, resembling those of Essex and Bedfordshire. Holland sends the same kind, and also a red-fleshed onion, not very big, but of lower value. Germany exports the 'globe' variety, solid and firm. From the Bordeaux district we get an onion of a larger size, pink-fleshed, and less firm in texture than those grown in higher latitudes. Portugal and Spain send a monstrous onion, sold per pound by grocers, and known as Spanish. These magnificent specimens are due to a favourable climate, with ample and continuous heat, the practice of irrigation, and the system of ridging up the soil so as to shield the bulb from the fierce rays of a noonday sun. Egypt exports a very compact, sound onion, rather larger in size than the English sample, which travels well, and reaches England in splendid condition, clean, bright, free from dirt or sand, and having an inviting aspect when presented for sale.

We have noted how our imports of onions have increased from Egypt, and it is acknowledged that this country is at present the most active and aggressive competitor in the onion trade. Egypt has been regarded by some people as the land of pyramids and mummies only, but it has from time immemorial had a reputation for onions. Ancient Egyptians swore by the onion, and regarded the plant as sacred. The inscription on the pyramid of Cheops tells us that the workmen had onions given to them; and from the Bible we learn that the Hebrews, when slaves under Pharaoh, enjoyed these bulbs, and that when far away they remembered 'the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic.' The trade with Egypt for onions is now so important that four lines of steamers are engaged in the traffic, bringing consignments from Alexandria to Liverpool, Hull, and London. The Egyptian onion is a handsome and useful vegetable, and by selecting the best strains of seed the quality tends, year by year, to improve. The Egyptian knows two varieties, the 'Baali' and the 'Miskaoui,' but supplies of the latter kind are seldom sent abroad, as they absorb so much moisture from the frequently irrigated ground in which they are grown that they do not stand a sea-voyage well. The 'Baali' onion is the more popular Egyptian onion, and is grown in yellow soil, which is sparingly watered while the bulbs are maturing, in order that the onions may stand a lengthy sea-voyage with little risk of 'sprouting.' So excellent in quality are these onions, that efforts are, it is said, being made in other countries to raise onions from Egyptian seed.

Under the social and economic conditions of life in England, market garden land must be high-rented, as such land is always desired close to large centres of population. Of course, it is possible that rents may come down; but this is one of those cases where a thing is possible, but not at all probable. What handicaps the industry more than high rent is the scarcity and dearness of labour. As regards female labour, it is a matter of sentiment; but undoubtedly their labour is most useful in some of the processes of cultivation and after-management of vegetables. Excessive railway rates constitute a legitimate grievance, and the action taken lately by the leading companies is in itself an acknowledgment that they have been giving the foreign grower the preference, to the disadvantage of the home grower. Such associations as the British Produce Supply Association, of which Lord Winchilsea is originator, have been formed to 'inaugurate a new and improved system for the purchase, distribution, and sale of British agricultural produce.' As an

illustration of the excessive charges which we have had to submit to, it may be mentioned that it costs less to bring agricultural seeds from Chicago to London, a distance of about 4000 miles, of which 1000 are by rail and 3000 by steamer, than it does from stations within 150 miles of London. The scarcity of distributing centres, which is also engaging attention at the present day, will no doubt be adjusted in conjunction with railway rates, with which it is closely connected. But the practice of consigning the major portion of the produce grown to the few existing markets there are in the country is responsible at present for gluts and unremunerative returns. It is strange that, however abundant the produce might be, and however bad the prices ruling at the market, still to the local consumer the price rarely falls. And yet some people are surprised that others go into town for their supplies.

The want of technical knowledge is susceptible of self-adjustment, and depends on the grower himself. It is not a question of digging and hoeing, but of giving care to small details; of being in close touch with the markets, and, therefore, well and regularly posted up as to supply and demand; of getting reliable and continuous information as to immediate and prospective market wants; and of being always on the lookout, and ready to adapt 'ideas' though they may be 'new.' A writer in the *Kew Bulletin* on this subject points out another cause for the large importation of vegetable produce — the increasing prosperity of the country, and the rise in the 'standard of comfort;' that is, we have got rich and lazy, and would rather buy an article of consumption from outside than take the trouble to produce it ourselves. So long as the foreigner is ready and willing to deny himself the enjoyment of the produce of his soil and climate so that he may draw on our wealth, and so long as the price of labour allows cabbages or any other vegetable to be grown more cheaply in Holland or anywhere else than they can be grown in England, these vegetables will be imported, and compete on favourable terms with our own produce.

## GEORDIE'S JUSTICE.

### II.

THAT despairing shriek brought unexpected aid to poor Tommy. It reached the ears of Geordie Donce, and Geordie's experience told him that such a shriek could only be caused by some most unusual accident.

He ran quickly from the corner of the shed in which he had what he called his 'office'—a bare stool and desk black with age, smoke, and grease—and in a few seconds reached the scene of the tragedy.

At once his keen, sharp eyes took in the situation: Sam and another of the gang making frantic efforts to move the lever, great drops of perspiration oozing from their foreheads; one man trying to undo the knotted cords, whilst another made desperate attempts to cut them with a blunt jack-knife; big Bob Rowe using his herculean strength in an endeavour to draw back the plate from the grip of the roller. All this Geordie saw at a glance.

Near by there stood a gigantic sledge-hammer, a hammer which was the joy of Bob's life. None but he could wield it. Nothing delighted him so much as to bring it down, on forging or anvil, with a ringing blow that would shake the ground for yards around.

This mighty tool Geordie seized and swung round his head once—he was sixty-five that day; twice,—and the swollen veins on his forehead seemed ready to burst; a third swing he gave it, and once again the bright head of the hammer flashed through the air with cutting 'swish.' Then, with a final turn, he brought it down full on the edge of the slowly moving cog-wheel at the end of the upper roller. So fair and heavy a blow had he dealt that the great wheel was broken in three pieces, which fell, with dull thuds, to the ground.

The sudden jar released the lever, and back it swung, dealing Sam a heavy blow on the stomach; the plate ceased to move, and Tommy was saved, but not before the cruel, grinding roller had gripped fingers, hand, and wrist.

What has taken so long to describe only occupied the fractional part of a minute in its execution. Not a word did Geordie utter; his thin lips were closed like a rat-trap over his square, straight-cut mouth.

Having dealt his record blow he began, with imperious gestures, to direct the men to raise the upper roller and so release the plate. His broad chest panted with the effort he had made. His greasy, black cap had fallen off, and his stiff crop of hair seemed to rise up in suppressed indignation.

The plate released, he proceeded, with rough gentleness, to bind up the crushed hand. With scant ceremony he tore off strips from Bob's shirt, improvised a tourniquet, and so stopped the fearful bleeding. Tommy's first scream had been his last. He lay quite unconscious on the plate, the rust on which formed a dark plane across which streams of blood slowly trickled, and fell drip, drip, drip, drop upon the dusty floor of the mill. Pitiful little moans issued from his pallid lips, which seemed doubly pallid in contrast to the general griminess of his face.

The cords unloosed and the hand bound up, Geordie next carried the still unconscious boy to the watchman's hut at the entrance gates. Staunch old bachelor though he was, he bore him along as if he had been accustomed to babies all his life. Some one brought a cab; and Geordie, still with Tommy in his arms, stepped in, and was quickly driven to the hospital.

The rattling of the wheels somewhat roused the boy.

'I'll do it,' he murmured, brokenly; 'I'll do it—if yo'll—ony—take me—off.'

'Whist, then, lad, whist!' said the old man;

'ye 're all reet now. It 's me as 'as ye. Don't yer know me—Geordie?'

At the sound of the rough, kind voice, Tommy opened his eyes, and seeing the well-known, rugged features of the friend of the 'nippers,' but still not realising that he was safe, sobbed out:

'Please, Mester Donce, don't let 'em do it. I 'll kill the nag if they ony let me go!'

Thinking to quiet him, Geordie questioned him, as to what them —— chaps had been going to do to him. Then, in broken accents, and with sobs and shivers of dread, he told him all—how they had wanted him to break the machine and how he had 'bested' them; then how they had insisted on his poisoning the 'gaffer's nag,' and, on his refusing, threatened to put him between the rollers.

'An' indeed, indeed, Mester Donce, a wouldn' 'a promised fur to do it, ef a adn' seen they was boun' fur to put me in.'

'Never yo' min', m' lad; never yo' min'. We 'll be upsides wi' un. Thev got Geordie to deal wi'! the skunks.'

But then, to the honest fellow's great dismay, Tommy continued the conversation, but on most irrelevant subjects. He told Geordie, among many other things, how he had lately been to a grand ratting-match — how his grannie had bought him a new cap which he was to wear to-morrow for the first time, that day being Sunday; and so on, and so on, harking back every now and then to Bob Rowe and his threats.

At last, to the old man's great relief, the hospital was reached, and here willing hands would have relieved him of his burden. But no; Geordie would give Tommy up to no one but 'Mester' Doctor. So he was allowed to carry the lad to the doctor's room.

The latter examined the hand, looked at Tommy's bright eyes, listened to his rambling utterances, and shook his head.

'Will it finish him?' asked Geordie, in what was meant to be a whisper, pointing to the crushed hand.

'Oh no, that's nothing,' replied the doctor; 'but the poor fellow is in high delirium, and that is what I am afraid of.'

'Off his chump, like?' queried Geordie.

'Yes; however, leave him now, and look in in the morning. I may have a more cheerful report to make then.'

'—— ——,' growled Geordie, between his set teeth, as he thrust his hands deep in his breeches' pockets. Had acute eyes followed this action they would have observed peculiar knobby excrescences rising from under the old man's iron-stained moleskins, and would have rightly inferred that each pocket enclosed a huge clenched fist. With this he left the doctor and took himself away.

Geordie lived in a small house wedged between an iron merchant's store on one side and a foundry gate on the other. Opposite was a boiler-maker's yard, and at the back a locomotive shed. The atmosphere of the street had that peculiar smoky flavour so congenial to Geordie's nasal organs, and the air was full of the ringing din he so dearly loved and in which he had spent his entire life. His bodily comforts, so far as his independent spirit would allow, were attended to by a married niece who lived near. Geordie would allow no woman to live in his house. Every morning his niece came and did what was necessary for the day, running in towards five to make up the fire and put the old bachelor's dinner on the hob.

Having left the hospital the kindly-hearted and indignant foreman trudged off to his lonely home among the ironworks. Entering his kitchen, he took his hot dinner from the hob, and sat him down to his lonely meal. An odour of onion pervaded the small apartment, as Geordie delved among the contents of the brown basin in front of him, and fished up huge squares of meat or great pieces of potatoes. These he transferred to his mouth and masticated with much the same action as one of his mills. The table contained little else than a knife and fork, one blue jug keeping company with a plate of salt.

He held his two-pronged fork in some peculiar manner between the thumb and remaining finger of his left hand. Steadily working his way to the bottom of the basin, he hardly lifted his eyes, or ceased the regular up and down movement of his square jaws till he had scooped up the last drop of gravy on the end of his knife.

Grave thought sat on the old man's face as he ate, ground one might rather say, his simple though very ample meal. His brows were still contracted as when he left the hospital; the echo of his muttered oath seemed to hang about the small kitchen. The basin emptied, set in the sink and filled with water, Geordie's next move was towards a barrel standing in one corner of the room. Drawing a brass key from the pocket of his leathern waistcoat, he filled the blue jug to the brim with foaming beer. Raising the jug to his lips, he opened his mouth to take a huge draught, first blowing off the froth and scattering it in a shower of iridescent bubbles. But before the fragrant liquor touched his lips the frown on his brow relaxed and a light seemed to break upon him. The jug was set down on the table with its contents untouched. The light broadened, the thin lips relaxed, the blue eyes shone with suppressed merriment.

'—— my soul and body,' he cried ecstatically.

With which reprehensible exclamation he brought his heavy right hand down upon his thigh with an echoing crack that would have made another man's leg ache for a week after.

'That 's it,' he shouted, 'that 'ill fetch 'em. Blame 'em, they won't forget it in a hurry. Ha! ha! ha! I see 'em now.' His loud laugh made the four walls ring again.

Twice he attempted to drink, and twice the secret joke proved too much for him, and the jug had to be set down untasted. The third time he succeeded, and poured in the beer—it would not be correct to say he drank it—without pausing once.

His usual pipe followed, but ever and anon the hidden thought would come between him and his smoke, causing him to emit peculiar sounds, compounded of grunts, laughs, and coughs.

Next morning, as soon as the rules of the institution allowed, Geordie was at the hospital, once more anxiously awaiting the doctor. The old man was dressed as on the previous day—leathern waistcoat, greasy cap, iron-stained moleskins. Sundays and week-days were all the same to him. Geordie never attended any place of worship: he was a stranger to all churches. He would not have found their atmosphere congenial, unless, perhaps, he had been allowed to sit in some belfry-tower whilst the bells were clanging their loudest. Then he would have been perfectly and peacefully happy, surrounded by hideous noises and cold black metal. He stood in front of the fire in the doctor's room as stiff and stolid as a newly founded casting.

As the doctor had said, it was a simple matter enough to amputate Tommy's maimed hand. In fact, within an hour after his admission to the noble building, Tommy was lying on his cot in No. 2 Ward, his stumpy forearm bound up, and made comfortable for the night. He himself was cleaner than ever he had been in his life before, and stretched between snow-white sheets. A snow-white pillow also supported the aching, throbbing head, which tossed from side to side in raging fever.

Very anxious was the doctor that night, but towards dawn the nurses observed an improvement; and when the doctor made his rounds at breakfast-time he found the danger, though not entirely absent, still much lessened. By the time Geordie put in an appearance, that is, at ten o'clock, professionally speaking Tommy was all right.

'Well, Donce,' the doctor said cheerily as he entered his room, 'I think he'll do.'

'Does that mean he'll pull through, Mester?' Geordie queried eagerly.

'Yes, he's quite safe. The arm is going on well, and the fever has almost left him.'

Geordie was silent, his features working strangely. Then he turned away, saying:

'Yow keep yowr rooms too hot, doctor,' making a motion to wipe perspiration from his brow. But, curiously enough, the perspiration seemed to have gathered in his eyes.

'You're a kind-hearted fellow, Donce,' the doctor said, with a sharp look. Then, with quick tact, continued:

'Tell me how the accident happened.'

'Gammon, gammon,' muttered Geordie, in allusion to the doctor's first observation. But before he could reply to his question, he had to spit violently into the fire and make two or three big efforts to swallow something that had hopped up in his throat and stuck there.

'It happened this how,' he burst out, when he felt master of himself. Then he gave the doctor a true and full account of the whole affair. For respectability's sake we must repress the frequent oaths he introduced into the recital; they were but indications of the depths to which a strong nature had been moved, mere heavings of an ocean of love seldom disturbed.

'The brutal hounds,' exclaimed the doctor, when Geordie had done. 'What's going to be done to them? They deserve penal servitude for life.'

'No, no,' laughed Geordie, 'that 'ud never do. *They* wouldn't care for pinnel servitude, bless ye. W'm goin' to judge 'em ourselves. And,' he went on with a chuckle, 'I reckon our verdic' 'll be one theys goin' to remember.'

'Well, I hope so, Donce; they richly deserve to suffer. However, I must bid you good-morning. My patients will be requiring me.'

'Mornin', Mester,' replied Geordie, turning to go.

'Say,' he said, stopping on his way to the door, 'mappen yo' couldn' let me 'ave a luk at 'e,' pointing with his thumb in the direction in which he supposed Tommy's ward to lie.

'Certainly,' the obliging doctor replied, 'come along.'

So together the strangely matched pair passed out into the large entrance hall and up the broad staircase. They offered a curious contrast. The dapper little doctor, treading almost as lightly as a bird; his beard neatly trimmed, spotless attire, and bright looks. At his side the huge, heavily built iron-man, lifting each foot as if it weighed a ton, dressed in a skin waistcoat with bits of fur still sticking to it here and there; his head still covered, for Geordie was far too independent to remove his cap for any one. Stepping as a young elephant might be expected to, he followed the doctor into No. 2 ward, and planted his heavy person by the side of Tommy's cot.

Tommy was sleeping quietly, with one bright spot on each cheek, his bound-up arm lying outside the sheets. As the old man gazed at his little friend, a strangely soft look crept across his rugged, hard-lined face. He bent down to listen to his gentle breathing.

'God bless yo' fur a brave lad,' he whispered, as he turned to follow the doctor to the door.

There he was dismissed, and forged his way down-stairs alone, as silently as he could. Crossing the hall again, his attention was attracted by a box standing near the door. It looked like a letter-box, only the slit was too small. It had also some words painted on it, but reading was not easy to Geordie.

'What's that thing fur?' he queried of a neatly attired nurse, who crossed the hall at that moment.

'That is for visitors' contributions,' the nurse answered, with a smile.

'Visitors' contributions; well, I'm a visitor. But what's contributions?'

'Money given by those who come here to see their friends,' she explained, much amused.

'Oh,' said Geordie, 'you'll be meanin' brass.'

Therewith he dived into his right hand trousers' pocket and brought up a miscellaneous collection of sovereigns and half-sovereigns, silver, coppers, nails, string, shreds of tobacco, and what not.

With the useful thumb and remaining finger of his left hand he dropped in first one golden coin and then another, then a third, each falling with a happy clink to the bottom of the box.

'I reckon that'll put it reet,' he remarked, as he turned away, leaving the nurse petrified with astonishment at the strange apparition. Having discharged this duty and so eased his mind, he wended his heavy way back to his home.

The rest of this memorable Sunday was spent by Geordie, for the most part, in the exercise of some peculiar gymnastic feats, of which more anon. One of his acts, however, must be mentioned here. So impressed had he been with the painful cleanliness of everything connected with the hospital and its inmates that he felt it absolutely necessary to make some attempt at 'weshing' himself, if he carried out his intention of visiting Tommy as often as he was allowed to do so.

Therefore he set to work that afternoon and used soap and water for the first time for many years. True, the resulting improvement was only partial, and his heart only half in the work of reform. As he explained, in an apologetic way to his surprised niece that evening, 'he couldn' abide the mucky stuff,' meaning the soap, 'and on'y did it for that little nipper's sake.' However it had this good effect: whilst Tommy lay in hospital, Geordie visited him every Sunday; and so sure as he was found, at three o'clock, with his queer attire, mounting the steps leading to the hospital door, so would he have been found, two hours earlier, making a brave effort to cleanse face and hands, using the brown basin from which he had eaten his dinner a few minutes previously.

## SPECTACLES.

None of the five senses with which we are endowed is more precious than sight, nor is there one more liable to deterioration with both young and old, defects in it developing more rapidly, and at an earlier period, than in our faculties of hearing, smell, touch, or taste. With the right use of our eyes, we have an enviable amount of independence, in contrast to those afflicted with visual defects, and a capacity for enjoying all that makes life beautiful and desirable. We need be neither a burden to our friends nor a weariness to ourselves. Partial or total blindness is a contingency that may come to all; yet the neglect of little troubles to our eyes is notorious, and the commonest care to preserve them to the utmost, is quite the exception. At the first sign of any bodily ailment we seek remedies, but too often defer a consultation with an oculist until irreparable mischief has been caused by delay. Clever oculists and skilful opticians have brought to great perfection remedies and appliances for defective sight, which were totally unknown to former generations.

Of these, spectacles are the most familiar to us, though it does not appear that the ancients used them at all. Italy, the country to which we owe so much in the arts and sciences, claims the invention, but authorities differ about the name of the inventor, and also in the date of their introduction, somewhere at the close of the 13th century. Jourdan de Rivalto, who died at Pisa 1311, stated in one of his sermons, 'that it is not twenty years since the art of making spectacles was found out, which is indeed,' he adds, 'one of the best and most necessary inventions in the world.' At Pisa also, preserved in the Convent of Santa Caterina, are chronicles dated 1280, wherein we find that Alessandro de Spina, a friar of the order of the Predicanti, on hearing 'that another than himself knew of it,' first communicated the result of his own invention of spectacles. This 'other' may possibly have been Salvino degli Armati, a Florentine noble, who, dying 1317, has inscribed on his tomb, that he was the first to invent spectacles. But there are traces of spectacles in the writings of the eleventh-century Arab author Alhazen. And Friar Roger Bacon, who ended his days 1294, describes a pair thus: 'This instrument, a plano-convex glass, or large segment of a sphere, is useful to old men, for they may see the smallest letters infinitely magnified.' It was only learned men and monks in those early days who required those 'segments of a sphere' to read their precious manuscripts and to illuminate their beautiful missals. Now every one reads, and new theories so upset old traditions, that even the Venerable Motto of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers, 'A Boon to the Aged,' is no longer correct. Glasses are now an equal boon to the young, as to the old, and infants of tender years are getting as habituated to wearing them, as their elders are to seeing them on their little noses, a preventive as much as a curative measure for defects to which young people are specially liable, but which until recently, left unchecked, were a source of discomfort and of lasting disfigurement.

In the joyous age of inconsequent youth, we are said to view the world through 'rose-coloured spectacles.' But the time arrives all too soon, when these enchanted aids to happiness are dim, useless, and unserviceable, just like our real eyes, when we have unwillingly to acknowledge 'we do not see as well as we did.' The laws of natural decay are immutable, and every portion of our complex bodies—including our eyes—undergoes certain changes as years creep on. All our nerves are differentiated, each with its own special mission to fulfil. The auditive nerve responds to infinitely delicate vibrations of sound, which have no effect whatever on the optic nerves, whose peculiar work is to transmit, by fine vibrations, impressions into the back of the brain, by means of which medium alone we see. After the age of forty or forty-five, the lenses of the eye become more or less flattened, and the result is a decrease of the refractive power, and a sensible diminution in the acuteness of vision. This well-known failing betrays itself when the things we are looking at require to be held at an ever-increasing distance, before they become sharp and clear. The lessened transparency in the media of the eye is a gradual but marked process, and from it oculists can form a fairly correct idea of the age of a patient. When keenness of vision is lessened, even in a small degree, an oculist—not an optician—should be consulted without delay, who will advise the right kind and proper strength of spectacles suited to the case.

If we think of the construction of the eye, its delicate tissues and sensitive lenses, we will readily understand that none but those who have made the difficult science of optics their study, is fitted to treat its defects and diseases. The standard of vision is not invariable, it is relative, rather than absolute; the eyes of no two people are alike, and even the two eyes of

an individual frequently differ materially. It is clear, then, that many different glasses are required to suit all visions; for if unduly strained by unsuitable lenses, the sight is apt to give out long before it should, had proper precautions been adopted. The three primary properties of lenses are to modify the inclination of the luminous rays of light at their incidence upon the cornea; to modify the quantity of light; and to modify colour. A great variety is in use, both for scientific purposes and for spectacles. For the latter we have the non-focal coloured glasses, the plano-convex, the plano-concave, the double convex, and double concave, and the double focus or Franklin lens, that appears cracked across the centre, but is in reality two pair of lenses in one frame, to suit eyes of different focus—no uncommon occurrence, though often unsuspected, and therefore not attended to as it should. The oculist has every form of lens at his command, for the various kinds of defective vision, the commonest of which are 'astigmatism' or irregular sight—'myopia' or short sight, and 'Presbyopia,' old or long sight. This last with the aged arises from rigidity, but many young people are liable to the trouble. The lenses for spectacles are made usually from crown-glass, the cheapest of any; but convex glasses, which from their shape are peculiarly liable to injury from scratches, are nearly always constructed from either rock-crystal or flint-glass, both extremely hard substances, possessing, besides, superior dispersive powers over other material. The cheaper kind of spectacles sent over in quantities from Germany and elsewhere, are seldom free from blemishes, and as the slightest flaw in a lens is injurious to the eye, care should be taken not to use any that have tiny air-bubbles or minute specks on their surface.

Like everything else in this progressive age, spectacles have been rapidly perfected, not only in the quality of the lenses, but more especially in their mounting. The heavy framework of bone, horn, and tortoise-shell, worn by our grandfathers, are a contrast indeed to the dainty light setting of modern glasses, the aim of the good spectacle maker of to-day. A frame of the slightest fine steel, or the lightest of gold, compatible with the safe holding of the lens, makes the wearing of glasses much less irksome than they must formerly have been. Pince-nez have frequently no setting at all beyond the necessary bridge; and the heavy double gold eyeglass, once such a favourite with young-old belles and antique beaux at Spas and fashionable watering-places, is now quite obsolete. Another craze too is gone, when every one who wished to be thought smart, was bound to carry an eyeglass, in order that they might properly recognise friends, and effectually avoid detrimentals. There is a survival of this fashion on the Continent, in the constant use of the long-handled lorgnette.

When the advisability of wearing spectacles is once granted, care should be taken, not only to procure lenses that suit, but also to have comfortably fitting frames. The bridges of our noses on which they rest, we all know, vary in width, and the distance between the eyes is seldom the same in two individuals. Attention ought to be paid to this fact; for if spectacles are improperly adjusted, the focus is imperfect, causing the eyes to ache, and instead of assisting us to see better, the fault may aggravate disease, if it exists, or even induce it. The apathy shown by people about their eyes is difficult of logical explanation. We see glasses with crooked frames, and lenses quite dull with constant use; and hear the wearers of them complaining of failing sight and increasing inconvenience, all through neglect of the simple precaution of a periodical examination by a skilled oculist. Not to use this precaution is a source of absolute danger where men are employed in any public capacity. The primary cause of many a collision at sea and accident on railways is doubtless often due to defective eyesight of the lookout man in the one case, and of the signalman on the other.

The first fruits of the slow growth of optical science was not spectacles, but the single microscope, in the form of a glass globe filled with water. The next known magnifying lens is one of rock-crystal—now in the British Museum—found by Layard in the Palace of Nimrod. But it was not until three centuries after spectacles had been introduced, that the first compound microscope was made in 1590 by Zacharias Jansz or Janssen, or by his father, Hans Jansz, spectacle makers and natives of Middleburg, a town about four miles from Flushing. A Jansz microscope was in the possession of Cornelius Drebell, of Alkmar, when staying in London, as Mathematician at the Court of James VI., but this primitive effort cannot compare with the perfect modern instrument that has revealed to us a world of infinite minuteness, not less wonderful than the knowledge obtained with the aid of the telescope of the infinitely remote heavens. Practically, the invention of spectacles led to the making of the telescope; for although astronomy was the earliest science cultivated by the ancients, they do not appear to have had instruments, but obtained their knowledge of the phenomena of heavenly bodies by constant, direct observation and close study. If Galileo did not actually originate the telescope—as some claim for him—he at least perfected it sufficiently to take observations which upset the erroneous theories held by wise men for ages, and to establish a more reasonable basis of study for the future benefit of scholars.

It is said that Galileo, when residing at Padua, where he was Professor of Mathematics at that university, one day went to Venice, where he heard that a Dutch spectacle maker, called Metius, was exhibiting to the Venetians a combination of lenses by which distant objects could be seen comparatively clearly. The great experimental philosopher, refusing either to look at or examine this marvel, returned home to puzzle out the hint he had received. The instrument known as 'Galileo's Tube' was completed the following year, 1609, and later, his perfected double-eyed telescope was given to the world. The sad sequel of his efforts in the cause of science is well known—how he was cited by the church for spreading heretical doctrines contrary to the direct evi-

dence of Scripture, was afterwards imprisoned, and on his release, banished from his native Florence for many years. Then came blindness, and Galileo, a broken and disappointed man, passed away in his seventy-eighth year, in his battlemented, strong, old tower, which still stands boldly out against the blue Italian sky, on the crest of a hill overlooking the lovely Tuscan vale of Arcetri.

## ROMANTIC TALES OF THE INDIAN WAR.

### AN UNPUBLISHED INCIDENT OF THE SACK OF LUCKNOW.

By W. Forbes Mitchell,
Author of *Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny*.

Just after the Mutiny of 1857–58, some meddling philanthropists in England tried to get up an agitation about the wanton cruelty of our Army in India. They entirely overlooked the nature of the war and the fact that we were engaged in putting down mutiny and rebellion, and in punishing the murderers of helpless women and children; and omitted to reflect that until after the fall of Lucknow, the enemy — wherever met — far outnumbered the British, rendering it morally impossible to guard prisoners even if they had been taken. It was also forgotten that the revolted Sepoys had proclaimed the war of extermination, not the British; and no apologist of the mutineers can honestly assert that they were actuated by patriotism to cast off the yoke of the oppressor. As regards cases of wanton cruelty said to have been perpetrated by Sikhs or Goorkhas during the sack of either Delhi or Lucknow, it must be fully recognised that the greater part of the native army on our side consisted of newly raised levies from the wildest districts of the Punjab, and the Hills of Nepaul. Many of those in the ranks of the Punjabi regiments, and most of the native officers, were old men who had fought against the British during the wars preceding the annexation of the Punjab, and who had in 1857 actually taken service with the British in the hope of plunder and to pay off old outstanding grudges against the revolted Sepoys. They above all men looked upon mercy shown to a fallen enemy as the height of imbecile weakness.

I well recall the disgust and disapprobation of an old Sikh Sirdar (a native commander of a troop or squadron of cavalry) in the Umbeyla Pass campaign of 1863, seven years after the mutiny, because a picket of the enemy, which were surprised in the defiles and taken prisoners, were merely disarmed and sent to the rear. I asked the old man what he would have done with them. He replied, 'You Anzeze (English) are far too lenient; you don't know the ingratitude of these people. I remember on my first expedition into these hills, in Runjeet Singh's time, we surprised a picket just about this very place. We flayed every man of them alive, and tied them on ant-hills to be eaten alive by the ants. That is the proper way to deal with those people.' And when I asked him how he would appreciate such treatment himself, he replied: 'If we were to fall into the hands of these scoundrels they would treat us far worse if they had time; they would impale us alive on a sharp stake, with hands and feet tied, and keep us there until the jackal by night, and the vultures by day, would in pure mercy come to put an end to our sufferings.' Such were the men composing the newly raised levies of 1857, who in most instances had to be controlled by only *one*, or at most *two*, European officers per battalion. Can it therefore be wondered at if there were some cases of wanton outrage? The only wonder is that there were not more. But as to cases of real wanton cruelty or outrage committed by European soldiers, none came under my own notice;, and during the sack of Lucknow, I only heard of one well-authenticated case of wanton barbarism committed by a European officer. He was the son of a captain who had been in the service of the late king of Lucknow, and knew very little about European or Christian refinement, having been born and educated in Lucknow, and later on presented with a cadetship by Lord Dalhousie, in recognition of the services of his father at the time of the annexation of Oude.

But to my story. In pages 342 and 348 of the first edition of *My Diary in India*, Dr (now Sir W. H.) Russell, special correspondent to the *Times*, notices the outrage, but not its sequel and punishment. This may not have been exactly legal, according to the Queen's regulations and the articles of war, and was consequently known only to a few. In describing a run through the captured positions, Russell writes: 'I came upon the'——(I need not name the regiment). 'They are a fine set of fellows, but there is one among them who did a bloody, a cruel and cowardly act this day; but I am glad to know his comrades feel towards him as he deserves. After the Fusiliers had stormed the gateway, a Cashmere boy came to them, leading a blind and aged man, and throwing himself at the feet of this officer, asked for protection. The officer, as I was informed by his comrades, drew his revolver and snapped it at the wretched suppliant's head. The men of the regiment called shame on him. Twice again he pulled the trigger, and the weapon still refused to act, so thrice had he time to relent. The fourth time the gallant officer succeeded, and the boy's life-blood flowed at his feet, amidst the indignation and the outcry of his men.'

Such is Russell's account, which is exactly what was reported in the camp and told to me by men who were eye-witnesses to the barbarity. Now for the sequel, which I witnessed myself. After the capture of the Begum's Palace, my regiment, the 93d Highlanders, was allowed a few days' rest in camp, but returned to the city on the 18th March. By that time every effort was being made to put a stop to plundering and to restore order. General Sir Hope Grant himself, with a squadron of his cavalry brigade, patrolled part of the city and the roads, leading from the camp and the gardens alongside the Gumti, to put a stop to marauding. My company of the 93d was posted in a large house and garden near the Mint. Shortly after we had been posted, the General rode into the garden and called on Captain Dawson for a

guard of about a dozen men, and a drummer with his cat, to go and secure a party of marauders, who were plundering in a close or blind alley near by. I, with a dozen men, and drummer MacLeod, was at once detailed for the duty, and went with the General. After going round several turnings, we came on a party of about a dozen men, a sergeant, and an officer of the —— Fusiliers, the same officer who had shot the Cashmere boy two days before, as described by Russell. They were all arrested and shut into a small court, the entrance to which, a narrow *cul de sac*, was guarded by a party of the 9th Lancers. Sir Hope Grant dismounted, leaving his charger with the mounted men in the street. Taking the guard of the 93d inside the courtyard, we were joined by Sergeant Peter Gillespie, our deputy provost-marshal, with a set of triangles and an unusually formidable 'cat-o'-nine-tails.' Sir Hope Grant ordered the whole of the marauders to fall in with the officer on the right, whilst Sergeant Gillespie fixed the triangles in the centre of the court. As soon as these arrangements were completed, the General, addressing the officer, asked him if he had not heard the Commander-in-chief's orders against marauding and plundering, and whether he knew that those caught in the act, no matter what their rank, were to be summarily flogged by the provost-marshal and returned to their regiments. Declaring that, having himself caught the party red-handed, he meant to do his duty, and flog every one of them, he then ordered the officer to strip. The latter remonstrated, but Sir Hope Grant replied, 'Come, come, sir! no nonsense: strip and take your punishment like a man; otherwise I must order these Highlanders to lay hands on you and forcibly tie you up. We have no time to waste for general courts-martial upon men like you; so strip at once.' The officer saw that there was no escape, and most reluctantly stripped, threatening Sir Hope Grant with a report to the Horse Guards, damages in a civil court, &c. But all his threats produced no effect; Sergeant Peter Gillespie strapped him firmly on to the triangles, then throwing off his coat to enable him to wield the cat with more effect, called out, 'Ready, Sir Hope!' The General gave the command, 'Lay on,' and counting the lashes himself, Peter laid on—up to twenty-five, which the officer stood with a good deal of wriggling, but up to then he did not howl outright. When he completed twenty-five lashes, Peter stopped, and saluting the General, said, 'My arm is tired, Sir Hope; drummer MacLeod is left-handed; let him give the remainder.'—'All right, all right,' said Sir Hope. 'Certainly! certainly! let drummer MacLeod finish the job!'

Non-military readers who have never seen a man flogged may not see the force of the change from a right-handed to a left-handed operator with the cat, so I must explain. The lashes given with the left hand cut diagonally across those already laid on with the right hand, making a St Andrew's cross, multiplied by nine at every stroke on the back of the patient, and the pain of a cross-flogging is excruciating. The halt had allowed the strokes already administered to swell, and the blood was flowing freely, for the cat had been purposely prepared, as a punishment for the shooting of the little boy, as described by Russell. So drummer MacLeod assumed the cat in his left hand and flogged with a will; and at the second or third stroke the officer commenced to howl, but this had no effect. Sergeant Gillespie counted the lashes, and Sir Hope Grant stood in front of the triangles, calling out: 'Now, now, don't howl and disgrace your regiment; take it like a man! take it like a man!' When he had got his fifty, Sir Hope said: 'Now on with your clothes, and off to your regiment, and if you don't say anything about this yourself, no one else will; be off, and don't plunder any more, lest a worse thing befall you.'

The officer dressed and disappeared as sharply as he could, Sergeant Gillespie saying stingingly to him, 'You're not so brave on the triangles as when shooting little boys.' As soon as he was gone, Sir Hope Grant turned to the sergeant and the men, telling them that if they would each promise not to plunder any more, he would let them off, in consideration of the bad example which had been set them by an officer. This they all gladly promised, and were allowed to go. I afterwards learned from Sergeant Gillespie that the whole was a prearranged plan, the sergeant only being in the secret, as the officer in question was known to be an inveterate plunderer, and a cowardly cur. He shortly afterwards sent in his papers and retired from the service. He was eventually drowned in one of the Assam rivers by the upsetting of a boat.

## THE COMMONPLACE.

Shall we but value what is rare—
The flawless gem, the peerless face—
And none of our affection spare
For what is only commonplace?

The gifts of God, like words, abound
On ev'ry page of Nature's book:
There's something worthy to be found
Wherever you may chance to look.

We do rank common things before
God's rarer wonders, now and then,
As common bread is worth far more
Than diamonds to hungry men.

And always in God's common things
There's beauty, if we care to seek—
The sober brown of sparrows' wings,
The wrinkles on a furrowed cheek.

'Tis not perfection icy-cold,
In earth beneath, or heav'n above,
That can alone our heart-strings hold:
Hearts cannot tell us why they love.

God help us all if men should care
For only what is full of grace,
Lest love itself should then be rare
And we should still be commonplace!

C. J. Boden.

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## VOTING SUPPLIES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

By Michael MacDonagh.

The House of Commons, composed as it is of the elected representatives of the taxpayers of the realm, has sole control of the collection and expenditure of the national revenue; or of the mode in which taxes are raised, and the manner in which taxes are spent. Before the Revolution supplies were voted by the Commons, on the direct application of the Sovereign, without any specific information being afforded as to the financial needs of the State, or any guarantee being given that the money would be spent solely for the public weal. The money went into the Royal Treasury, and the king spent it, as a rule, for his own pleasure, and to sustain his own influence and power. If the Sovereign had at his disposal a fat purse, he paid little heed to public rights or public wrongs. But when his treasury was empty, he went to the Commons to solicit further subsidies in a repentant and yielding mood, real or pretended, and then the representatives of the people were able, as conditions precedent to voting the money asked for by his impecunious majesty, to have grievances redressed; to extort concessions; to make the bounds of freedom wider yet. The votes of supply are now founded on annual estimates prepared on the collective responsibility of the Cabinet. These estimates are carefully calculated to raise just so much money as will cover the expenses for the coming year. And that money is strictly appropriated within the year to the specific purposes for which it is voted by the House of Commons.

Long ago, too, the House of Lords exercised co-ordinate control with the Commons over the national revenue. But the interference of the Lords in supply was always regarded with jealousy and resentment by the Commons; and at last, after many hot controversies, the people's representatives succeeded, after the Revolution, in establishing for evermore their exclusive right to determine 'the matter, the measure, and the time' of every tax imposed upon the people. The principle upon which this exclusive right of the Commons is founded has been well expressed by Lord Chatham. 'Taxation,' said he, 'is no part of the governing or legislative power. The taxes are a voluntary gift and grant of the Commons alone. In legislation, the Three Estates of the Realm are alike concerned; but the concurrence of the peers and the crown to a tax—the gift and grant of the Commons alone—is only necessary to clothe it with the form of a law.' Accordingly, all proposals involving the raising or spending of taxes can only originate in the Commons: and although all Bills embodying such proposals are, after they have passed the Commons, sent up in the usual fashion to the Lords; and although the Lords may in theory reject a Money Bill (they are expressly prohibited from modifying its clauses or altering it in any way), the rejection of any such bill would now be considered a breach of constitutional usage, if not an invasion of the privileges of the representative chamber.

The sums of money necessary for the administration of the affairs of the United Kingdom and the defence of our world-wide empire are enormous. Over ninety millions of money is annually raised for this purpose. In the year ending with March 1894 the exact amount was £91,302,846; in the last financial year it was £93,918,421. These figures do not include the payments out of the national exchequer to local bodies in aid of local taxation, which of late amount to over six millions per annum; so that the gross imperial expenditure at present is close on £100,000,000 a year. This enormous public revenue comes, either directly or indirectly, from the pockets of the people.

The tendency of the national fiscal policy in our days is to remove imposts from articles of consumption—especially those which are necessaries as distinguished from luxuries, and from raw materials used in manufactures, and to

increase the taxes on income and property. But, nevertheless, the vast bulk of the revenue still comes from the indirect taxation yielded by the Customs and Inland Revenue. Customs are imposts levied on a part of the foreign trade of the country, or on tea, tobacco, wine and spirits that come to us from abroad. The Inland Revenue consists of revenue derived from the internal resources of the country, such as excise duties on home-produced beer, spirits, and malt, income tax, and the various other taxes on property. Of the £98,466,798 raised in 1895, the greater portion, or £62,835,263, came from the Inland Revenue (which includes both direct and indirect taxes, the latter, however, yielding the most revenue), and £19,974,601 from Customs. The Post Office Service yielded £10,472,876 ; the Telegraph Service, £2,534,262 ; and the remaining sum, between two and three millions, is derived from miscellaneous sources, such as fee stamps, patents for inventions, and the hereditary revenues of the Crown from woods, forests, and lands (£414,450) which have been handed over to the State in exchange for the Civil List, or the £407,301 (including £60,000 for the Queen's privy purse) paid for the salaries and expenses of the royal household. This sum is exclusive of the £187,796 granted in annuities and pensions to other members of the Royal Family.

The entire revenue of the country is gathered in from its various sources by the state departments charged with its collection ; and it forms, when paid into the Bank of England and the Bank of Ireland to the account of 'Her Majesty's Exchequer,' one common fund which is called 'The Consolidated Fund.' Payments from the national exchequer are of two kinds —namely, 'Consolidated Fund Services' and 'Supply Services.' The first services consist of regularly recurring annual charges, that have been already authorised and made permanent by acts of parliament, and which, therefore, are issued to the Treasury without having to come every year under the supervision of the House of Commons. These charges amount to about £28,500,000. As much as twenty-five millions of this sum—being indeed the biggest slice of the public revenue—go to pay interest on our national debt (which amounted at the last financial year to about £669,104,024), and to create a sinking fund for its redemption. Over half a million of the consolidated fund service goes to the Queen and other members of the Royal Family ; another half a million for the salaries and pensions of our judges and magistrates ; about £339,000 for annuities and pensions for certain naval and military services (including annuities to the heirs of Nelson and Wellington), and for diplomatic, political, and civil services ; about £82,000 for existing salaries and allowances to high state functionaries—as, for instance, the £20,000 to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the £5000 to the Speaker of the House of Commons ; and the remainder, or about £337,000, for miscellaneous services.

The effect of placing these charges on the Consolidated Fund is that they are entirely removed beyond the criticism of the House of Commons. The idea, of course, is that such subjects as the payment of our national debt —on which the credit of the country depends— and the annuities of the Royal Family, the allowances to the descendants of national heroes and faithful servants of the State, and the salaries of our judges and magistrates, and other high state functionaries, ought not to be liable every year to discussion, and perhaps heated and undignified criticism, in the House of Commons.

Over the 'Supply Services,' or the second class of charges on the national exchequer, the House of Commons has entire control, as they must be specially voted by the House every year. They come to about £63,000,000 ; and are divided into three classes—Army, Navy, and Civil Service. The Army estimates last year amount to close on twenty-one millions ; the Navy estimates to nearly twenty millions, and the Civil Service estimates to about twenty-two millions.

The Estimates are, in the first instance, prepared by the ministers at the head of the various state departments which spend the money. The Secretary for War is responsible for the Army estimates ; the First Lord of the Admiralty for the Navy estimates ; and—to mention only two of the seven departments which come under the general head of 'the Civil Service'—the Postmaster General for the Post Office estimates ; the Home Secretary for the Home Office estimates. But these estimates of the amounts which in the opinion of the ministers are required to carry on the work of their departments for twelve months are subjected to careful scrutiny (to see that they are framed with a due regard to economy) by the Treasury, a department which exercises a jealous control over the other State departments, in all matters involving the expenditure of public money—before they are adopted by the Cabinet, and formally submitted to the consideration of the House of Commons. The Treasury, by all accounts, keeps a tight hold on the strings of the national purse ; and its approval of any proposal which would compel 'Sandy, Taffy, John, and Paddy' to put their hands deeper into their trousers pockets is difficult to obtain, unless indeed, it involves a question of policy, to which the party in office is pledged when, of course, the economical scruples of the Treasury must give way.

Unofficial members of the House of Commons have not the right to propose a motion for the increase of any of the estimates before the Committee of Supply. It is easy to account for this restriction on the privileges of members of parliament. Constituents frequently make unreasonable demands on their representatives ; and it is to be feared that if members could propose the expenditure of public money, it is not ninety millions, but nine hundred and ninety-nine millions, that would be required to meet the claims members would be compelled to make on behalf of their constituents.

A member therefore cannot move to increase a vote. That can only be done by the responsible minister. But a member may move a reduction in a vote. Committee of Supply, therefore, affords to every member the opportunity of raising any grievance his constituents or the public generally may feel against any of the departments or ministers, whose expenses and salaries are covered by the votes. This practi-

cally means that any question may be raised in Committee of Supply. There is no doubt that the anticipation of criticism in Committee of Supply has a restraining influence on ministers, and tends to maintain that honest and pure administration in the State departments which has been so long the proud boast of this kingdom.

The business of Supply is extended over a large part of the Session. But as the votes are agreed to in Committee, they are reported to the House, when, as on the report stage of a Bill, their proposals may be again debated and rejected or adopted. Sometimes what is called 'a vote on account,' which is usually for a large amount, is taken by the Government, to enable it to carry on the services of the country until the regular votes have been adopted. Under the authority of those 'Supply resolutions,' the Comptroller and Auditor General—to whom they are sent direct from Parliament—grants to the Treasury a general credit on the Consolidated Fund in the Bank of England. The Treasury, however, does not pay over to the various departments the funds appropriated to their services directly they are voted by Parliament. In fact, the money does not reach the departments at all through the Treasury. Armed with the warrants issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Treasury directs the Bank of England to place the money to the account of the Paymaster General, who acts as the banker of the departments. Payments are made by the Paymaster General only against orders issued upon him by the departments. These orders are like bank cheques, and the books of the Paymaster General are kept in a similar manner to those of a banker—that is, each department is credited with the amounts received on its account from the Treasury, and is debited with the various sums paid on the orders or cheques it issues. Each department has the power only of spending during any year the amount voted for its service. If the funds voted by Parliament for the purpose should prove insufficient, owing to a miscalculation in the estimated revenue, or in the estimated expenditure, the Treasury can raise the amount necessary to cover the deficit by the issue of Bills on the security of the Exchequer, which are subsequently redeemed by means of supplementary votes of supply granted by Parliament. On the other hand, should a department spend less than the amount voted for its service, the surplus has to be returned to the Exchequer, into which such department has also to pay any amount it may have received from any other source than its 'vote,' as for instance the proceeds of the sale of old stores.

The amount of taxation each year being thus calculated to provide for the expenditure which it is estimated will be required during that year and no more, it may be asked how are new and unforeseen demands on the national exchequer met? Has the Treasury to wait for another year to receive the money from Parliament? Two permanent reserve funds have been created to meet such contingencies arising during the parliamentary recess. One is the 'Treasury Chest Fund,' consisting of £1,300,000, for unexpected public services at home and abroad; the other is the 'Civil Contingencies Fund,' consisting of £120,000, for departmental services of a like character. Any money advanced to the Treasury from either of these funds must be repaid by a special vote of supply when Parliament again assembles. This is the only attempt made by the State to set aside funds to meet the 'rainy day' mentioned in the proverb.

The passing of the Appropriation Act at the end of each session is the consummation of the control which Parliament exercises over the public expenditure. In this Act are consolidated all the votes passed in Committee of Supply, and its purpose is to insure that each vote is appropriated to the objects for which it was granted by Parliament.

But nevertheless, it cannot be said that there is a rigorous supervision of the Estimates by the House of Commons. Indeed, that is not possible in the circumstances of parliamentary life, and happily it is hardly necessary. Adequate scrutiny of the spending of the national revenue is supplied by other means. There is the Audit department of the Civil Service, whose business it is to examine the accounts and vouchers of the expenditure of the various branches of the public service. But that is not all. Every session the House appoints a Public Accounts Committee—consisting of experienced and clear-headed business men—whose duty it is to supervise the work of the Audit department. The system by which the public funds of the realm is administered is indeed beyond suspicion. Under it, extravagance—not to speak of peculation—is impossible, and all the money is spent on the objects for which it is voted by Parliament. That no doubt is the reason why the sums asked for by ministers are so readily granted year after year by the House of Commons.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER III. (*continued*).

THEY were crossing the Rialto bridge by this time. About midway the king stopped, and standing side by side, they looked down at the Canal. It was a lovely morning—overhead the blue sky was flecked with swift flying clouds, and beneath them the green water of the canal danced and curtseyed to the fresh breeze. Here and there gondolas dotted its surface, but the great thoroughfare was scarcely as busy as usual.

For some little time neither spoke—the king was gazing down at the water, as if trying to make up his mind to say something, and yet hardly caring to do so, not knowing what answer he might receive.

Olivia looked at him with a great pity upon her face.

'May I know what you are thinking of?' she said, when the silence had lasted upwards of three minutes.

He gave a little start as she spoke, showing thereby how far away his thoughts had been.

'I must beg your pardon,' he answered

quickly. 'I am afraid I make but a poor companion. What was I thinking? I fear I can hardly tell you. Perhaps I was wondering at the seeming contrariness of Fate. I intended to do so much, I started so well, and now that the game is in my own hands, I am plucked out of it, like a flower that is just opening to the sun.'

He moved a little closer to where she leant her arms upon the coping of the ancient bridge. The expression on his face was sadder than she had ever yet seen it.

'Lady Olivia, I think if you only knew how much I intended to do—what lofty aims and aspirations I had, you would give me all your divine pity.'

'But I do pity you, sir. I have told you that I pity you with my whole heart.'

There were tears in her eyes, and the king would have noticed them had his thoughts not been elsewhere.

'I dreamed such dreams of all I was going to do. I found my kingdom going begging, and having taken possession of it, I devoted my life to building it up. It has been my child, my all. I have thought for it, schemed for it, nay, even fought for it. At first I could make no headway at all. The people were orientals, and their prejudices against me were in their blood. But I was patient; I humoured them, I taught them to respect me, and at last I won their confidence, and next their love. This once gained, little by little I began my work of improving them. Here again I had to exercise all my caution, their ways were not European ways, and customs and traditions that have been handed down from father to son from generation to generation for hundreds of years are difficult foes to fight. But still, by unlimited patience and perseverance, I began to make headway. My staff, all picked men, helped me; the French priests, having discovered that I was not going to interfere with their mission work, lent me their co-operation, and every year saw my kingdom growing in power and solidity. I pictured myself as the founder of a country that should in time take its place among the great nations of the earth. Physically there could not be a more enchanting land. It is the Garden of Eden itself. My people are strong and industrious; with proper tuition, they make the best of workmen. They are patriotic, and in capable hands can be manufactured into excellent soldiers. I have a standing army of five thousand men, recruited and drilled by European officers, and at a day's notice I can raise reserves of twice that number. Having accomplished all this in so short a time, what could I not have done in another ten years had I only been spared?'

'But you *will* be spared. I cannot believe that it is as bad as you say.'

'Ah! again you think to cheer me. But alas, nothing you can say can alter what I have been told must happen. My lungs are seriously affected.'

'But if you are careful—if you do implicitly as the doctors tell you—then surely your life may be spared for years to come.'

'You try to make me see the bright side—but alas! the decree has gone forth, and I cannot shut my eyes to the truth. No, no! Let us talk of something else. Remember after to-day, if you are going away so soon, I probably shall not see you again. After to-day we shall only be memories to each other. It seems to me, Lady Olivia, as if I had known you all your life.'

She hung her head a little, and it might have been the reflection from her sunshade that gave the colour to her face as she answered:

'And I, your Majesty.'

'If you could only understand how pleasant our intercourse has been to me. Kings, Lady Olivia, are at the best but lonely men. Even such small kings as I. And yet we try to make friends.'

'But you have many friends.'

'I fear not! I fear not. I only wish I could think otherwise. Oh, if we could implicitly trust those about us, how different life would be! I have been deceived so often that I sometimes wonder I have any faith left in human nature. Small as my kingdom is, it is surrounded by jealous foes. China would wrest it from me were she strong enough; France has long cast envious eyes upon it. Even now I am never certain when the latter may not find a pretext, and endeavour to take it from me. But she shall not have it without a struggle. Of that I am determined.'

'You would fight to the bitter end to prevent such an injustice!' cried Olivia. 'What right has France to your kingdom? It is yours by right and might, and yours it must continue. Let her be content with what she has already.'

'Ah,' replied the king, 'I fear you have but a small knowledge of the ambition of a nation. France has more than she can manage already, but that is no reason why she should not endeavour to take my ewe lamb from me.'

'But you will not let her. I have no fear. I know you too well for that.'

As she said this Olivia drew herself up proudly and looked at the man she addressed. Had such an action been necessary, I believe she would have girded a sword upon her thigh, and gone forth to his rescue, like a second Maid of Orleans.

'No; I shall not let her, if I can prevent it; you may be very sure of that. But the question is, can I prevent it?'

'You must—you must. It would be the cruellest injustice that she should have it.'

There was a light in his eyes like the flash of steel. It was evident he was about to answer her in a similar strain, but he stopped himself suddenly, and drew a little closer to her side.

'Lady Olivia,' he said, and his voice throbbed with the intensity of his emotion. 'If I am ever called upon to do battle for my kingdom, shall I have your good wishes for my success?'

As if in anticipation of what might follow her reply, my sister turned suddenly very pale.

'You will always have my good wishes,' she answered, and then, as if she had said too much, she hastened to add, 'You have right and justice on your side—how could I help but sympathise with you.'

'You will only wish me well then, because I shall be in the right of the quarrel?'

She glanced swiftly at him, and then as swiftly withdrew her eyes.

'You press me to a disadvantage.'

'And pardon my saying so, you endeavour to turn me from the point at issue. Forgive my importunities. I should not have worried you with my questions. I am always so thoughtless.'

'You have not worried me; I am proud to answer you. I sympathise with you, because you are a brave man, and I think you try to be a good ruler. I cannot say more than that.'

'I will not ask you to do so,' he answered gently. 'I must consider myself fortunate to have won so much where so many have failed.'

After that there was another silence; then Olivia, having stolen a glance at her watch, suggested that it would be as well if they continued their walk. His Majesty agreed, and, side by side, they accordingly crossed the bridge, and made their way in the direction of Galaghetti's hotel.

When they reached the steps, the king paused, and held out his hand.

'Good-bye, Lady Olivia,' he said; 'I am very grateful to you for your sympathy. I shall remember your kindness all the days of my life.'

She was pulling off her gloves, and, as she extended her hand, one of them fell to the ground. The king stooped and picked it up. In the excitement of the moment, he did not return it, nor did she, strangely enough, ask him for it.

'Good-bye,' she answered, and then added, with a little quaver in her voice—'And may God protect your Majesty.'

'Amen,' he answered, and then replaced his hat upon his head, and went down the steps, while she entered the building.

She found me in the drawing-room, cutting the pages of a new book I had that morning purchased. As I greeted her, I saw that she was deathly pale, and for a moment I thought she was going to faint. But, as she insisted that she had never felt better in her life, I was constrained to believe her, against the evidence of my senses.

'And how did you find Lady Hammerton?' I inquired, when she had seated herself.

'I did not see her,' she answered. 'The poor thing is not well, and is confined to her room. I had my journey for nothing.'

'I can sympathise with you. I, too, had my excursion for nothing—the Consul is not at his office to-day. But you are late. How did you put in your time? You have been gone nearly two hours.'

She rose from her chair, and, picking up her parasol, prepared to leave the room.

'My dear Instow,' she said, 'how very curious you are. One would imagine, by the way you talk, that I am too young to be trusted alone. Venice is not Central Africa; a woman is as safe by herself in the streets here as in Piccadilly.'

Like a prudent man, seeing the way the wind blew, I held my tongue; but it was some time before I gave up wondering why she declined to tell me.

After lunch I was smoking a cigar in the smoking-room, when a servant entered with a note upon a salver. He handed it to me, and stood waiting for an answer. The envelope, which was addressed in a bold handwriting, was perfectly plain, but the paper it contained bore, in the left-hand top corner, a small gold crown. To my surprise, it was from the king's aide-de-camp, and ran as follows:

DEAR LORD INSTOW—Could you make it convenient to call upon His Majesty immediately on receipt of this. By doing so, you would be rendering him a great service.—Yours very faithfully, CONRAD MANOLAKI.

I scrawled a note to say that I would start at once, and then went upstairs to prepare myself for the visit. What could His Majesty want with me, I wondered, as I dressed.

On reaching the palace, I found that my arrival was expected. The aide-de-camp, Manolaki, was waiting to receive me, and, as soon as I was announced, he came forward.

'His Majesty is most anxious to see you, my lord,' he said. 'If you will follow me, I will conduct you to his presence.'

We ascended the great stairs together, and eventually reached a room in which I had never been before. It was furnished as a study, and I found the king pacing up and down in it. He was plainly in a state of agitation, and directly he saw me, he came over to where I stood, and shook me warmly by the hand. I noticed that he was no longer the apathetic, listless man I had hitherto found him, but showed himself now, as he must have been when he took the throne of the Médangs, quick, eager, and resourceful, with an eye that spoke for his command of men, and a brain that enabled him to make the most of every possible advantage. I never encountered a greater change in a human being.

'I am obliged to you for your promptness in responding to my request, my lord,' he said. 'I took the liberty of sending for you, as the matter upon which I desire to consult you is of the utmost importance. To be brief with you, I think you are my friend?'

'I desire that you should always so consider me,' I answered. 'If there is any means by which I can prove it, I shall be glad if you will tell me.'

'It *is* in your power, and I will show you how. See here.' He crossed to the writing-table in the centre of the room, and took from it a slip of paper, which he handed to me. 'This is a telegram in cipher from my prime-minister,' he said. 'Translated, it means, "Return with all haste. Fear serious trouble impending with the French."'

I held the paper in my hand, and looked from it to the king, then back again.

'I fear I do not quite understand,' I said. 'In what way can I be of assistance to you?'

The king wheeled round, and fixed his eager eyes upon me.

'From this message, you will understand that it is absolutely imperative that I should reach my country as soon as possible. In fact, I have already replied to the effect that I am coming. But how to do it puzzles me. The P. and O. steamer sailed yesterday for the East. There is not another boat leaving here for three weeks. I must be off without a day's delay, and endeavour to intercept a Messagerie boat at Port Said. I sent for you in order to ask if your lordship will convey me thither. Remember a kingdom's happiness hangs upon your answer.'

I replied without a second's thought. All my preparations were complete. I should travel faster than the majority of mail-boats. What was to prevent me from taking him all the way.

'I will gladly do more than you ask,' I answered, catching something of his enthusiasm. 'If you will accept my hospitality, I will convey you to your kingdom. My boat is ready, and we can leave to-night, if you wish. By that means you will save some days.'

The king's face lit up with smiles.

'I thank you, my friend,' he replied, shaking me by the hand. 'I thank you from the bottom of my heart. If ever I can repay you this service, be certain I will do so.'

'When will you be ready to start?'

'In an hour's time, if necessary. This inaction kills me—I must be doing.'

'Shall we say ten o'clock to-night?'

'By all means. At ten o'clock I will be ready. Manolaki will remain behind to settle everything. He can follow as soon as possible.'

'Then I will go out at once, and give the necessary instructions. You know my vessel?'

'The *Ianthe?* I saw her only to-day, lying beyond the Custom House. I will join you on board at ten.'

'In the meantime, I will bid your Majesty *au revoir.*'

'*Au revoir*, and many, many thanks. You are a friend in need.'

'I trust I may prove a friend in deed.'

With that I made my exit, and set off, first to the yacht, where I gave Wells the necessary instructions, and then back to the hotel. Olivia met me on the stairs.

'Can you be ready to leave Venice at ten o'clock to-night?' I asked, as I greeted her.

My abruptness must have startled her, for she gazed at me in astonishment.

'My dear Instow, how impetuous you are,' she said, when she had recovered a little from her surprise. 'This morning you had no idea when you would start; it might be to-morrow, it might be next week; now you want me to pack up and be off in a few hours.'

'There are urgent reasons for hastening our departure, dear,' I replied; 'you must not blame me.'

'But what reason can be so urgent as to demand this hurry?' she asked.

'I have seen the king,' I answered, as if there were but one sovereign in the world and he lived in Venice. 'He has received important news from his kingdom that necessitates his immediate return.'

It may have been my fancy, but I could not help thinking her face had grown a little paler.

'But how does that affect us?' she asked. 'What have we to do with His Majesty's movements?'

'As he has just missed the boat here, and it is unlikely he will catch one at Port Said, I have offered to convey him to his country,' I answered. 'I hope you have no objection?'

I expected to see her express some pleasure at the prospect of helping the man for whom she had shown so much admiration, but, to my surprise, she seemed to take my action in ill part. One might have been excused had one imagined, from her behaviour, that the king's presence was likely to prove distasteful to her, so unsympathetically did she greet the announcement of his coming. However, I did not argue with her, but went off to find my man, that I might tell him to pack at once.

By nine o'clock Olivia and I were on board; shortly before ten His Majesty made his appearance, and, almost while the clocks were striking, the anchor was raised, and the screw began to revolve. An hour later we were well out in the Adriatic, and beautiful Venice was a thing of the past.

## THE SAFETY POINT IN OIL AND LAMPS.

By a Practical Chemist.

At present there is an investigation going on before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, regarding the dangers of petroleum, and how they can best be obviated: whether by raising the standard of flashing point of the oil, or by enforcing the use of safety lamps, or both. Petroleum being the lighting material of the poor everywhere, and to a large extent also that of the middle class, there is no commodity more bound up with the comfort and refinement of the people. Wherever the standard of flash is low, dreadful deaths and serious fires are of frequent occurrence; but anything that would add materially to the cost, so as to limit its use by the poor, would be a national misfortune. The fatalities and fires are mostly from lamps, and according to Professor Dewar there are 10,000,000 lamps in use every night in the United Kingdom. Could the lamp manufacture and sale be regulated so as to prevent danger of accident? The accidents in storage and carrying, however, although they have been comparatively few, have been very serious and dreadful when they did happen, and these must not be neglected.

Whence arises the danger of petroleum? Chemists tell us that there is a series of compounds of carbon and hydrogen called paraffins. The first of the series is a very light gas, called marsh gas; the next is a heavier gas; the next heavier still; then they get condensable into a very

volatile liquid, then a denser liquid less volatile, and by and by liquids and solids non-volatile. There is another series called olefines, beginning with light gases also, gradually getting denser—volatile liquids, then less volatile, and the end of the series in this case is thick viscous non-volatile liquids. Both in natural petroleum and in the products of the distillation of shale all these are represented—gases, volatile and non-volatile liquids, and generally solids. Russian petroleum has no solid paraffin and has another series of liquids of its own. The gases from the petroleum wells are valuable fuel in America, and similar gases are used for fuel at the shale retorts in this country. The volatile oils are separated and sold as naphtha, benzine, gasoline, &c. The thinner, less volatile liquids are used for lamps, as paraffin oil and kerosene; while the heavier and more viscous liquids are used for lubricating machinery; and the solid goes to make paraffin candles, &c. In crude petroleum or shale oil, all the different series are present, and the first step in refining is a distillation. The volatile oils boil off first, and are run into the naphtha tank; the burning oils come next; and then the heavy oil and solid paraffin. If some of the naphtha is run into the burning oil tank, the lamp oil gives off vapours at ordinary temperatures and is dangerous for explosion or catching fire. These and the following notes are taken from the evidence put before the Committee.

The danger in lamp oil is from the volatile oil or naphtha present. The danger is gauged by taking what is called the flash-point. One way of taking the flash-point is to fill a bottle half full of the oil to be tested, heat up to 73° F., shake up air and oil together, let the spray settle, and put a light into the mixture of air and vapour over the oil. If a blue flame fills the bottle for a moment, going immediately out, then the oil is under the legal standard of 73°. If this does not take place, the oil is above standard. But oils flashing 73° to 90° are somewhat dangerous for lamps, and require some care. The better brands of foreign petroleum and all home-made oil, when tested in this manner, give off no vapour until 100°. There is no danger of explosion in a lamp and little danger of the oil catching fire unless the oil is heated above the flash point; for unless heated above flashing point there is no explosive vapour present. Small lamps only heat the oil 5° above the temperature of the apartment. The ordinary larger lamps, if with glass fount, heat the oil 10° or even 15° above the temperature of the apartment, with metal fount 20° or perhaps even 25°. So ordinary lamps charged with 73° oil, such as is free from surveillance in our present legislation, have often an explosive mixture in the reservoir; but if the wick fills the burner completely, and there is no passage open between the flame and the oil-reservoir, explosion cannot take place. For an explosion three things are necessary: vapours in sufficient quantity, air in sufficient quantity, and a flame applied to the mixture. To prevent the flame getting to the mixture the London County Council recommend that the wick be incased in a metal tube going nearly to the bottom of the reservoir, so that it will be impossible for the flame to get down the heated wick-tube to the vapour mixture. With oil in a lamp heated above flash point, if the oil is set free in any way by breaking or oversetting the lamp, the oil takes fire almost explosively from the sudden evolution of vapour, and this causes many more fatalities and fires than true explosion does. To obviate this, the L.C.C. recommend the reservoirs to be of stout metal. Other authorities, however, think that metal tubes and reservoirs are objectionable. All lamps leak more or less if overset, and if the screw is imperfect, or if it is not screwed in tight, the leaking may be great, and the heating of the oil by the metal tube and reservoirs adds greatly to the danger in such a case. As was pointed out to the Committee, the present type of lamp was introduced to suit high-flashing oil above 100°, and was meant for strong glass reservoirs, as glass is a bad conductor of heat. And it was shown that if the present low-flash oil is allowed, a new type of lamp must be adopted; for the metal fount and tube while decreasing danger in one direction, greatly increases it in another.

Mr Spencer, the chief officer of the London County Council in previous years, gave the opinion that raising the standard of flash point would do no good, and that our only safety is in regulating the sale, storage, and carrying of oil, and above all in enforcing the use of safe lamps. Before this Committee he has modified his opinion, and acknowledges that if raising the flash point is practicable, it would cover all the danger; but he thinks the minimum allowed should be 120° if all accidents are to be prevented. He handed in experiments showing the heating of oil during burning in lamps, &c.; but according to other authorities, his heats were excessive and deceptive. He did not think that safe oil was practicable, and still advocates legislation as to lamps. Sir Vivian Majendie, of the Home Office, had previously explained the present state of the law, the law proposed in 1891, &c. Mr Redwood, the able secretary to the Petroleum Association, in previous years opposed legislation, but now approves of a law on the lines of the 1891 Bill. He admitted that the higher the flash, the safer the oil, and that there were too many lamp accidents; and although 100° must be safer than 73°, yet he held that oil at 73° should not be reckoned a dangerous article of commerce. He thought that to get oil of the same specific gravity as at present, and 100° test, that of the present ordinary petroleum of commerce 30 per cent. would require to be rejected in the case of American (namely, 15 per cent. naphtha and 15 per cent. heavy oil), and 15 per cent. in the case of Russian (namely, 10 per cent. naphtha and 5 per cent. heavy oil). This he thought might make the safe oil too dear. The greatest of all physicists in the world, Lord Kelvin, and one of the greatest of all chemists, Mendeleëff of St Petersburg, declared that 100° was necessary for safety, and that there would be no practical

difficulty in procuring it. Mr Redwood thought that after taking out naphtha without taking out heavy oil, the oil would not burn well. But Mendeleëff assured the Committee that oil of 200° flash point could be burned quite well in lamps modified to suit, and that the present lamps would burn quite well with oil of 100° flash, got from ordinary petroleum by taking out naphtha only. The Scotch manufacturers showed that taking out the necessary amount of naphtha presented no practical difficulties, that it meant at most 7 per cent. of naphtha kept out of the lamp oil and sold as naphtha, and that this would not increase the cost to the manufacturers more than ¼d. per gallon; and the deficiency in quantity would at once be made up by refining more crude oil, which was superabundant in the world. But practical refiners from America are yet to be heard on this point. The lamp manufacturers strongly oppose legislation as to lamps, and say that it would cripple their home trade, and destroy their foreign. They also advocate raising the standard of flash to at least 90° or, better, to 100°, which would prevent all danger, and the lamp trade might be left free.

Evidence from Professor Attfield and others showed that our present standard was adopted through a mistake. Our first law of 1862, passed on account of the numerous fatalities and accidents, prohibited the use of oil that gave off inflammable vapours at 100°. There were no inspectors appointed, and dangerous oil came in as before, although now contrary to the law. A Special Committee of the House of Commons in 1867 recommended an 110° standard. The schedule regarding the test was handed over to Professors Abel, Attfield, and Letheby. They reported in favour of a certain test, which gave the same point as the Abel test does now, and agreed that *with it* the standard might be reduced to 100°. The Act adopted 100°, and at the last moment put in the old open test, which gives about 27° higher than the Abel test; and this was done without raising the standard to suit, or even putting it back to 110°. The change to 100° close test standard would have disturbed the petroleum manufacture and trade for a little, but would have saved lives and property; but, instead of this, the law allowed oil to come in as dangerous as before, but now took all responsibility from manufacturer and merchant. One hundred degrees old open test thus became the standard, which allows an oil that gives off vapour, and is dangerous for explosion and fire, at 73°. Legislation caused no decrease of accidents.

Evidence was also given as to Germany. The Commission there was composed of merchants, chemists, &c. They had evidence that England and Austria both lost a large continental trade by adopting a standard a little higher than the continent accepted; that when the Commission sat 40 per cent. of the continental trade came to German ports, and if the standard were made as high as in England, they would lose all this; and that 73° Abel as in England was practically no safer than 70° Abel which they proposed. The government then handed the matter over to the chemists to fix the apparatus and standard, but the standard was on no account to be fixed higher than the English standard. A standard of 70° was fixed, while its danger was fully acknowledged; and a memorandum was sent out to the German states and cities to regulate its sale and storage.

Witnesses showed that in Scotland, where oil above 100° is the rule, there are no fatalities, and that in England with 73°, oil fatalities are numerous. It was asserted against this that Germany, with a standard of 70° had no accidents either, and that both in Germany and Scotland the secret of the immunity was the sobriety and steadiness of the common people. Proof was then brought that Germany had really as many accidents as England, and that in Scotland the common people were not more sober and careful than the English. A standard of 100° or 105° was shown to be more effective for good than the proposal of the 1891 Bill, which classed all oils under 150° flash as dangerous. A standard of 100° will cause all the household oil to be sent in above 100°, and it would leave the oil and lamp trade free; but a safety point of 150° would cause all the oil of the common people to come in about 73° as at present, and the danger would continue, while the necessary regulations to suit this standard would greatly impede both the oil and the lamp trades.

It was further elicited that in 1874 the consumption of refined petroleum in this country was at the rate of 640 gallons per thousand of the population. In 1884 it had risen to 1084 and in 1894 to 3482 gallons. The importation of petroleum into London in 1894 was 1,500,000 barrels.

All the evidence yet produced, even from Messrs Spencer and Redwood, has been in favour of raising the standard to 100°; but no doubt the petroleum trade has good witnesses in reserve who may put a different complexion on the whole matter. It would be well for the general public to take an interest in the proceedings, as the safety and cheapness of petroleum are both of great importance, and there is just a suspicion that both in Germany and England the interests of the people have not been sufficiently protected against the numerous and ubiquitous members of the petroleum trade, who, under a common leadership, act throughout Europe as one man. It is evident that the trade representatives have not been kept at arm's length in Europe as they are in America. The people themselves must see to it that government, parliament, and press attend to their true interests.

In regard to the management of lamps, the writer has much personal experience. One of the advantages of a strong clear glass reservoir is that you see the height of the oil at all times, and there is no danger of filling too full. A danger in connection with a metal reservoir is that it may be filled too full, and if it is ordinary petroleum, it is dangerous to bring a light near the orifice so as to shine in. After stowing in the wick, the vessel may be quite full. When the lamp is lighted, the metal conducts the heat to the oil and it expands. The only relief possible, often, is for the oil to escape up the wick tube and overflow the burner, and give a great flare up the chimney that cannot be commanded by turning down the wick;

the oil may even overflow the burner and blaze up outside the chimney also. In such a case there is no danger of an explosion; but most people do not know that, and would throw down the lamp in terror and probably cause a fire. If the wick is too tight for this, the strongest reservoir would be rent, and the warm oil allowed to escape; when, if the flash were low, it would blaze up suddenly and fiercely from the evolution of vapours.

If the airholes below the burner get filled up with dust or wick trimmings, the lamp burns with a red flame, evolving much heat and causing smell; and if this waste gets soaked with oil, it may catch fire and blaze up, causing alarm and danger. The airholes should be kept quite clear and clean. No smear of oil outside the reservoir or burner should be tolerated. Whenever the lamp warms on lighting, it evaporates this oil, causing smell. If, on filling up the lamp, some oil is spilt outside the fount, and roughly wiped, the oil from inside the lamp comes over by surface attraction, and soon the oil is in drops outside the fount. If the fount and burner are free from oil at first, the oil cannot syphon out in this way. It is quite a mistake to think that oil comes through glass or metal. Any spill outside the reservoir should be wiped with a wet soapy cloth, and dried with a towel free from oiliness, and then no oil can syphon out. On trimming the lamp during the day, the wick should be turned down into the burner. Some people leave the wick turned above the burner, and even above the dome to be ready to light at night, but this greatly increases the syphoning over of the oil to the outside by surface attraction.

To bring about an explosion, there have generally to be several things wrong—such as dirty oil or wick, or dirt about the airholes to cause extra heating, and too small a wick, leaving a passage down the side, which is increased by the expansion of the metal by the heat. The flame can go down through a rather small passage when the tube is highly heated. So the wick must fill the wick-tube without being too tight, and this prevents nearly all danger. But everything should be clean, and then the lamp burns cool and with a bright white light. The wick should be dried before being put into the lamp, as the hygroscopic moisture it retains prevents the free course of the oil, and reduces the light considerably. A *moist* cloth should never touch the wick in trimming the lamp; and the lamp should never be allowed to burn dry, otherwise the wick free of oil attracts moisture. Wicks should be renewed whenever they get dirty.

In cold weather in winter the oil should be warmed up to the ordinary temperature of the house before the lamp is lighted, particularly if glass reservoirs are used. In country places this often happens: the oil barrel is in an outhouse exposed to frost, and the lamp is filled with this cold oil and lighted at once. The capillary action is greatly reduced by the cold, and the oil cannot rise fast enough to give a proper light; then the wick is turned up too far, perhaps until it gets beyond the dome, and a proper light cannot be got until the lamp is retrimmed. Cold weather always causes an outcry that the oil is bad, when it is really all right. The lamp should be filled in the morning, or else the tin can, filled in the morning, should be left all day in a warm kitchen; *not* near the fire if ordinary petroleum is used.

## GEORDIE'S JUSTICE.

### III.

PUNCTUALLY at nine o'clock the next morning the disciplinarian manager passed through the mill gate. He sat astride the beautiful creature that had, unconsciously, caused Tommy so much suffering. When he had seen her properly stabled—there was no groom at the works—he entered his office, and settled down to his letters before beginning his tour of the mill.

He had not been at his desk long ere the familiar face of old Geordie appeared on the other side of the glass partition which separated the manager from the rest of his staff.

'Mornin', Mester,' said Geordie, opening the slight door with a burst that almost shook the glass out of its frame.

'Good morning, Donce,' replied the manager. 'Is anything wrong?' it being an unusual thing for his foreman to enter the office so early.

'There's a domned lot wrong,' growled Geordie, with black looks in his eyes.

'What, then?' queried the manager. 'Has some young woman married you against your will since I saw you on Saturday?'

'No, sir,' said Geordie.

At that 'sir,' uttered slowly and with reluctance, the manager knew there must be something seriously the matter. Only on very rare occasions indeed did Geordie introduce that respectful word into his laconic conversation. The manager became at once all attention, put down his paper-knife, and listened whilst Geordie, in his slow and heavy way, made a detailed report of all that had occurred on the previous Saturday.

The manager was horrified at the base cruelty inflicted upon Tommy. He had young children, boys and girls, of his own, and sensible though he was of the difference in station between them and the 'nippers' employed in his mill, his heart was moved by Geordie's recital. He also greatly admired the staunch courage of the lad and the affection he had evinced for his beautiful horse.

'The barbarous savages,' he ejaculated. 'If I don't get them six months each I'm not manager of this mill. Send for his grandmother at once. We'll get her to take out a summons against the whole gang.'

'Nay,' said Geordie, 'we won't hev no summonses. No. The magistrates don't know how to deal wi' a case like to this 'un. No, Mester. *We'm* goin' to deal wi' 'em this how.'

Thereupon there ensued a long conversation between the manager and his foreman, at the close of which the former said:

'Very well, Geordie. I'm perfectly willing; but I think I'd better not appear to have anything to do with it.'

Geordie looked at him with a twinkle in his blue eyes.

'Mappen yo' couldn' think o' some one down town wantin' ye a bit,' he suggested with a sly look.

'Good, very good,' said the manager delightedly. 'I do happen to remember an appointment I ought to keep. Yes, that will do. And Geordie,' he continued, as his foreman was disappearing through the door, 'I'll remember to send in to you a score of jars of ale. It's warm weather, and the men will be thirsty this afternoon.'

'Lord love yow,' laughed Geordie. 'Yo does un'erstan' us chaps.'

With that he went away to his multifarious duties.

Nothing occurred during the morning to cause any uneasiness to Bob and his friends, and they began to congratulate themselves that the little matter would pass unnoticed.

But shortly after the great bell had summoned the men to work again after dinner word was brought to each of the gang that the 'gaffer' wanted them.

They entered the office, shuffling in one after the other in their great clogs. Big bully Bob; sneaking Sam Tappit; Wat Merrill, an unsociable, snarly kind of human bear; Tim Shankin, a 'prig,' drawing good wages, whilst his children went barefoot; and, lastly, dark Jack Pete, the 'furriner'—that is to say, he came from the south of England—quarrelsome, revengeful, and passionate to a degree. Altogether as pleasant-looking a crew as could well be found.

The manager received them suavely; harangued them in a set speech, in which he said he regretted their 'little joke' had led to such serious consequences to the 'nipper,' but he could make allowances, and so on, and so on. However, he concluded, he must take some slight notice of the offence, for discipline's sake, and they must therefore consider themselves discharged for a fortnight.

With that he dismissed them, opened a private door into the road, and wended his way down town to keep his appointment.

The five culprits tramped along the passage leading to the office entrance, offering mutual congratulations on the manager being such a 'softy,' and passed out into the yard.

Here they pulled up short, with some appearance of anxiety on their faces.

The gates were closed for one thing, which in itself was unusual at that time of day. Further, every man in the works was assembled on the open ground fronting the office; worse still, each had his shirt sleeves rolled back to his shoulders; but, worst of all, every man toyed with a thick pliant leathern thong, or pulled it through his open fingers, or rolled and unrolled it in his hands, or cracked the air with it. Things looked rather ugly.

Geordie stepped forward as spokesman.

'Chaps,' he said, 'we want a word wi' yo afore yow leaves us.'

'Go to blazes,' snarled Bob. He did not like the situation at all.

'Arter yow, lad,' Geordie replied; 'there's some as I knows on has to go afore me.'

He gave a signal, the men closed round, the implicated gang was surrounded, and after an ineffectual struggle—for what were five against eighty—each man was stripped of coat and waistcoat, and his hands tied behind his back. The rest then formed into two lines facing each other, and placed their prisoners at one end.

The self-appointed 'magistrates' were at first inclined to look upon the whole affair as a good bit of rare horse-play, one which would enable them to pay off old scores against a very unpopular gang; but their temper was uncertain on account of the suggested attempt to rob them of their bonuses, and it needed but a touch to give their muscles that stiffness which they would otherwise have wanted. That touch was forthcoming.

For, just at this moment, old Mrs Potter, Tommy's 'grannie,' passed across the yard on her way to the office, and somehow the sight of her gray shawl with white fringe, patched gown, and old-fashioned black bonnet, beneath which a white cap appeared—all Mrs Potter's best—roused the men to anger.

'One!' cried a black-bearded man near the end of the line. With that he brought down his thong on to Bob Rowe's broad back. The shock jerked an ugly oath through that gentleman's set teeth, and made him wince involuntarily.

'Two!' sang out the next man.

'Three! four!' came in rapid succession from other two, with as much *sang-froid* as if they had been checking over iron bars.

'Tally!' shouted the next, and for once in his life at least Tim Shankin knew what real pain felt like.

The culprits bore the many blows without flinching, thinking by dogged endurance to balk their judges somewhat of their revenge.

But they had underrated their power; the blows were delivered with such force and fell so quickly. They were bound to move. With sullen scowls they crept down the line of bare-armed men till they reached the end. Here they fondly hoped their punishment would cease, but were doomed to disappointment, as the towering form of Geordie blocked their exit.

'Back again, chaps,' he cried, 'back again. Now, lads, cut it out of 'em, cut it out!'

Down the lane Bob and his fellow-prisoners had to turn again.

Admonished by Geordie, the 'lictors'' strokes fell more thickly and more heavily. The victims' slow walk became more and more rapid till it increased to a run.

Each blow raised dark brown wales beneath their thin shirts, which were soon cut to shreds. The thick blood slowly trickled down their palpitating flesh.

Still the wretched fellows were forced to run up and down that terrible lane, walled in by muscular, fiercely indignant, angry men. The thongs hissed through the air and descended with sickening cracks on backs, shoulders, arms.

'For the love o' heaven, ha' done, lads,' gasped Mat.

Still the blows rained down. Convulsive sobs shook Sam's strong frame. The nails of Jack Pete's fingers were almost lost in his palms, as he clenched his fists in agony.

Six times were they compelled to run that fiery gauntlet, each blow scattering a little cloud of blood-dust in the air, the ends of the thongs growing limp, sopping, and wet.

'Open them gates,' shouted Geordie, in a stentorian voice, when the sixth run had been made.

The heavy gates began to swing back as the prisoners shot across the intervening space between the end of the line and the works' boundary. Half-a-dozen of the hands, headed by that terrible old man, rushed after them to give a few more parting strokes.

'Now go to blazes,' old Geordie shouted as they fled. 'I reckon yo'll not get it hotter there nor yo've found it 'ere.'

With that he collected all his remaining strength for one last blow. His thong flew through the air like a vengeful snake and caught Bob as he passed. He jumped a clean three feet in the air and gave vent to a yell that would have done credit to a red Indian, so cunning was the blow, and such an adroit twist did Geordie give to the point.

Blind with terror and rage, the five passed through the gates and into the road but—not yet into freedom.

For shrewd old Geordie had spread abroad the tale of Tommy's wrongs, and so much had they roused popular sympathy that a crowd of women and children awaited the culprits as they left the works. They were greeted with hoots, yells, and hisses, followed by a shower of bad eggs, rotten apples, cabbage stalks, a dead cat or two, offal from a neighbouring slaughter-house, mud, or anything else that was handy and offensive to touch or smell. The jeering, merciless crowd chased them down the road till each sought shelter in his own home.

'Eh! chaps,' cried the delighted Geordie, as he joined the other men and lifted up a can of foaming beer with his right hand, while he wiped his lips with the back of what remained of his left. 'Eh! lads,' he cried, 'they magistrates wouldn' a treated 'em so. Gie us a health, chaps, gie us a health; here's to Geordie's Justice, and may it never die!'

'Geordie's Justice' rang out from the cast-iron throats, and into each dry mouth the cool beer—the sly manager's gift—was poured in a refreshing stream.

It was brutal justice, perhaps, and severe, but nevertheless most effectual. For many a long day after any cowardly bully was immediately quieted if threatened with a taste of 'Geordie's Justice.'

He is dead now, is honest Geordie. No longer is his leathern waistcoat, which seemed to cling to his person like sheet-iron, seen passing from mill to house and house to mill.

Less than two years after the events above related, a slight accident led to his being carried to the same institution to which he himself had carried Tommy.

A slip on a piece of ice and a fall on the edge of a plate of iron fractured his thigh; and whether it was his enforced inactivity in hospital, or the abnormal amount of 'weshing' he had to undergo, and at the hands of women too; or whether his vital forces were too low to resist the effects of the shock caused by his accident; whatever the reason, he quickly sank, and in less than a fortnight his spirit had quitted his horny body.

His life had been a hard one. His character and practices might in many respects have been improved. His language was coarse; his person dirty. But perhaps his sterling honesty of purpose, his strict sense of justice, would stand him in good purpose in the after-world. Certainly his love for little 'nippers' in general, and Tommy in particular, would not be forgotten by the Great Judge. Possibly, on its entry into the kingdom of heaven, his soul would require far less 'weshing' than the bodies of many of the cleanliest people on earth!

At his funeral none attended with more sincere respect than did the nippers. They went in a body to the manager to 'ask off' to go to Geordie's 'burying,' for, as their spokesman put it, 'though Mester Donce would a kicked the innerds out o' a *man* as soon as look to 'em, 'e was allus a good chap to us nippers,' and so they honoured him to the best of their ability.

THE END.

## SAND-EELING.

By H. Heron, Author of *Shore-shooting*, &c.

'What is sand-eeling?' is usually the first question that greets the mention of this subject. Sand-eeling is one of the many pleasant experiences which can be obtained during a stay in the Channel Isles. Sand-eels are small, slender, silvery fish about six inches long, which are to be found in some of the sand-banks surrounding the islands. They are procurable only on the occurrence of the spring tides, when the sea recedes much farther than usual from the shore, and leaves the banks favoured by sand-eels, some few uncovered, but more generally under a foot or two of water.

Summer is the season when sand-eeling can be most enjoyed, as well as being the season when the fish are numerous; but they are very capricious in their habits, and the chances are even whether they may not choose the occasion of the spring tides as an opportune moment to forsake their usual haunts. At other times the sand literally swarms with fish, and the sport, in consequence, becomes fast and furious. Sand-eeling may be almost regarded as a national pastime among the islanders; for when the suitable tides occur in the daytime, whole families turn out to take part in the amusement, and people come from all directions to the places upon the coasts where sand-eels are likely to be found. Such spots are generally among the flats below the tide-line on long stretches of sandy beach. There the sand-eelers congregate and spend the exquisite summer day paddling about in the warm clear water, some neglecting the sand-eels, and devoting themselves to catching the big shrimps that can be seen lying on the golden sand below or darting about amongst the weed hanging from the weather-blackened

rocks, which lie thickly scattered about these miles of shallows.

One of the best localities for sand-eeling is situated on the south-east of Jersey, near La Rocque, where an immense expanse of weedy flats and sand is uncovered at low tide. Starting from a point some distance north of La Rocque, it is possible to walk along this sea-floor for two or three miles, while across the intense blue of the sea rise the white cliffs of La Manche, dazzling in the sunshine, and under the nearer shore spread out low dark levels of rock, which culminate seawards at about a mile from the land in a mass of granite crowned by a martello tower. Beyond and about this tower stretch the sand-eeling banks indefinitely.

Most of the people come by the coast road, passing down the greasy slip at La Rocque, and so on to the raised cart-track, which winds across the brown plain of rocks, and in and out amongst the larger up-standing groups, and so thread their way to the sand-eeling grounds. Some walk, carrying what appear to be hay-rakes upon their shoulders; others go a-fishing after a unique fashion—in carts! These latter jolt slowly along over pebbles and slippery surfaces and through sun-warmed pools for more than a mile, till they approach fairly close to the scene of action. There the horse is tethered under the lee of some tall rock, with an armful of hay to amuse him, while the men and women join the scattered parties of fishers. Some are moving about knee-deep in the rippling inlets and pools, using their rakes; others again gathered on outcropping islands of sand, stooping and plying their hooks. Farthest out to sea, a small number of weather-beaten men, to whom the occupation of the hour is serious business, not the careless pleasure of a sunny afternoon, can be seen wading about in deep water, where the eels are larger and more numerous.

Looking landwards, one sees broad reaches of sparkling water, and yellow spaces of smooth sand, broken here and there by clusters of still warm weed-bound pools, and edged by a line of thin foam where the margin of the ocean lips the shore. Along this line flocks of gulls swoop and settle, quarrel and cry; while companies of lesser birds wheel hither and thither like white thistledown blown about by the soft wind. Strewn everywhere at random are black knots and stumps of stone, with an occasional granite giant standing in the shallows mocassined with fringing weeds. On many of these spurs of rock, cormorants—the Isle of Wight parsons—sit solemnly watching the scene, their outlines looming dark against the shimmering blue of the horizon.

As for the sport itself, it can be carried on in two different ways—either with a large iron-toothed rake, or with an instrument resembling an excessively blunt reaping-hook. The rake is for use in the water. The fisherman has a basket slung in front of him, then he rests the long handle of the rake on his right shoulder and walks backwards, pressing the teeth into the sand. The eels lie about an inch below the surface of the sand, and so are impaled upon the prongs. When he sees he has some fish impaled, he raises the rake and dexterously and quickly transfers them into his basket, though many manage to wriggle off and escape, be he ever so adroit and rapid with his fingers. The hook is perhaps the more sporting method of the two, and is certainly the less cruel. In this case the fisher places his basket upon the sand-bank beside him, and, stooping, makes rapid semi-circular scrapes with his hook, thus knocking the eels out of their beds in the ooze. The fish being usually unhurt, vanish like a flash into the sand, so that a quick grasp with the left hand is necessary to secure them. The hook cannot be used even in shallow water, as it would require exceptional skill to capture the slippery eels in their own element.

Visitors to the islands occasionally wish to take part in this sport, but few ever reach the really best banks, and the excursion often ends in disappointment. To enjoy this, and indeed most other forms of sport, the individual must not be too much concerned about his or her appearance.

Very frequently the best tides occur during the night, and sand-eeling by moonlight—or, in default of the moon, with the aid of lanterns—is not an experience to be lightly foregone or forgotten. Moreover, the best catches are invariably made in the night-time, always exceeding those attempted by day. Five hundred fish is a common take for one person, and at night the number is usually far greater. It cannot be considered a hardship to spend the night wading waist-deep in the warm phosphorescent sea, when with every step and movement you leave a shining track behind you, while now and then a golden bead remains like a jewel on your fingers. If you hold the jelly-like atom for a few moments on your hand the little light dies out gradually.

Then home, when the early morning light is spreading like milk over the surface of the water, and the shore, as you approach it, glimmers in a line of opal pink under the gray western sky. A couple of hours' sleep, followed by a breakfast of crisply fried sand-eels, eaten with thin bread and Jersey butter, rounds off the expedition in first-rate style.

The delicate, silvery, toothless fish must be cooked and eaten while absolutely fresh, or when dried. The islanders dry them in great quantities for winter use, first gutting them immediately on the return from fishing, and then placing them in the strong sunshine to dry.

Besides sand-eels, large soles are often impaled by the rakes, and sometimes devil-fish, whose spines are poisonous, and produce a painful swelling in a few minutes.

Sand-eeling should never be undertaken by strangers without a guide. The danger on these coasts is the rapidity with which the tide rises, racing in over the shallows with alarming speed. People, when far out, often imagine themselves quite safe as long as the water is not apparently encroaching on the slip of sand or rock where they happen to be standing, and forget that, owing to the inequalities of the sea-bed, their particular mound or ridge may still be high and dry a quarter of an hour after the water is many feet deep in some wide hollow between them and the land, and that presently the whole expanse will be submerged

with the exception of a high rock here or there, to reach which may just be as impossible as to gain safety on the mainland. In this way a good many accidents have happened even in broad daylight, but a moderate amount of caution and good sense should entirely prevent the occurrence of such misadventures.

This warning applies even more especially to night-fishing, when the turn of the tide takes place so softly as easily to pass unnoticed, and by the time one becomes aware of the rising of the water, it may be a difficult matter to outstrip the rush of the tide. Then there is the further danger of losing one's way among the bewildering spread of rock and shallows to be considered. In the darkness they either look deceptively alike, or to perplexed eyes assume a strange and unfamiliar aspect, apt to mislead the wanderer. Men born and bred on the coast have occasionally been deceived. For instance, a farmer and one of his neighbours—both of whom had passed their lives within a couple of miles of La Rocque—went astray there one dark night some years ago. Knowing that the tide was about to turn, they slung their baskets, heavy with a splendid catch, on their backs, and set out confidently for the shore, as they thought. They had proceeded about half-a-mile, when it suddenly struck them that something was wrong. Fearing that they had lost their way, my friend the farmer stooped and gathered a handful of gritty sand at their feet. Both men examined it with keen interest, as may be imagined. 'This is the wrong gravel; we must be walking straight out to sea!' exclaimed his companion. In this way their intimate knowledge of the coast saved them—a means of safety that could not be possessed by any stranger. They turned at once, and hurried through the gloom in the opposite direction, well aware that they were hastening for their lives. They barely managed to make the shore in time, after a prolonged struggle breast-high, through the hiss of the rising tide.

It is therefore wise for visitors to secure the services of a reliable man belonging to the neighbourhood; and in most cases those who go sand-eeling will be eager for a second instalment of so pleasant and novel an experience.

## THE PURLOINED WILL.

By Herbert Keen.

Old Barker was a fossilised Q.C., who had long ago retired from practice. Ill-natured people said that his practice had first retired from him, but his age and infirmities alone justified—if they had not compelled—his withdrawal from active life. He was a wealthy bachelor, residing in the Albany, where he possessed a cellar of port wine which was the envy of his friends. Hence, perhaps, the origin of the gout which severely afflicted him; but his tastes were luxurious, and self-indulgent in other respects also. He was an art patron of a very shrewd and discriminating type; his pictures were valued at several thousands of pounds, and his collection of china was unique. Nevertheless, he was extremely thrifty, not to say stingy, with his money, and he had never been known to give away a sixpence in his life.

In fact, old Barker was a thoroughly selfish, ill-conditioned, old curmudgeon, whose choleric temper was emphasised by a sort of savage humour, which caused him to be treated with awesome respect. He had a wicked old squint or cast in one of his watery pale blue eyes, and he uttered his most trenchant remarks with his defective optic glaring in such a manner as to complete his victim's discomfiture. His nephew, Charles Gascoigne, had frequently noticed this unpleasant peculiarity, for next to the old man's valet—a crushed, down-trodden creature, who retained his post only from the hope of a legacy—this young gentleman was the subject of the Q.C.'s cruellest witticisms.

It must not be imagined from this circumstance that Gascoigne lacked manliness or self-respect. On the contrary, he was a very spirited young fellow, and this was one of the main causes of his uncle's displeasure. But after all, when one is heir-presumptive to a hundred thousand pounds—which was considered the most modest estimate of the old man's wealth—it is sheer folly not to exercise a little patience and self-control. Gascoigne was by no means averse to the prospect of a life of ease or luxury in the near future; and in view of this agreeable contingency, he took things very easily at the bar, though he suffered from occasional misgivings and twinges of conscience on account of his idleness—for he had brains enough to perceive that he was wasting his opportunities.

If he could only have felt reasonably sure of his uncle's testamentary intentions regarding him, his conscientious scruples would have troubled him very little. But the old man delighted to perplex him by contradictory hints and threats, and constantly reminded him that he had a cousin, the wife of a country parson, whose claims were equal in point of kinship to his own. It was true that this young lady had mortally offended old Barker by marrying without his consent, but this might not have prevented him from making a will in her favour. Gascoigne was too high-minded and generous to feel any resentment against his cousin on this account, and he would have been perfectly satisfied to know that he would inherit equally with her. But what perpetually worried him was the irritating suspense which his uncle seemed purposely to inflict; and there were moments when he felt strongly inclined to sacrifice his future prospects for the luxury of giving the old gentleman a piece of his mind.

One eventful morning Gascoigne called at his uncle's chambers, and was ushered into the old man's sitting-room, a gloomy apartment, full of artistic treasures, but rendered obnoxious to

the dutiful nephew by association with its owner. It was tenantless, however, at the moment; his uncle's capacious arm-chair drawn up in front of the blazing fire had evidently just been vacated; while upon an adjacent table stood a japanned tin-box, inscribed with the old man's name in white letters. Gascoigne stood for a few moments on the hearthrug, gazing impatiently around him and wondering what sort of welcome he would receive, when his attention was attracted by the edge of a piece of paper which protruded from beneath the lid of the tin box. Absently, and acting upon a mere idle impulse, he stepped forward and endeavoured to force back the paper into the box. Not succeeding at his first attempt, he put out his other hand in order to ease the pressure of the lid, when, to his surprise, it yielded to his touch, and he then perceived for the first time that the box was unlocked.

Up to that moment nothing had been further from his thoughts than to play the spy; in fact he had scarcely been conscious of what he was doing. Nor, indeed, even when the uplifted lid revealed the contents of the box, which consisted of a number of documents neatly docketed, did he experience the least sensation of curiosity. But, unluckily, just as he was closing the lid again, after releasing that fatal slip of paper, his eye was caught by a prominent inscription:

WILL
OF
WILLIAM BARKER, ESQ., Q.C.

Without making excuses for the young man's next action, it should at least be recorded that it was entirely unpremeditated. There, to his hand, lay the solution of all his doubts and difficulties. If he was his uncle's heir, well and good; his present negligent mode of life need trouble him no more. But if he had only been left an insignificant legacy, and his cousin—or some other person—was destined to inherit the fortune, then it behoved him at once to set about making up for lost time, by applying himself assiduously to his profession. This reflection passed like a flash through Gascoigne's mind, and made the opportunity for enlightenment so irresistible, that he seemed to rush upon temptation rather than yield to it. One second of anxious listening, during which the only sound he heard was the tumultuous beating of his heart, and then he had seized the momentous document and was eagerly scanning its contents.

Though brief, it was, unluckily, in his uncle's crabbed handwriting, and Gascoigne was compelled to carry it away from the box a little nearer to the light. A hasty glance was sufficient to convey to his trained mind its full purport. A paltry legacy to the long suffering valet, a picture or two to himself, all the rest of the contents of the testator's chambers, with the cash at the bank, to the niece, Mrs Marsden; and the residue 'to my nephew, Charles Grant Gascoigne, whom I appoint sole executor to my will.'

Gascoigne gasped as he read the concluding words, which meant that he was absolutely heir to his uncle's vast wealth. He was glad on his cousin's account too, for the art treasures bequeathed to her were of considerable value. But to know that he himself was the possessor—practically the possessor—of the remainder of the old man's fortune, was a revelation which caused his pulses to thrill with excitement, and made the sunlight dazzling.

Perhaps because he was momentarily carried away by the pleasurable excitement of the discovery, the young man's vigilance was relaxed; or perhaps, old Barker intentionally burst in upon him unawares. At all events, without a moment's warning, while he still held the will in his hand, the door of the room was opened, and Gascoigne had barely time to thrust the document into the side pocket of his coat before his uncle, with his hat on, and muffled up for going out, suddenly stood before him.

'Hullo!' growled the old man, blinking in the sunlight, 'so *you* are here?'

'Yes, uncle,' replied Gascoigne tremulously; 'didn't Rogers tell you?'

'He never tells me anything, the lazy scoundrel,' grumbled old Barker, shuffling in, and giving his nephew a distorted forefinger to shake. 'What do you want?'

'I called to inquire—I was sorry to hear you have been so unwell,' said Gascoigne, thanking his stars that he had not left the lid of the tin box open.

'So I have; but you are disappointed, you see. I'm nearly right again. I was just going out,' snarled his uncle, advancing to the tin box as he spoke.

Gascoigne's heart stood still, as the old man lifted the lid of the box. He apparently remembered that he had left it unlocked, and the action was evidently designed to assure himself of the fact. Had he laid a trap for his nephew, and entered the room abruptly with the idea that he would find him prying? Such a project would not have been foreign to the old gentleman's disposition, and Gascoigne trembled lest his uncle might open the box. But apparently this suspicion was groundless, or else Gascoigne's position at the window had been suggestive of innocence. At all events, old Barker proceeded to lug out his keys from his breeches pocket, and locked up the box with a shaky hand.

'Can I do that for you, uncle?' inquired Gascoigne, prompted by a wild hope of being able to slip in the will unobserved.

'No; you stay where you are!' said his uncle over his shoulder. 'This is where I keep my will. You would like to see it, I dare say?'

'No, indeed, sir,' said Gascoigne hastily, dreading that his uncle might be disposed to gratify him.

'Not curious enough, eh?' snarled old Barker. 'Well, that's a good thing. You would be disappointed, I can tell you. Don't expect anything from me.'

'Very well, sir,' said Gascoigne, too much overwhelmed by the consciousness of having the will in his pocket to appreciate the humour of the situation.

'Quite disinterested, eh? Mark my words, young man; not one farthing will you get from me till you are making five hundred pounds a

year by your profession. Do you hear?' cried the old gentleman, cocking his eye at him.

'Yes, sir,' answered Gascoigne, with tolerable composure.

'Then you had better set about it. Not but what you have plenty of time,' he added hastily. 'I'm good for twenty years yet—the doctor says so.'

'I'm glad to hear it,' said Gascoigne dutifully.

'No, you're not. All the same, it is as well for you that you should have a few years to work up a practice in, for if I were to die to-morrow, you would get nothing.'

'Are you going out, sir?' inquired Gascoigne, puzzled what to say to this enigmatical utterance.

'Yes; I'm going to take that box to my bank. You can come with me, and pay half the cab fare,' replied his uncle, chuckling at this characteristic joke.

He rang the bell, and sent his man for a cab, to which, in due course, Gascoigne escorted his amiable relative, while the porter carried the tin box. If his uncle had been in an observant mood, he would have remarked that the young man submitted, with much better grace than usual, to his jokes and sarcasms. This was hardly surprising, for it is not difficult to be long-suffering with an elderly relation when one knows he has manifested his benevolence in the most effectual manner. On the other hand, the awkward fact that he was carrying off, clandestinely, the old man's will was sufficiently disconcerting to render Gascoigne a trifle absent.

When he had deposited his uncle and his tin box at the bank—after duly paying his moiety of the cab fare—Gascoigne had leisure to reflect upon the predicament he had placed himself in. Needless to say that he bitterly repented of his unpardonable curiosity; it would be more just to dwell upon his honest shame at what he had done. It seemed to him that only two courses were open to him; one, the more honourable, was to return the document frankly to his uncle; the other, to keep it carefully and say nothing. The latter plan was the one which he finally adopted, not so much from self-interested motives, as because he could not bring himself to face the old man's wrath. The more he thought about the matter, the more bitterly ashamed and humiliated he felt. As for the fortune, he regarded that as absolutely and for ever forfeited, whichever course he took. If he confessed his fault, he knew that his uncle would ruthlessly strike out his name. The same thing would happen if he kept his own counsel, for it was inevitable that the old man must, sooner or later, miss his will, and it would be quite natural and easy to conjecture how it had disappeared. In Gascoigne's view, he had only a choice of evils; and he simply elected to spare himself the scourge of his uncle's tongue.

There are natures which need the stimulus of some unforeseen event or misfortune to awake their slumbering energies. This was the case with Gascoigne, for being firmly convinced that the result of what he had done would be to deprive him of his looked-for inheritance, he applied himself from that day forward to the drudgery of earning his livelihood. He had many friends and some influential connections, but, more important still, he possessed talent to which he had never hitherto attempted to do justice. A lucky chance, the absence of a learned leader in a notorious case, afforded him an opportunity of making a name, and almost without effort — so great a lottery is success at the bar!—he found himself in a position which was envied by his contemporaries.

The process occupied nearly three years, and during this period he avoided the society of his uncle as much as possible. He was haunted by a constant dread of the discovery of his secret, and was more than indifferent about offending him. Old Barker, on his part, grudgingly acknowledged his success, and was disposed to be more gracious; until, at length, having invited his nephew to dinner one evening, and entertained him royally, he said, quite good-humouredly:

'I suppose you are making five hundred pounds a year now?'

'Yes,' replied Gascoigne.

'Then I shall have to alter my will. You would like to know what is in it, I expect?'

'I do know, sir,' said Gascoigne impulsively.

'What!' exclaimed the old man.

'Your will is at my chambers, sir. Do you recollect that day when you left your tin box unlocked upon the table here? In your absence I opened it, saw your will, and was unable to resist the temptation of reading it. You returned suddenly, before I was able to replace it, so I have kept it ever since,' exclaimed Gascoigne, very pale and shamefaced.

There was a painful silence for full a minute; the old man's evil eye seemed positively to glare upon the offender, who looked precisely as he felt; and then Gascoigne said:

'It was a mean trick, but I'm heartily ashamed of myself, and I beg your pardon.'

'And that is to be the end of it, eh?' sneered the old man, slowly recovering from his amazement.

'I expect not,' said Gascoigne half defiantly.

'Your cousin ought to be much obliged to you,' said old Barker with a harsh laugh.

'She needs the money more than I,' said Gascoigne.

'By Jove! sir, she shall have it too. What is more, it shall come to her from your own hand,' roared the old man, purple in the face.

'I don't understand,' said Gascoigne quietly.

'I'll make a fresh will on the spot.'

'Very well, sir.'

'You shall take it down from my dictation.'

'As you please. It is rather like signing my own death-warrant,' said Gascoigne with a nervous laugh.

'So it is; so much the better; serves you right. There's a sheet of paper and a pen over yonder. Sit you down,' said the old man excitedly.

Poor Gascoigne obeyed silently, and not without an uncomfortable pang. It was, as he had said, uncommonly like signing his own death-warrant; but after all, it was only what he had anticipated, and he felt a certain sense of relief at having unburdened his conscience.

'I suppose you had better have the pictures and the things here,' said the old man grudgingly. 'She wouldn't appreciate 'em.'

'Thank you, sir,' said Gascoigne meekly.

'There may be a few pounds at my bank—not worth speaking of. In fact, this will may as well be in similar terms as the last, with your name and Margaret's reversed,' said old Barker, with his malevolent old eye glistening.

'Margaret is to be residuary legatee, in fact,' said Gascoigne, with a sinking heart.

'Yes. How much do people say I'm worth.'

'£100,000 at least,' answered Gascoigne, with assumed indifference.

'Ah! a good round sum to lose for a little curiosity, isn't it?' sneered old Barker.

'It can't be helped,' said Gascoigne philosophically.

'Indeed it can't. Now are you ready?'

'Yes,' said Gascoigne, grasping his pen firmly.

The old man dictated, and the sight of his nephew's ill-concealed discomfiture was evidently so amusing to him, that he paused at frequent intervals to chuckle and laugh. At length, however, Gascoigne's penance was ended; witnesses were procured; and the will was duly signed. Old Barker took possession of it, and when his nephew departed—for naturally the evening soon flagged after this exciting episode—the old man said:

'Good-night. What a fool you have been! Those pictures and things are not worth a quarter of what I gave for them. Still I suppose you will get a couple of thousand clear.'

'More than I had any right to expect,' said Gascoigne, as heartily as he could.

'More than you deserve, you mean. Shake hands!'

'You've forgiven me?'

'Yes, but you'll never forgive yourself! You were a fool to look at the will, but you were a worse fool to tell. If you hadn't, I should very likely never have missed it,' said the old man, leering at him.

This was not exactly consolatory to Gascoigne, who, though he realised the satisfaction of having relieved his conscience, experienced the natural disappointment of a man who has wantonly thrown away a vast fortune. It is true that he had always expected this, and at least he had saved something out of the fire. But it was a bitter pill, and it was fortunate that his professional engagements prevented him from brooding over his disappointment. He was also spared any further discussion on the subject with his uncle, for within a week the old man had an apoplectic seizure, from which he never rallied. Gascoigne was of course summoned to his uncle's bedside, but the patient was unconscious, and in that state he passed away. His will was nowhere to be found, but in searching for it, Gascoigne came across a note addressed to him by the deceased, stating that the document was in the custody of his solicitor, and requesting Gascoigne to see this gentleman at once, before communicating with his cousin. The young man naturally lost no time in calling upon Mr Bush, of Lincoln's Inn, an old friend and client of his uncle's, and he was perhaps, a trifle disappointed when the lawyer placed in his hands the identical document which he had himself assisted to prepare.

'I thought, perhaps, my uncle might have made a subsequent will,' he observed half involuntarily.

'He could not have made a will more favourable to you,' said old Mr Bush. 'His pictures and things must be worth £10,000 at the very lowest estimate, and his bank balance—which he leaves you also—amounts to rather more, as I happen to know. I should think you will take altogether £30,000 when the effects are realised.'

'It is an agreeable surprise,' murmured Gascoigne. 'Still, my cousin is residuary legatee, which means, I suppose, £150,000.'

'Nothing of the kind, my dear sir,' exclaimed Mr Bush. 'The lady will only get the proportion of his annuity due at the date of his death—perhaps £1000 or so.'

'What!' gasped Gascoigne. 'His annuity!'

'It will surprise many people,' replied the lawyer. 'He was supposed to be very wealthy, and so he was, in a sense. But he sunk his fortune many years ago in the purchase of an annuity of £5000 a year, and a precious good bargain he made of it. It is a good thing for you that you are not his residuary legatee.'

'I was once,' exclaimed Gascoigne, marvelling at his narrow escape, and at his uncle's peculiar method of showing resentment.

'Yes; that was before your success at the bar, on which I congratulate you,' replied Mr Bush. 'The fact is, that our departed friend was fond of a joke. Fortunately, as your cousin expects nothing, she won't be disappointed at getting only £1000. If his old will had stood and you had found yourself in her position'——

'That *would* have been a sell certainly,' said Gascoigne, who felt that he could now afford to laugh.

## ROSE-ELF RIDDLES.

The Rose-Elf laughed with glee
As he put this riddle to me:
'What is yet fairer than I?
Prithee attend!'
I hesitate not to reply:
'The face of a friend.'

The Rose-Elf shook with mirth,
And a dewdrop fell to the earth.
'What rarer jewel is worn?
Prithee attend!'
'The tear that is sympathy-born
From the heart of a friend.'

The Rose-Elf bowed his head,
And a fragrance around was shed.
'Dying, my sweetness is past!
Ah! what can eternally last?
Prithee attend!'
'That, born of God, hath no end,
So—Love, in the heart of a friend.'

Rebe Mills.

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## THE SALT AND GAS WELLS OF CHINA.

By E. H. Parker.

One of the most remarkable industries in the world is the salt factory of Tsz-liu Tsing, on a branch of the Upper Yang-tsze River, in Western China. The name means 'self-flowing wells,' and refers to their peculiar capacity for supplying both the raw material itself and the fuel for preparing the material—salt brine and natural gas—at one and the same time. It would be of very little use to say what towns they are near, as all topographical names in that region are equally unknown in Europe; but their exact situation is in north latitude 29° 30′, and longitude 105° east of Greenwich, about thirty English miles from the walled city of Fu-shun. I visited them in 1881, and at that time certainly not half-a-dozen Europeans in all had even seen them, not to say accurately described them.

The number of wells in actual working is about five thousand; but for official purposes—that is, squeezing and corruption—they are reported at a quarter of that figure; and the area under active operations covers, perhaps, four or six square miles. One of the first things that attracted my attention, as I strolled amongst the works, was a man leisurely tapping the rock with a heavy steel weight suspended from a framework by strips of bamboo, to which it was firmly attached: he had already done a little over two inches, having only begun the day before. A little farther on, I saw a similar hammer being raised by a youth from a well mouth not more than six inches in diameter. This man said his grandfather had commenced the work, which had gone on uninterruptedly through the life of his father, and was now in its seventieth year. Two inches of rock are an average day's work, which, at three hundred days a year, would make fifty feet, or half a mile for the seventy years. But, of course, that was an exception, and he had suffered accidents. As a rule, bottom, or rather absence of bottom, is reached in anything between one and ten years, and the majority of the wells are between two thousand and three thousand feet deep. The weights or hammers are shaped like a closed fist, with two projecting knuckles, and the operator simply dabs this against the rock by leisurely raising and letting go the bamboo line. As the slush accumulates and deadens the effect of the hammer, it is hauled up in a bamboo bucket, that is to say, in a length of bamboo, fitted with a self-acting leather valve at the bottom, and about as bulky as a beer bottle: the weight of the descending bucket opens the valve, and allows the slush to run in: the moment the bucket is raised, the valve imprisons the slush. As the well gets deeper, the force of the human arm is insufficient to raise the hammer. A scaffolding is then built, and the man works a lever with his feet. A second man often assists to twitch the cord sideways, so as to give a rotatory motion to the heavy weight.

When the man 'strikes ile'—that is, brine and hydrogen gas—a terrific explosion usually takes place. The force of the gas is sufficient to annihilate any portion of the man who may be standing in its way; and for many weeks it is impossible to put anything down the well, until the gas has been partially exhausted. This is done by piercing small holes in the side of the well (which, for the first three hundred feet, is lined with cedar wood), and attaching thereto long pipes, through which the gas can be subdivided, conveyed any distance, and ignited for any required purpose. The force of the rising hydrogen thus expends itself upon these outlets, and it becomes possible in time to block up the well with a heavy stone. In the case of the one I closely examined, the hydrogen was carried along some distance by two main bamboo pipes, very solidly strengthened with a heavy clay skin: these two mains were then subdivided into twenty. These twenty had been fiercely burning, night and day, for many weeks, but the supply was so plentiful that no attempt at economy was

made, although each small jet would have more than sufficed for boiling several salt-pans in perpetuity. The annual rental on such a subdivided jet is about £10 a year: in one establishment which I visited, seventy pans were kept going day and night, so that their owner would have to pay £700 a year, at least, to the proprietor of the hydrogen well. This explains how it pays to go on dabbing away, generation after generation: the longer a man works, the less wise it is to abandon what he has accomplished. He can borrow on the security of work done, and if he himself does not make a fortune, his grandson will; meanwhile, he himself mortgages future certainties. It is only the wells which have gas, but no brine, which are thus unmanageable and inexhaustible. Where there is brine as well as gas, the latter is kept within bounds by the former, and the proprietor uses as much of his own gas as he wants to boil his own brine, letting out the rest at a rent. There is a great deal of uncertainty about the gas of the brine-wells: sometimes, after issuing with the brine for years, it suddenly gives out; at others it as unexpectedly recommences, or even begins for the first time.

The gas from one of the subdivided jets has enough power to evaporate five hundredweight of salt in an iron pan three inches thick. Notwithstanding this force, the flame is at once extinguished if a small paving-stone is placed at the muzzle of the jet; the gas then escapes into the air through two smaller tubes, which are opened for that purpose, a few feet back from the muzzle; and if all the outlets are blocked, of course the gas forces its way through the one where there is least resistance. Nothing could be simpler or less expensive than these arrangements.

The wells must have been worked from the most ancient times, for I find the following sentence in the Chinese commentary to a work almost two thousand years old: 'As to these fire wells, if it be desired to extract their fire, the way is to throw some ordinary fire into them: in a moment there will be an explosion just like a clap of thunder, and a blaze of light visible for miles round. This fire can be conveyed away in bamboo tubing, in such wise as to make charcoal or coal unnecessary. Having thus got the fire from the well, you can boil the brine from the well, and you will get from forty to fifty per cent. of solid salt out of it: whereas, if ordinary fire were used, you would not get more than twenty or thirty per cent.' The viceroy of the province who was in power when I visited the wells, and who himself published a book on the reorganisation of the industry, places the date of their first profitable working towards the middle of the fourth century of our era.

A pair of enormous shears, well stayed and very firm, are fixed directly over the mouth of each well, and to the top of them is attached a strong pulley, round which passes the bamboo cord which supports the 'bucket.' The term bucket is only a makeshift expression for an immense tube, from twenty to fifty feet in length, fashioned of bamboo joints connected together with hempen cord tightly wound round the screw-like thread cut into the outer face of the bamboo, and strengthened near each end by stout iron rings. The rope from the pulley passes under another wheel in a horizontal direction to the circumference of what may be described as a huge timber teetotum or decagonal framework, the axle of which is a perpendicular beam revolving in iron sockets below and above. Projecting spokes allow the attachment of four buffaloes, each of which a driver grasps by the tail with one hand, while with the other he belabours with a whip or rope-end. Through the nostrils of each buffalo is run a halter, so tied in front of him that he gets a cruel tweak each time he lags. The pace commences with a brisk walk, which gradually increases into a sharp trot, and even a gallop, the wretched animals panting for their lives, and lashing themselves into a tempest of perspiration. It took twelve minutes to haul up the particular bucket I stood watching. By measuring the number of times the rope encircled the teetotum, and then taking the diameters of this last, I found the depth of the well must have been as nearly as possible two thousand five hundred feet, or say, half a mile.

As with a nautical log-line, so with this rope; the last hundred feet or so at each end were marked with hide tongues, so as to give warning that the bucket was approaching, or the rope running out. Two of the four buffaloes are then slipped, and the pace is eased for the two remaining ones. The bucket contains about two hundredweight of brine, the emptying of which only occupies a few seconds: the brine is carted out into a tub or cistern let into the ground, from which a conduit carries the liquid through a rough filter into a roofed reservoir, kept under lock and key. The teetotum is then allowed to revolve backwards at a fearful pace, the weight of the long bucket giving the necessary impetus. As the top end of the rope draws nigh, a brake is applied by the foreman in charge. Like all the other native apparatus, this is extremely simple. It consists of flat bamboo strips, tapering into a twisted rope at each end, and one end is attached to the building, while the other runs half round the teetotum: the foreman simply sits on the flat part, when, of course, his weight checks the speed. The same four buffaloes are again immediately harnessed to, each team hauling up two buckets in succession, at intervals of about five hours. After their turn is over, the beasts are carefully groomed and stalled, and are, besides, regaled with a swim once in every twenty-four hours; their food is expensive, as all the country around has long since been denuded of vegetation.

Any one who has not a well of his own can buy brine from the reservoirs. As the country around is undulating, it is easy to convey the brine in any direction by the simple force of gravity, all that is necessary being that the starting point be a few inches or feet higher than the destination, and higher than any hillock over which the bamboo tubing may be conducted. The brine is, of course, not all of one quality; the blacker it is the better, and

the yellower it is the worse. The owners I spoke to did not place the yield of salt so proportionately high as the ancient authority I have quoted; the chief one said the best brine would only boil into twenty per cent. of solid salt. But it is only the fiercest furnaces that can produce the block salt at all; the jets of ordinary vigour will only produce granular salt, which is of lighter consistency. A cake of block salt weighs six hundred pounds, and this is deftly split into four quarters, each of which forms a man's load. One cake for each pan a day is exceptionally good work. I found that seventy pans produced, on the average, seven tons a day, taking granular and block salt together, at the particular establishment where I made close inquiry.

The boiling sheds reminded me very much of an English tannery, and also, to a certain extent, of the salt factories at Winsford and Northwich in Cheshire. The furnace over which each pan is placed is simply a hole in the ground, about six feet square and deep, and the gas tubes are conducted into this hole. The mouth of the gas tube is not more than half an inch in diameter. There are about six pans to each brine reservoir. These reservoirs are made of wood covered with clay, like tan-pits, and are automatically fed by conduits through which the brine trickles slowly into the pans. The wages are extremely high for China, about ten shillings a week, and food found; but good food (rice and pork) costs little in China, threepence a day being enough to feed any reasonable man. Each man works twenty-four hours at a stretch, and then rests for another whole day of twenty-four hours. He gets no holidays except at the New Year. The work is, of course, very trying, especially during the insufferable heats of summer; but the roof arrangements are good, and there is plenty of ventilation. The smell from the fresh brine and unburnt gas is decidedly bad, but the fumes from the furnaces did not appear to me to be at all offensive. The discrepancy between the ancient account and the modern, as to the proportion of salt that may be extracted, possibly arises from the fact that the 'curds and whey' of beans are in modern times poured into the boiling brine, in order to facilitate crystallisation; the result of this I was told was, that half the total solid product was 'sweet salt,' and half 'gall-cake.' This 'gall-cake' is too acrid for eating purposes, and is used to make paint and plaster bind firmly, and also to separate the curd from the whey of bean juice.

The salt costs about a halfpenny a pound at the factories, but government duties and the cost of carriage soon bring it up to threepence or even sixpence a pound. In fact, I found that I could roughly calculate the distance I was from any given spot in this province by inquiring the local price of salt. It is not easy to ascertain the exact production for each year, but it is certain that the government derives, from the Tsz-liu Tsing industry alone, an annual revenue of at least £500,000, even at the present low silver rate. It is everybody's interest to conceal the truth, and everybody concerned peculates wherever there is opportunity. I spent a considerable time in trying to work out the approximate truth, and came to the conclusion that 600,000 tons a year would not be too high an estimate of the gross production of all the wells, including in this the Fu-shun and all other districts within a circuit of one hundred miles. Quite 30,000,000 people use this salt; so that, at this rate, there would be two tons for every thousand people, or from four to five pounds a head per annum.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER IV.—WE REACH THE MÉDANGS.

Of our voyage from Venice to the Médang River I find, on looking through my diary, that there is little or nothing of importance to tell. We reached Colombo, where we had arranged to call for coal, two days in advance of the French mail-boat, and nearly a week ahead of the P. and O. steamer by which the king would, in all probability, have otherwise been compelled to travel. The stamp of the engines resounded night and day, and every noon the record of our progress was hailed with eager acclamation. It was extraordinary how every one on board the boat, from the person most interested, down to the very ship's boys, seemed to be impressed with the necessity of speed. I think of all the gifts vouchsafed to man, the most enviable is the power of affecting others with a participation in one's own desires, such as the King of the Médangs undoubtedly possessed. Sometimes, when I lay awake in the still watches of the night, I found myself almost wondering at my position. What was there in this man, I asked myself, to compel me to such haste, to make me spend my money so recklessly, to induce me, who detested haste so cordially, forego my own carefully planned arrangements, and find no satisfaction so great as the frothing of the water under our bows, and the high figures recorded on our patent log? And yet when I was in his company, it never occurred to me for an instant to wonder. I paced the deck by his side, cast anxious glances at the weather, prayed that no storm might arise to hinder us, and continually interrogated the captain and engineers as to the progress of the boat.

Under the influence of his excitement, our passenger's despondency about his own health seemed entirely to have left him. Never once did he refer to his doctor's report in any shape or form. He was occupied from morning till night, plotting and planning, and preparing himself for every possible contingency that might await him on arrival in his dominions. Sometimes he made me his confidant, at others he would keep himself strictly to himself. At all times, however, he was consideration and courtesy itself. A guest more charming, or one more easily pleased, it would have been scarcely possible to find.

When Ceylon was once behind us, and we were steaming across the Indian Ocean, bound for Singapore as fast as our engines would take us, every one's restlessness seemed to increase by leaps and bounds. In less than a fortnight we

should reach our destination, and our friend would know the worst.

On the afternoon of the day that we entered the Straits of Malacca, I was seated near the saloon-companion reading, when the captain descended the ladder from the bridge, and came to speak with me.

'I am sorry to have to tell you, my lord,' he said abruptly, as he touched his cap, 'that the engineer thinks he is running short of coal.'

There was always a standing feud between the bridge and the engine-room, and Wells was only too glad to have a chance of presenting his enemies to me in an unfavourable light. I therefore resolved to make inquiries before I committed myself to any line of action.

'How much has he still in the bunkers?' I inquired.

'Plenty,' he says, 'to take us into the Gulf of Siam,' was the answer, 'but not sufficient to see us across it.'

'You infer by that, I suppose, that we shall have to call at Singapore,' I continued. 'That will mean a long delay and, as you know, under the present circumstances, every hour is of importance.'

'I am quite aware of that, my lord,' he replied, with an aggrieved face. 'I told Mr M'Gill so myself only ten minutes since.'

'Send Mr M'Gill to me, if you please,' I said. 'This is a very serious matter, and we must not decide hastily.'

A moment or two later the skipper returned with the engineer, a weather-beaten old Scotchman who had been in the service of my family ever since he had been able to earn his daily bread. I questioned him on the subject of the coal, only to learn that it was necessary beyond doubt that we must call at Singapore, otherwise we should be unable to reach our destination. There was nothing for it but to make the best of a bad bargain. I accordingly gave the required instructions, and rose from my chair to go and inform the person chiefly concerned. Just, however, as I was about to enter the saloon-companion, I espied him coming up the stairs from below. When he reached the deck I turned and walked with him to the rails. He looked eagerly at me.

'You have some bad news for me, Lord Instow,' he said, with that peculiar abruptness characteristic of him. 'I can see it in your face. What has happened?'

'Something that will cause you some annoyance I fear,' I answered. 'The chief engineer has just been to me to say that he has not sufficient coal in his bunkers to carry us to our destination. Steaming at the pace we have done has caused the store we took in at Colombo to vanish in half its ordinary time, and we must therefore put into Singapore for a fresh supply.'

The king's face clouded ominously.

'Another delay,' he muttered, 'another delay. And every hour of vital importance.'

He walked a few paces from me and I saw his fists clench, and his mouth harden. Suddenly he wheeled round, and came back to my side.

'I am proving myself sadly ungrateful,' he said, 'after all your kindness to me. I hope you will forgive me. For a moment, I must confess, I *was* disappointed, for I am so eager to get to my kingdom that I can bear no delays. But I know that you are as sorry as I am. How long do you think it will take us to get in a fresh supply?'

'At most not more than five hours,' I answered. 'I cannot tell you how vexed I am that such a thing should have occurred. But I fear it could not be helped.'

'Say no more about it, I beg of you,' he answered. 'In any case, we shall be there some days before I could possibly have reached it in the ordinary course of events.'

'And then you will know everything. And your mind will be set at rest.'

'Yes. I shall know everything,' he replied, with an infinite sadness in his voice. 'How much that means, "know everything!" But there is one question I have been wishing to ask you every day. When you have deposited me at my destination, what do you and your sister intend doing?'

'We had thought of calling at Haiphong, and then proceeding on our way to Japan,' I answered.

'Are you in any great hurry to reach the Land of the Chrysanthemum?'

'No,' I replied. 'We are idle folk, and there is no particular need of haste.'

'Then why not stay with me for a week or two? I should like nothing better than to have an opportunity of repaying all the kindnesses I have received at your hands. There is much to be seen, believe me, and to one who, like yourself, takes such a vivid interest in the building up of new countries, there are endless traits to be studied in the people themselves. Come, Lord Instow, what do you say? Will you remain with me for a while?'

He looked at me with his dark lustrous eyes, as if more than I could guess depended upon my answer.

'I should enjoy it immensely,' I replied. 'But I must first consult my sister. If she has no reason for hastening on to Japan, I shall be only too glad to accept your hospitable invitation.'

'We must place the matter before Lady Olivia, then, and see what she says.'

Accordingly that evening at dinner our guest introduced the subject, and when Olivia had given her consent, it was definitely settled that we should accept the invitation extended to us. For my own part, I must confess, I was glad. I will own to a vulgar curiosity. I wanted to examine his country carefully, to criticise his rule, and I was also anxious to learn what untoward event had called him so suddenly from Europe. Such a favourable opportunity might never occur again, and under these circumstances I was resolved to make the most of it.

Two days later we reached Singapore, spent a miserable day coaling in the harbour, and continued our voyage the same evening. Once in the Gulf of Siam, we were nearly at our journey's end. In three days or thereabouts we should be in the Médang River, which the king had informed us was navigable up to his capital; and then for a spell ashore!

As the distance that separated us from the

land decreased, the king's anxiety became almost painful to watch. Throughout the day he paced the deck, casting anxious glances ahead and astern, as if by so doing he could hasten the progress of the boat.

On the evening prior to our making the land, while I was engaged upon the bridge, he discovered Olivia standing at the taffrail, watching the water creaming in the wake. The night was warm, and the sea was strangely phosphorescent.

'In forty-eight hours or thereabouts you will be in your own country once more,' said my sister, when they had been standing side by side for some few minutes.

'Yes, I shall be at the head of my kingdom again,' he answered, in a low voice; 'and from what I imagine, it will be about time. It is a good thing, Lady Olivia, that few people are compelled by fate to know the suspense that has been my portion these five weeks past. And it also falls to the lot of but few to have such good friends as yourself and your brother. How I shall ever be able to thank you both sufficiently for all your goodness to me I do not know.'

'I'm sure we have equal cause to be grateful to your highness.'

To this he offered no reply, but glanced round the horizon, and then up to the multitudinous stars shining in the firmament of heaven.

'Shakespeare tells us "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune,"' he continued; 'but he says nothing of how we are to guard it when advantage has been taken of the flood, and the fortune has been acquired. My kingdom is *my* fortune. I have won it; am I to keep it or not? That is the question that the next few weeks have to answer.'

'Keep it?' cried Olivia with conviction. 'As I said to you in Venice, you *must* keep it, come what may.'

'You wish me success, do you not?'

'With all my heart I do,' she answered; 'you must not even *think* of failure. It could never be.'

'You have said you wish me success with *all your heart*, Lady Olivia,' he said, with peculiar emphasis; 'have you any notion of what construction those apparently simple words may have put upon them by a lonely man?'

She gave a little start, and her hand suddenly clenched upon the rail before her; she did not answer, however.

'You must remember,' he said very slowly, and with increasing earnestness, 'that after all, sovereigns are men first and kings afterwards. To win your esteem I would accomplish anything possible to mortal man; nothing could be too difficult for me. But I am frightening you. I had no right to do so. Forgive me; I will say no more now, but will content myself with one question. Having said so much, can you still bid me go on and prosper with *all* your heart?'

She looked up into his face, and then in a voice so soft that he could scarcely hear it, whispered:

'I do. Go on and prosper.'

He bent his head over the hand he held, and pressed his lips upon it. She did not try to prevent him; but, as soon as he released her, she turned on her heel and sped away along the deck towards the saloon companion-ladder. When she came to bid me good-night half-an-hour later, her eyes were red as if with weeping.

'Why, Olivia,' I said, holding her beautiful face up to the light that I might examine it, 'what does this mean? You have been crying. Come, come, darling, what has made you unhappy?'

'I cannot tell,' she answered, her face now buried on my shoulder. 'I do not know.'

Seeing that she was in a state when it is not wise for a man to make any attempt at comfort, I changed my tactics, bade her not be silly, and having done so, led her to her cabin. Afterwards I went on deck, more puzzled as to the reason of her tears than I cared to own.

I found the king pacing up and down before the smoking-room. To my surprise, I found he was in happier and more confident spirits than I had seen him since we left Venice.

'We are making the best of headway,' he cried, as I came up with him. 'I should say we're doing a full sixteen.'

'I can tell you exactly,' I answered, going to the ladder that led to the bridge, and calling the mate to me. From him I inquired our speed, and was surprised to hear him reply 'sixteen and a half.'

'That being so,' said the king, 'we should have the coast in sight at daylight, and twenty-four hours later should see us at our destination. After that I can get to work. I feel as if we are on the threshold of great events.'

'You seem somewhat more confident this evening.'

He looked at me very closely for a second or two, and then, gathering from my face that I knew nothing of his interview with Olivia, continued:

'I *am* more confident. As I approach my country my old spirit is coming back to me. I am determined that my arrival shall mark a new epoch. What I have done in the past shall be as nothing to what I will do in the future. I will let you see of what great deeds I and my people are capable, and then you will be able to judge for yourself what our future is destined to be. Lord Instow, who can say that I am not building up the nucleus of what may some day be the ruling power of the East? You think of India, of Russia, of China, of Japan, and you smile incredulously. You deem it impossible, but I am not abashed; to-night I am prophetic and can see clearly into the future. I see my people increased to more than double their present number; I see the soil of my country utilised to the best advantage; I see my cities filled with honest traders, my borders extended to the China Sea on one side and the Bay of Bengal on the other; I see ships carrying the produce of my land to the other great nations of the world, and the vessels of those countries at anchor in my harbours. Trains traverse my plains, all the latest aids to civilisation are known and utilised by my people, I live at peace with my neighbours, and having done my life's work I see my son ready to take my place when I shall step down from the throne.'

'God grant it may be as your highness pre-

dicts,' I answered, quite carried away by the eloquence with which he spoke.

'God grant it may,' he answered, lifting his hat from his head as he spoke.

Then taking my arm, we began to pace the deck together, building up and perfecting the empire which he had so sanguinely anticipated. It was a lovely night, and as the king was not tired, we continued to walk and talk long after the bell had struck midnight; then, as the dew was falling heavily, we adjourned to the smoking-room, and continued our discussion there. When we had finished, I discovered, to my astonishment, that it was on the stroke of three. In an hour and a half at most it would be daylight, and soon after that the coast should be in sight. Under these circumstances, we determined to remain upon deck to welcome it.

An hour later it was light enough to enable us to see the yacht from stem to stern. We accordingly left the smoking-room and ascended to the bridge. Here the air struck strangely cold, and a slight mist hung upon the water. I inquired our speed from the skipper, who had just joined us, and he answered, 'Barely ten.'

In less than an hour the sun rose on our starboard bow, and when he was well above the sea a faint line revealed to us the land ahead. From contemplating it I turned to the king. His eyes were fixed upon it, and his mouth was firm set as if he were clenching his teeth that he might prevent himself from betraying his emotion. Proportionately as the land rose above the waves his excitement increased, until, when it was close enough for us to be able to discern its general outline, he could contain himself no longer, but putting out his hand, squeezed mine in it, and muttering something I could not catch, vanished below. A quarter of an hour later I followed his example, and turned into my bunk to sleep like a top till breakfast-time.

When we visited the deck again, we were close in-shore, approaching, under easy steam, the entrance to a large river whose broad mouth emptied itself into the sea between two lines of thickly wooded cliffs. Evidently this was the Médang River of which his highness had so often spoken to us. Olivia was by my side, pale and heavy-eyed, as if she had not slept a wink all night, which I afterwards discovered had been the case. The king joined us a few moments later, and, standing at my elbow, watched the scene with straining eyes. And indeed the picture presented to us then was one that might have appealed to the most blasé of travellers. You must picture for yourself a cloud-capped mountain range, the foremost peaks of which rose almost precipitously from a green jungle that stretched well-nigh to the water's edge. Indeed, though I looked for it, beach I could see none. Straight before us, without bar or other hindrance, lay the dark sluggish waters of the Médang River, out of which the palm-clad hills rose abruptly to a height on the right of six hundred feet, on the left to possibly a thousand. With the strip of green sea before us, and the lights and shadows thrown by the clouds upon the hills ashore, we were presented with such a view as I doubt any one who saw it that day will ever forget.

It was evident that the captain had made himself thoroughly conversant with the locality, for he steamed boldly in, keeping as far as possible in the centre of the stream, in order to avoid snags and dangers of a similar nature. Clustered on a plateau at the foot of the eastern hill were a few small huts, otherwise the landscape was devoid of human dwellings. Indeed, the king informed us that with the exception of a small town situated fifty miles or so inland, there was no settlement of any importance between the sea and the capital.

(*To be continued.*)

## THE SMALLEST PRINCIPALITY IN EUROPE.

Very few of the tourists who travel along the Arlberg railway every autumn on their way from Switzerland to the Tyrol are so much as aware of the existence of the tiny principality of Liechtenstein, through which they rapidly pass in the express train. Between the Swiss frontier-station at Buchs and the Austrian town of Feldkirch the line traverses for five miles one of those small, independent states, which by some miracle have survived down to our own day in the midst of their powerful neighbours, and show us, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, what the miniature principalities of the middle ages must have been like. Every one has heard of Monaco, the little Italian republic of San Marino is dear to collectors of postage-stamps, and the Spanish commonwealth of Andorra is occasionally mentioned in the newspapers; but of Liechtenstein, the fourth and last of these curious mediæval survivals, the British excursionist knows hardly anything. Yet it well repays a visit from the traveller who has a spare week on his hands. If he be a sportsman, he can make friends with the Prince's forester and perhaps have a shot at the chamois which haunt the mountains at the back of the principality. To the botanist, the fields and hillsides are full of attractions; the philologist will find ample scope for his science in tracing out the many relics of the Romance language which abound in the villages. Vaduz, the little capital, is a beautifully situated place of about eleven hundred inhabitants, planted amidst its luxuriant vineyards, beneath the frowning crag upon which the old castle of Liechtenstein stands to keep guard over the valley of the Rhine below. Although it is so small, Vaduz can boast of a delightful old inn, where the beds and the cooking are all that can be desired, where the black-coated waiter has not yet made his appearance, and the genial landlord and his wife do everything they can to make their guests comfortable.

The little principality is a perfect miniature of one of those great states with which we are all so familiar. Liechtenstein has its Prince, its Constitution, and its Parliament. The Prince, John II., who succeeded to the dignity in 1858,

is not very much in the principality, but resides for the most part either in Vienna or on his other Austrian estates, which are very large. But he usually comes in the autumn for the shooting, and the new hunting-box which he has built near the old castle will probably bring him more frequently to Vaduz. Among his people he is very popular; *er ist ein sehr netter Mann*, said an old villager, pointing to the Prince's portrait which hung over the mantelpiece, and added that it was a pity he did not enjoy better health. Fifty-six years of age and unmarried. By disposition the Prince is rather shy, but he is a keen sportsman, and, like most of his people, a very devout Catholic, as the new Gothic churches which he has built at Vaduz and Schaan fully prove. It was even rumoured at one time that the pope himself, if he quitted Rome, might find in Liechtenstein a second Avignon. There is a story too that the proprietors of Monte Carlo once meditated removing their famous tables to the little Alpine principality, but that the Prince promptly refused to permit it. The Liechtensteiners are such a simple-minded, honest folk, that it would be a great pity if anything of the kind occurred, and it is certain that the reigning Prince will never sanction such a step.

By the Constitution of 1862, Liechtenstein possesses a local diet, composed of fifteen members, three of whom are nominated by the Prince, and the remaining twelve are elected by manhood suffrage, every male citizen of full age who lives in the country having a vote. This miniature House of Commons meets once a year, and is elected every four years. The executive consists of a regent or *Landesverweser*, who acts for the Prince in his absence, and under him are the communal body and forester's department. There is a court of law in Vaduz, with an appeal in the first instance to Vienna, and in the second to the Austrian superior court at Innsbruck. It has been found convenient to allow the Austrian Government to manage the post, so that Liechtenstein—to the regret of philatelists—has no stamp of its own, using instead the ordinary Austrian stamps and coins. By a recent convention, the principality is combined for custom-house purposes with the Austrian province of Vorarlberg, but in all other respects it is perfectly independent. Its inhabitants devoutly wish that it may remain so, and not without reason. For Liechtenstein enjoys the almost unique distinction among continental nations of having no army and no compulsory military service. Before the Austro-Prussian war of 1866, Liechtenstein formed part of the Germanic Confederation, and was bound to furnish its quota of troops to the Federal army. Always Austrian in sympathy, it voted for mobilisation against Prussia, and sided with Austria in the struggle which ended at Sadowa. But, after the war, its little army of eighty men was disbanded, and has not been revived. Naturally, those who wish to avoid the conscription in other neighbouring countries migrate to Liechtenstein, and it is to this fact that the considerable increase of its population—now about 10,000—and the preponderance of males over females are due. It is jokingly said that in the rearrangement of Germany in 1866 and 1871 Liechtenstein was left out because Bismarck forgot the very fact of its existence. But its people, according to their own account, have every reason to congratulate themselves upon their exclusion from either of their heavily-taxed neighbour-lands. Obscurity has its advantages. The only serious fiscal burden under which they suffer is the tax imposed for the maintenance of the dam which is necessary for keeping the Rhine within its bed. Every winter the stream, which forms the western boundary of this little state, overflows its banks below Vaduz, and floods the low-lying meadows which separate the river from the mountain-range of Liechtenstein. Great damage is done to the farms in that neighbourhood, and the cost of keeping the river-banks in proper order falls very heavily on the little community.

The greater part of the Prince's territory consists of mountain. At the northern extremity, where the railway runs through it, the country is fairly level, and broadens out into a plain, which is, however, broken by the low ridge of the Schellenberg, once an independent principality, belonging to counts of its own. But from Vaduz to the extreme south boundary there is very little space available between the mountains and the river. Here and there are hamlets dotted over the mountain side, or nestling among the vineyards in the valley. There is Triesen, once, it is said, a famous Roman settlement, overwhelmed by an earthquake in some bygone age. There is the picturesque village of Balzers too, with the fine old ruined castle of Guttenberg above it, of which strange legends are told. A lovely walk up the mountains through a tunnel, known as the Triesenberger Kulm, leads into the wild and romantic Samina valley, the home of the eagle and the chamois. Another and easier excursion is over the pass of St Luziensteig, which is commanded by the now disused Swiss fortress of that name, into the canton of the Grisons, and down to Ragatz and Mayenfeld. But the most interesting walk is up to the old castle of Liechtenstein itself, with its fine ivy-covered walls, part of them dating from Roman times, and round through the woods to the dismantled Wildschloss, once a robber-stronghold, from which the watchman could spy the boats, laden with rich merchandise, as they sailed down the Rhine. High mountains, it must be confessed, there are none—at least, in the sense in which the Alpine Club use the word. The 'Three Sisters' above Vaduz are barely 8000 feet high, the Naafkopf, the highest mountain in the principality, only 8560. But of fine mountain air and varied mountain excursions there is plenty, and almost every hill and valley has a legend of its own. Liechtenstein, like Vorarlberg, is very rich in folklore, and the learned Dr Vonbun, who knew the locality well, has made a most interesting collection of local legends.

The people themselves are the descendants of a Germanic race which gradually swallowed up the Rhaetian colonists who formerly inhabited the land. Originally a Roman settlement, Liechtenstein still preserves many traces of the

Romance language, which was still spoken there as late as the seventeenth century. Vaduz, the name of its capital, is a corruption of the Latin *vallis dulcis*, or 'pleasant valley;' and such names as Gamprin, Schalun, Valorsch, Samina, Gavadura, Valüna, Mazoura, which all occur in the principality, are, as Dr Umlauft of Vienna has pointed out, all of Romance origin. Quite recently there has been a large importation of Swiss labourers to work the cotton mills at Schaan, but the people are still happily uncosmopolitan, and are quite content to live as their forefathers did before them, 'the world forgetting, by the world forgot.' A couple of years ago they actually attained to the dignity of a parliamentary crisis and a paragraph in the European press. But that was a rare exception.

## THE GREEN-CUB MINE.

### A WEST AUSTRALIAN STORY.

By Robert Bain, M.A., Author of *A Buccaneering Raid*, &c.

### I.

I had just returned from my bun and milk lunch, and was sitting down to copy a deed, when I received a telegram.

'Hallo, Tommy,' said Brown, 'who on earth's sending you a telegram?' For the clerks in our particular department of Law & Livingstone's, 171 St Regent Street, Glasgow, always gave special instructions to their aristocratic friends not to send telegrams to the office, or the governors would be for reducing their salaries. So at least they said, but as the average amount of the salaries in question was something like eighty-five pounds a year, the statement is open to doubt.

I opened it, and a smile of delight flitted across my face as I read: 'Central Hotel—come — immediately — important — just — arrived.—Jemima.'

I can hardly hope to describe the effect produced upon me by that signature; for Jemima was my old chum Billy Johnstone, whose indomitable pluck and reckless boyishness had not sufficed to remove the nickname which his gentle voice and girlish face had won him. But what gave me the actual pleasure was that I had not seen him for over two years, but had only heard from him at long intervals from Albany and Coolgardie. I had not even called on his folk at Cathcart, other interests of a pleasanter, if more heart-disturbing nature, keeping me generally in the western districts of the city.

As I did not know how long I might be out, I showed the telegram to old Livingstone, and readily got permission to go. I rushed down to the Central, wondering what the important business could be, and five minutes later was shaking hands with the best fellow I've ever known—the only one I have ever met who was at once scholar — in a moderate sense — and player, man and boy.

But what a change these two years had wrought in him! Three inches had been added to his height, and the feminine note in his face had changed, and left only a pleasant memory of it in his eyes, blue and soft as of old, yet with the same old laugh lying in ambush behind them. The other interests already alluded to tended to make me sentimental, but he quickly cut short my apostrophes with a new, strange, business alertness which I was quite unable to account for.

'Here, I didn't send that telegram just for fun, Tommy. I've got the finest investment in the world for you, and there's just a possibility that in a couple of hours your chance will be past. Have you any money?'

'About ten or twelve pounds,' I said, after a moment's reflection to consider if there was not another odd pound to be scraped up somewhere.

He laughed. 'That blessed law! Why didn't you go in for the kirk, Tommy, or buy a public-house on borrowed money? But the law! Oh, I could write melancholy epics about the law!' He had been in a law-office for eight months himself. 'Ten pounds! And what can you borrow?'

I hesitated, for I am Scotch.

'Is it safe?' I asked.

'Safe! D'ye think, you ruffian, I'm a Jabez Balfour? I tell you that except what's necessary to keep me for another month, I haven't a farthing that isn't in it, and every one of these farthings will be ten within three months!'

I became excited, as a prospect of fabulous wealth opened up before me. 'I can get fifty pounds from old Service, I think; and I believe I could get about other thirty.'

'Ninety pounds. 'Tisn't so bad. Then gallop and get it, and be back here within forty minutes. Every minute's pure gold.'

'But it's impossible!'

'You must. It means nine hundred pounds, Tommy, and I've heard about some one called Peggy. Get a cab, and run the horse off its feet. It's ten to one just now. You'll be here by one-thirty,' and he thrust me out of the door.

I hailed a passing cab. We were more than once like to be stopped for furious driving, but I scarcely noticed, for I was in a world of impossible dreams. Old Service wasn't in his warehouse, and I had to hunt him up at his club. He saw the excitement in my face, and it was impossible to screw the money out of him without telling him all I knew.

'Who is your friend?' he asked suspiciously. I told him.

'He's to be trusted!'

'Like gold.'

'H'm!' He pondered. I was in fidgets.

'I'll tell you what. If you're open to take the risk, I'll give you a cheque for three hundred—half to go in my name. Eh?'

I almost fainted, but recovered—took the cheque, almost leaped over the stairs in my excitement, but managed to find the cab-door without misadventure. The cab seemed to crawl as we drove round to the others I wished to visit, but at one-twenty-five, I rushed into the hotel in frantic excitement, and met 'Jemima' in the entrance hall.

'How much have you got?'

'One hundred and sixty for myself, and a hundred and fifty for Service!'

'By George, you've done well. Come on then, into the cab again!'

We entered. 'Stock Exchange,' he called to the driver. We were there in a couple of minutes. He sprang out and hailed a passing broker:

'How are "Green Cubs" standing?'

'Four-and-six, I believe. I'm not certain, however. There's not many dealings in them.'

'Buy three hundred and ten pounds' worth, and send the note to—have you a card, Tom?' I gave him our office card.

'To Thomas Buchanan, care of Law & Livingstone's, St Regent Street.'

'All right, sir,' and he left us.

'Jemima' turned and shook my hand.

'That's the best day's work you ever did, Tommy, my boy. One-sixty divided by five shillings—six hundred and forty shares, and by this time to-morrow they'll be worth a pound a piece. In a month you'll get any money for them.'

'Good gracious!' I exclaimed, startled beyond all measure, 'how do you know?'

He took out a cablegram, evidently from Australia, and showed me that it contained the one word, 'Grip.'

'Do you know what that means?' he cried triumphantly. 'Ten ounces to the ton, and the best mine in West Australia!'

'But how do you know anything about it,' I asked.

'Me! I'd like to know who should know better. I'm the "Green Cub!"'

II.

It would be useless for me to give a column of the interjectional remarks uttered by me on hearing this astounding statement. The more so, as 'Jemima' would not volunteer a single word of information till we had driven back to the hotel, where, having ordered coffee, he gave me, while we drank, a full and true account of what bids fair to be the most famous Australian mine.

'You remember my last letter from Coolgardie?'

I nodded. For from previous letters I had learned all his progress in Australia, from the day he landed in Albany to that of his arrival in the mining capital of the west. I knew all his adventures, too—how he had helped to load a ship with coal at a pound a day, immediately on his landing—of his first night out on the Australian plains, and of his long tramp north to his first mine—all of which might be spun out to many most interesting pages—of the life at the diggings, where he arrived on a Sunday to find an international athletic meeting in full swing; and of all the wonder that comes flooding on the 'new chum,' and flings into prosaic relief the old life across the seas. Yes, I remembered, for had not the first romance almost whirled me from my feet and whirled me too off in quest of phantom fortune at the gold mines?

'Well, I told you what a go-ahead place Coolgardie was; every man dead-nuts on making money, and never a moment of rest; chokeful of brains, work, and money, and a mighty tight corner for the man who is not particularly blessed with any of the three. I soon saw there wasn't much chance for me there, for let me tell you, Tommy, what the engineers in Coolgardie just now don't know about mining isn't worth knowing.

'So I tramped out north, and got a berth at the Scandinavian Reefs, about a hundred and fifty miles to the north-west. I was there exactly three months, and had managed by that time to save thirty pounds—of course you know the regular wage was three-ten a week and water; and as I could live comfortably on a pound a week, I simply saved hand over hand. We usually stopped work at four when on the day-shift, and one day on coming back to my tent, I found things in considerable disorder and my money gone.

'I at once raised an alarm, and the rest of the miners, who had tents near by, all came rushing up. At that very moment my neighbour, a wages' man like myself, came running out of his tent with the cry that he had been robbed. We all ran to his tent, and found that there too, as in mine, everything was in confusion; but after further examination, his money was found all right. The affair was rather a serious one; for there were only twenty-three in camp at our mine, and one of these, it seemed, must be the thief.

'Under the circumstances all volunteered to let their tents be examined, and a committee of three having been appointed, a search was made, but nothing was found. When all was over, they came back to my tent and made a minute examination of the ground, and as one of the three had been a tracker in the Sydney police, they were not unfitted for the business. The traces had been carefully removed by trailing the sand over them, but in one corner was found a solitary heel-mark, and a peculiar one at that. For on the inner side it had been roughly cobbled, and the coarse patch had left a clearly-defined impression. Now, rightly or wrongly, suspicion had fallen upon my neighbour—Macnaughton was his name—and, in his absence, his tent was searched that very evening, and a pair of spare working-boots found whose right heel corresponded exactly with the heel-mark in the tent. Still, this was too slight a clue to build a case upon. Next day, however, two of the miners who had left the camp a little before sunrise to try a little prospecting on their own account, on their return brought back the somewhat significant news that they had seen Macnaughton walking along the edge of a lake, a mile distant, shortly after dawn. Certain movements of his were deemed by them so suspicious that they thought fit to report the circumstance to the committee. The latter regarded the information as so important that two of them, including the tracker, slipped down to the lake. Of course the rest of the camp was now at work, and no one was aware that anything was on. On reaching the side of the lake at the spot indicated, they found a clear trail running along the shore of salt and sand for half a mile, and stopping at a large boulder which lay at the lake's edge.

'I should mention that the lake, like most of those in West Australia, was a salt one, and covered with a sheet of salt just like ice; but at several places this had been broken close to the shore, and the boulder lay half in and half out of the water at one of these spots. There were no marks on the shore side, so one of the two waded into the water, and dipping his arm, felt along the foot of the rock. At one point his hand came in contact with a large stone which seemed to block up a gap in the base of the boulder, and he had to use both hands to lift it away. Thrusting his hand into the opening, he immediately touched a canvas bag. He drew it out, and on opening it found that it contained my thirty pounds, neither more nor less. This was brought to me without any stir being made, and so the first great mistake was made. For, whether they, being members of such a small camp, disliked doing anything without certainty, or whether they simply desired to take the man red-handed, I cannot say; at any rate they did not make any attempt to arrest him, and that same afternoon Macnaughton expressed his intention of leaving for the Barrier Reef fifty miles to the south.'

'But where was the mistake?' I interrupted.

'Oh, that will come out in the sequel. But they should not have removed the money if they wanted to catch him in the act. Of course it was at once seen that he was about to play into our hands by visiting the boulder where he had left the money, and next morning when he packed up, and shouldered his traps for the southward tramp, one of the committee said that he was going that same day to a neighbouring reef, about six miles distant, and would take the chance of his company along the road. Of course there was no excuse for refusing such an offer, and the two went off, while those in camp awaited with considerable eagerness the turn of events. As for me, my practical share in the affair being over, I determined to get my money banked as soon as possible; so, borrowing a horse, I proceeded to ride to Clearhills, the nearest banking station. Meanwhile, the two men had left the camp and tramped off to the south. After walking some four miles, however, Macnaughton complained of an old sprain, and told his companion he would wait for an hour or so, and rub it with some whisky. The other needn't wait however.

'The other didn't wait, but walked for about a quarter of a mile, then doubled back under cover of some scrub that lay to the east, and lay watching his man. The latter waited for about ten minutes, then rose, looked searchingly along the southward road, and finally moved back towards the camp at a swift pace. The watcher cut across the scrub, and reached the end of the lake and lay down. Soon afterwards, he saw Macnaughton come out of the bush between the lake and the road, and walk along the high bank until he reached the boulder.

'Even then he seemed suspicious, and it was only after a careful scrutiny of the lakeside that he ventured into the lake. He stooped and drew the stone aside, and then, to give the very words of the man who was looking, "he staggered against the rock, and I'm blest if I didn't think he was going to drop."

'I believe that at that moment he must have fancied the eyes of the whole camp upon him. He stood for a moment leaning his head against the stone, then, with the manner of a hunted animal, crept into the bush and disappeared. The watcher at once ran round to the road, but as he was lying about the middle of the southern shore, the other, though only the third of a mile off across the lake, was about a mile and a half ahead by the road. The result was, that though half the camp turned out to search the scrub, they failed to find their man, though he was thought to be still lying in the neighbourhood. Mistake number two; and now the "Green Cub" comes into the yarn.

'To understand what follows, you must know the lie of the roads. From the Scandinavian Reefs you travel five miles along the Coolgardie road to the Blue Boulder Mines due west; then a seven miles' ride slightly north-east brings you to Clearhills. But from our camp to this road is barely two miles across a country of rock and high scrub. Picture me then riding confidently along this road two hours later garbed *à l'Australienne*—if that be the proper French for it. I felt rather proud, I can tell you. Only eighteen months from home, and here was I, rigged out like the best of them and just as formidable-looking, cantering across a West Australian plain. You see I was an old enough hand to have caught the style, and new enough to have retained the sense of novelty.

'I was just thinking how I would startle the natives if I were to ride out Crosshill way in the same guise, and what a dash I would cut as I galloped through Mount Florida, when I saw some one hurrying forward half a mile ahead. I innocently yearned for company, and gave my horse a dig, that sent it forward at a gallop.

'When I was still about a couple of hundred yards behind, the person turned and stood staring at me for a little as I rode up. I could perceive that, whoever he was, he had had a heavy tramp, for his clothes were almost in shreds as if with forcing his way through the bush. At the point where he was standing grew a gray wilderness of almost leafless trees, as impassable as the scrub itself, and into this he dived as I approached. Coming up to the spot, I looked about me in wonderment.

'Now, had I not been a bit of a jay, I would have ridden on with the reflection that if a man in a wild country wishes his privacy respected, it is advisable to give him all he desires. But, being a jay, I dismounted and walked forward to the point at which the man had disappeared. I was still peering forward when a shot came from a point not many yards in front, the bullet whistling past the side of my head, and striking the rock which bordered the other side of the road with a sharp click that I fancy I can hear yet.

'I turned and ran for my horse, but another bullet caught me in the hip; and though I

contrived to stagger to the bridle I fell, as much through fear as pain I fancy. Through the mist of failing consciousness came the dim vision of a face seen somewhere else, and then all was dark.

'When I came to, the sun was well to the west, and his rays were reflected from the white road in a hot blinding glare which was unbearable; so, to get out of the direct heat, I crawled painfully across the road to the solitary ridge of rock on the northern side, which rose above the general level beyond like a whale's back. Irregular bush varied the monotony of the waste, and the outliers of the leafless wood made a thin disappearing fringe along the roadside.

'Once against the rock, and partially sheltered from the heat by a gray trunk, I began to consider the situation my stupidity had landed me in. It wasn't a pleasant one. My precious money was gone for a second time, and with it the borrowed horse; and here was I, lame and faint with loss of blood, half-way between two stations. I sank down disconsolately, and to tell the truth, I cried from pure anger against the cruelty of circumstances. Suddenly, I caught sight of one memento of Australia, the flattened bullet which grazed my head. I picked it up, and the next moment fairly gasped. Some small yellow particles were sticking to it. A few fragments of rock had fallen with the bullet. These I picked up with considerable trepidation. *They were literally sown with gold.*

'Despite the pain it caused me, I stood up again, and examined the place where the bullet had struck, and I believe I yelled. I didn't know much yet about mining, still I knew there wasn't a reef like it as far as Coolgardie. I'm not joking, Tommy—the gold was simply sticking in it like peas.

'My pain vanished like magic. I tore up a scarf I wore, bandaged the wound the best way I could, broke off the branch of a tree, and, using it as a stick, crawled into Clearhills, and registered the spot as my claim.'

'But I thought you could establish a claim by merely pegging out,' I exclaimed.

'As a matter of fact I lost my head, and was mortally afraid of pegging out myself, if I waited. But listen to the sequel. My horse, instead of being stolen by my assailant, as I imagined, had galloped back to Blue Boulders, with the result that a couple of miners rode out in search of me, while word was sent back to the camp and a pursuit organised.

'Three hours later these two came riding into Clearhills in a fever of excitement. They had come across the trail of blood from my wound and seen where I had crawled to. While examining the spot they had noticed the remaining particles of rock, re-discovered the reef, and pegged out as many claims as they thought they could hold. They galloped up to the registration office in order to make doubly sure.

'"Already registered," said the agent.

'"Great Scott! Who by?"

'"William Johnstone of Scandinavian Reefs."

'"Put down our names for the nearest claims, and we'll see how the business dollies out."

'Then they went to find me. I was lying in the hotel in a wild confusion of weakness and intoxicating dream. They stood gazing at me in wonder while I told them all that had happened.

'"And you crawled in here?" said one. I nodded.

'"Well, I've been at the game for ten years, and have mined from Queensland to Coolgardie, and have never struck it rich yet till now; and here you go cavorting around like the little green cub you are, and play at being popped at with guns, and hang me, if the blamed bullets don't go prospecting for you. A blooming little green cub as we used to call them at Bendigo."

'Then he turned with a grin to his companion.

'"Hang it, Jim, if we don't name it the 'Green-cub Mine' as an insult. Lor', I wish some chance would come along and insult me. Never mind, young one, we don't grudge you your streak of luck, for if you are a cub, you're a blamed plucky one," and he gripped my hand in a fiercely-gentle way that made me squirm.

'I needn't bother giving you all the details of how I clubbed with them and other two pals of theirs, and so held the reef till we sold it to a syndicate for six thousand pounds and a thousand shares apiece; but you may guess how confident I am when I tell you that I've practically sunk every penny of it in the company.'

'And what about Macnaughton?' I asked.

'I don't know where he disappeared to. As a matter of fact, I forgot all about him in the excitement of my find, and when I did think about him, I felt rather obliged to him than otherwise. On the whole, I think we were easily quits. And now, are you for a game at billiards?'

'You forget I've the office to go back to,' I replied.

But I couldn't have played in any case. The gold fever was upon me, and I was trembling with excitement. I rushed back to the office, and went to work at high tension, unable to keep my thoughts concentrated for five minutes.

That night I bought all the evening papers in the hope of finding fresh quotations. Our buying had already sent the shares up to six shillings, and my pulse danced with the thought that I had swayed the market. Next morning's *Herald* contained a telegram reporting an extraordinary crushing at our mine, and the rest of that day I was even more unfitted for business than the day before. But at ten past three the door swung open, and Johnstone strode in. He leaned across the counter and caught my hand:

'Best congratulations, old fellow. Market closed to-day with 'Green Cubs' at twenty-two and six, and selling like wildfire!'

I stared incredulously, and dropped my pen with a sort of paralysed laugh. However, I soon recovered. But the best is still to come, for three months later I sold out at 11$\frac{6}{8}$, and cleared a profit of something like nine thousand pounds; and my visits to the west end of the city assumed a business-like regularity. All the

same, I would not recommend any one to follow my example unless he too can get hold of a Green Cub. It's safe then—but—not otherwise.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE recent celebration of Lord Kelvin's jubilee as Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Glasgow will long be remembered as an event of unusual interest and importance. Lord Kelvin's life-work covers such a wide field of knowledge that very few are able to gauge the immense value of his labours to mankind at large. A special feature of the late celebration, which took place in the presence of distinguished visitors from all parts of the world, was the exhibition of some of Lord Kelvin's principal inventions. Among them was the mirror galvanometer, without which long-distance submarine telegraphy would be next to impossible; models of his wonderful machinery for paying out and recovering deep-sea cables; his beautiful compass; and his deep-sea sounding apparatus. These inventions alone would guarantee lasting fame for any man, but Lord Kelvin is also noted for abstruse investigations of the highest order; and it is not too much to say that he has laid the whole world under an immense obligation for his untiring labours in the field of scientific research.

The last consular report from Naples alludes to an invention by Mr H. Linden, secretary to the Zoological Station at that port, which may possibly have some influence on the future of boat propulsion, although as yet it seems in its toy stage. Mr Linden, taking nature for his instructor, has fitted a boat with fins, which are fixed on outriggers projecting over the stem and stern of the vessel, and he finds that by their aid the boat can be propelled by the action of the waves. The rolling and pitching of a boat in a choppy sea, as well as the vertical action of the waves, will also help to work these fish-like appendages. At first the result was not encouraging, for the boat travelled only two kilomètres (about 1¼ mile) per hour, but by careful adjustment of the fins this speed was soon greatly increased. A boat 14 feet in length was made to run at 5 kiloms. an hour in the Bay of Naples against a south-west wind, and nearly as fast against a north-east wind. It is said that the fins can be easily adjusted to any boat, and that they are inexpensive. It will be noted that this system is useless in still water.

An animal made of tinplate, of the shape of an elongated fir cone, about three feet in length, which crackles and rustles with every movement, is one of the latest acquisitions of the Zoological Society of London. Its name is the Pangolin, or Scaly Ant-eater, and it belongs to the same family group as the Armadillo and Platypus. It has excited great attention at the 'Zoo,' for it is—if we are correctly informed—the first animal of the kind which has been exhibited there. Its home is where the termites, or white ants, are found; for the animal feeds on these destructive creatures, and possesses claws which are designed to break down their strongholds. The claws are also necessary for burrowing in the ground, for the pangolin excavates a cave for himself and his mate eight feet or so below the surface of the earth, and in this strange home one or two young are produced every year. The pangolin at present at the 'Zoo' is fed upon ants and their eggs, and also exhibits a partiality for cockroaches scalded in milk. The scales with which its body is covered are hard and sharp as steel, and it can give a terribly cutting blow with its powerful tail. It can roll its body up into a ball like a hedgehog when it so wills.

The art of smuggling goods, so as to escape the Customs duty, has been carried on to very great perfection; and all kinds of dodges have been adopted to hide articles from the vigilant eyes of the officers. It would seem, indeed, that every form of concealment had been practised, from simple hiding to the manufacture of articles out of contraband material; for instance, innocent-looking oil-cake, made in reality of compressed tobacco. But the American smuggler has lately found out a new method, albeit one which is rather risky, as the recent discovery shows. At New York an exhausted pigeon fell into the hands of the police, the reason of its failure to reach its home being that it carried a number of comparatively heavy diamonds, some under its tail, some on its legs, and others round its neck. Now there is, under the present United States tariff, a heavy duty upon these gems, and the police theory is that the intercepted pigeon is the property of a gang of smugglers, who regularly take birds to Europe, and when on the homeward voyage attach precious stones to them, which are purchased abroad, and set the birds free before the Customs scrutiny takes place.

The outcry of all humane people against the wanton destruction of bird life for purposes of personal adornment has so far affected the attitude of the retail traders in feathers, that some of them are selling artificial goods instead of the real article. Many ladies, who would scorn to place real feathers in their head-gear, are by such representations induced to buy so-called 'Osprey' feathers, a name which for some unknown reason is given in this trade to the delicate plumes of the small white herons or egrets. But, *caveat emptor*, the so-called 'artificial' plumes are in reality genuine plumes, which, let it be remembered, are only developed on these beautiful birds during the season in which they have their nests and young. It is to salve the consciences of their customers that the sellers make use of this unworthy subterfuge, and unless the practice be exposed, 'one of the most beautiful of birds'—we are quoting the words of Sir W. H. Flower, who has recently written a strong protest on this subject—'will be swept off the face of the earth, to minister to a passing fashion, bolstered up by a glaring falsehood.'

The great difficulty found in cities and large towns of disposing of the ever-increasing amount of waste products, rubbish, and animal and vegetable refuse, which find their way to the household dust-bins, has led to the extensive adoption of parish destructors, which are huge

furnaces in which this unhealthy matter is purified by fire and turned into harmless dust and ashes. A new destructor has recently been opened by the St Pancras (London) Vestry, where the ash and clinkers are converted into a valuable mortar and concrete; and where also an ambitious attempt is being made to utilise the gaseous products as a heating agent for raising steam. Adjoining the destructor premises is an electric lighting station, and the heat from the furnaces of the destructor is carried to the boilers next door. The system is at present under trial, and there is very much doubt whether it will prove successful. The refuse will most probably require the aid of coal to help it to come up to the standard necessary in a fuel for the raising of steam.

Carbolic acid is now so generally employed for disinfecting purposes that familiarity is apt to breed contempt for its highly corrosive and poisonous qualities; hence the value of knowing of a good and easily obtained antidote to its dangerous effects. Professor Carleton states that vinegar applied to a cutaneous or mucous surface which has been burned by the acid will immediately give relief, the characteristic bleaching of the skin quickly disappearing, and subsequent scarring being to a large extent prevented. It is also useful when the poison has been taken internally; and, unfortunately, large numbers of lives are lost annually through carbolic acid poisoning—chiefly cases of suicide. For internal administration the vinegar should be diluted with an equal quantity of water, and taken by the patient as soon as possible.

It was some time ago pointed out by Nordenskiöld, the Swedish scientist, that water might often be found by boring through granite and other crystalline rocks, his theory being that changes of temperature must cause shearing strains between the upper and lower layers, which would lead to fissures through which surface water would percolate. A well made in 1894 on the Swedish coast under such conditions is now yielding four thousand four hundred gallons of fresh water a day, and other wells have since been bored to about a similar depth (one hundred and ten feet) which give encouraging results. It is believed that many lighthouses and other outlying stations can be provided with fresh water by boring through the rocks upon which they are situated.

The transport from one end of the earth to the other of the most perishable articles of food is now becoming quite a common thing, and the plan usually adopted is that of the refrigerator. But recently quite a new method has been discovered of packing butter for shipment without the aid of ice or refrigerating machinery. The butter is packed in a box made of six pieces of ordinary glass, the edges being secured by strips of gummed paper. Over the glass is placed a layer of plaster of Paris, which, being a bad conductor of heat, preserves the butter at an even temperature. Butter packed in this way at Melbourne has been shipped to South Africa, and then taken seven hundred miles overland to Kimberley, where it has arrived in perfect condition. Cases holding as much as two hundredweight of butter are now being made for this new trade departure. The cost of packing is about one penny per pound.

In a Government report from Colombia appears the description of a tree, known as the chaparro, which possesses the property of being fireproof. It grows on the vast plains of Colombia and the north of South America called savannas, extensive districts which are parched with heat, except during the rainy season. It has long been the custom to clear the ground for the new vegetation which springs up so luxuriantly on these plains after the rainy season by means of fire; and such fires, miles in extent, kindled by the herdsmen, destroy everything in the shape of vegetation except the chaparro tree, which survives to afford a welcome shade in an almost treeless region. It is a small tree, seldom growing to more than twenty feet in height, with a girth of about three feet, and it owes its protection from fire to the nature of its hard thick bark. The bark lies on the trunk in loose layers, which do not readily conduct heat to the more delicate parts of the structure. It is a general idea among the natives that this tree grows only where gold is abundant in the soil below. That it is common in auriferous districts is indisputable, but there is no ground for supposing that it does not grow elsewhere.

Every one who travels much by our railways will admit that, while there is much to admire in the way that they are officered and managed, there is room for reform. We do not allude here to the regular unpunctuality of certain lines, for that at present seems, for some obscure reason, to be irremediable. But there are various little matters in which the convenience and comfort of passengers might, with advantage to both customers and companies, be better secured than they are at present. For example, there is no reason why a return ticket, for which hard cash has been paid, should not be transferable as well as available at any time after issue. A step in the right direction has been taken by the North Eastern Railway Company in the issue of books of coupons for one thousand miles of travel, at a reduction of about twenty per cent. on the usual fares. But the privilege is confined to first-class passengers only, and is so hampered by red tape restrictions that we fear it will not be highly valued. Still it is a step in the direction of much-needed reform, and we look forward to the time when such books of tickets will be available at any time, for any person, and on any railway in the kingdom. Possibly railway officials will regard such a proposition as being impossible, if only on account of the forged tickets which would soon be in circulation. The same argument would apply to bank-notes, but no one would think of suggesting that because a note is forged now and again, the present system of paper currency should cease to be.

In a Belgian paper a wonderful story is told by M. Fiston, of certain observations which he has made upon the habits of eels. He had planted at a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards from the bank of a river where eels were plentiful, several plots of peas. As the peas reached maturity he noticed that some of the pods were gnawed through with an even clean

cut, and he at once attributed the damage to field mice. But his gardener one day informed him that he had visited the ground very early in the morning and saw several 'serpents' come from among the peas at his approach, and go to the river. The next morning M. Fiston himself went to the field, and threw a stone into the middle of the peas, when at once out came a dozen eels which fled towards the stream. It has long been known that eels will leave the water and take to land in search of insects, and they have also been said to eat cereals, but a diet of peas for such creatures is something new.

It is said that one of the latest products of the electric furnace is a compound of boron and carbon, which is so hard that it will cut glass as easily as will a diamond. The new substance is due to M. Moissan, who makes it by heating together boracic acid and carbon; it is black, and, unlike the diamonds made artificially some years ago, which were microscopic in size, the new material can be procured in large lumps. If this be true, the compound will be hailed by engineers as a valuable aid in the drilling of hard rocks.

At Blackpool, Lancashire, a new system of traction has been inaugurated on a tramway line which runs from that place to Lytham, a distance of six and a half miles. The novelty consists in the car carrying its own motor, which is an Otto gas-engine, driven by gas compressed in steel cylinders, which are carried beneath the vehicle. The cars weigh seven tons each, and can be driven at a speed of twelve miles an hour. Like many of the autocars now upon probation before the public, the engine in this car is kept going whether the car is in motion or whether it is standing still, the flywheel making two hundred and sixty revolutions per minute. The gas and air with which the cylinders are charged is ignited by means of an electric spark, and the working parts are kept cool by water circulation. The new car seems to be a great improvement upon previous attempts in the same direction, and it is alleged that the system is more economical in working than horse traction, steam, or electricity.

While so much is being done to reform our methods of highway travelling, it is interesting to turn back a few pages of history to see what was being done in the same direction by our forefathers. In 1802 the first tramway, or iron railway for horse traction, long before railways as we now know them were thought about, was laid between Wandsworth and Merstham in Surrey; and a large basin was made at Wandsworth to accommodate thirty barges which brought their freight *viâ* the Thames. There was a double line of rails, and 'points' were used to transfer the vehicles from one line to the other. Great surprise was evinced at the ease with which a single horse could draw immense weights on such a railway; and once, to settle a bet, an animal dragged twelve wagons loaded with stones, each wagon representing a weight of three tons, for six miles. A contemporary writer says: 'Notwithstanding the advantages of iron railways with respect to facility and motion, this road does not appear to be much used, nor is it probable that railways will ever come into general use.'

Mr Maxim, of Maxim-gun celebrity, is still sanguine as to the future of the flying-machine. It will be remembered that he has built a huge machine of this description which is driven by an enormously powerful steam-engine of comparatively light construction. He points out that until within the past six years, the experimenters with flying-machines were little better than charlatans and mountebanks, and that it is only quite recently that men of science have turned attention to the subject. In this way much valuable information has been gained from actual experiment, as opposed to mere theory. Mr Maxim believes that it is now possible to make a successful and practical flying-machine 'which will at least be a valuable adjunct to the offensive and defensive powers of highly-civilised nations, who are able to make and operate delicate and complicated machinery.'

An article in the *Journal* for June 1896 dealt with cider-making in England: since then the *Board of Trade Journal* has called attention to the cider industry in France, and to certain curious developments in Germany. Normandy is *par excellence* the country of cider. It was in Normandy first of European countries that cider was made into a wholesome and popular beverage. Normandy still holds that her ciders are the finest in the world. The cider product of France varies enormously from year to year. The recent average has been about 14,000,000 hectolitres per annum; but in 1893 the total was 31,600,000 hectolitres, in 1895 nearly 25,600,000 —the average price being about ten francs per hectolitre (of twenty-two gallons).

In Germany, on the other hand, little cider is consumed, and German apples are not good for cider-making. But to this industry the Germans have applied themselves with the same insight, persistence, and technical skill as has enabled them in the last two decades to supersede England in many specifically English products. The Germans have verily entered into the cider harvest of France. They now import largely the best French apples (by train-loads at a time), and Germany now exports ten times as much cider as France (often as 'German champagne')—to Athens, Damascus, Calcutta, Capetown, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Buenos Ayres, Pekin! The town of Frankfort alone has fifty cider factories (five of them large), and the new industry is reported to bring into this one German town £500,000 per annum.

## THE PANAMA CANAL AS IT IS.

The West Indies, the Spanish Main, and the Central American isthmus hold a somewhat unique place in the world's history. Of no equal area of the planet, probably, are the annals so peculiarly a record of wild ambitions, tragic failures, piracy, treachery, decay, and death; and we hear but little of honest industry, peace, and prosperity. Two of the greatest disasters in the history of commercial and financial enterprise, separated by almost exactly two centuries, are associated with the same section of the American isthmus, at points one hundred and twenty miles apart. In 1695

the Scottish nation, under the influence of the far-sighted William Paterson, had apprehended the boundless possibilities of the isthmus as an *entrepôt* of the trade and commerce of the eastern and western hemispheres, and were with feverish and almost frantic eagerness planning the Darien scheme—a scheme which contemplated the digging of a canal between Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In 1698 the first colonists left Scotland. In 1703 the last miserable survivors of an utterly ruined enterprise reached home. Racial and religious hostility, Spanish enmity, and English jealousy, combined with a deadly climate and internal mismanagement to wreck the scheme.

The deadly climate and still worse mismanagement—amounting to criminal misuse of the funds collected—were active in ruining the great Panama Canal Scheme which, carried triumphantly through the initial difficulties by the creator of the Suez Canal, collapsed in bankruptcy and ignominy in 1893. Since 1889, when operations practically ceased, the stupendous canal works have been falling into utter ruin; and, being gradually absorbed again into tropical jungle, the impression they make on an eyewitness should not be devoid of interest.

The traveller by the inter-oceanic railroad from Colon to Panama has ample opportunity of surveying the wreck of the workings (the writer, fortunately, had extra facilities and time for a more perfect inspection); as, naturally, the course of both across the isthmus is confined to the lowest practicable levels, and intermingle with one another, as it were, the most of the distance, with the exception of the last two or three miles from each outfall.

To the voyager starting from the Atlantic coast, and passing the stations of Monkey Hill and Tiger Hill, perhaps a tithe of the innumerable last resting-places of the disease-stricken toilers still remain sufficiently conspicuous to force themselves on his attention; though of many hundreds, nay, thousands of graves, no traces are now visible, owing to the quick growth of vegetation, the total lack of kindly care, and the ravages of tropical insects amongst the rudely-constructed wooden crosses erected originally to the memory of the departed by a despairing friend or relative, who may himself have fallen a victim to a like fate a few days, even a few hours, later.

All along the route, thousands of tenantless, decaying edifices of deal and corrugated iron are grim reminders of the once vast multitudes who not long since dwelt therein. Over a million tons of machinery and plant, huge dredgers, locomotives, stationary engines, rust and rot under the pitiless influence of tropical rain and sunshine. Some, it is true, are protected as far as means and circumstances allow for possible future utilisation; but the mass lies uncared for. It is indeed a pitiful, awful scene of chaos for an engineer to gaze upon. We have even seen the sympathetic spectator in actual tears as the gigantic failure struck him with full force at first vision. Imagination falls far short in conjuring up the real state of things; personal observation alone can bring home the magnitude of the disaster.

On a fair estimate, from statistics at our disposal, and our own measurements, it would seem that fully a third of the excavating has been accomplished. But portions of the excavated section are rapidly refilling and being rendered useless from various causes, such as absence of protection works, and the deposits carried down by the Rio Chagres—a stream of scarcely imposing width, which, however, drains a large area, and has been known to rise as much as twenty-five to thirty feet in a few hours. Across the course of the Chagres the route of the canal continually cuts and recuts—an obvious source of difficulty, even in the rosiest era of the enterprise.

On approaching the watershed and the cordillera crossing, the famous La Culebra Hill is reached. Here it was that the heaviest excavating had to be done; there for the first time the vastness of the undertaking becomes apparent. Though much has been accomplished, there still remain perhaps millions of tons of material to remove; owing to the irregular formation, the total amount can be but roughly estimated in any way. Fairly beyond that point, the digging of the remaining length of the canal to Panama, free from the assaults of the roaring Chagres, and amongst streams of no great importance, is perhaps child's play in comparison with the eastern slope section, though undoubtedly vast difficulties, natural and otherwise, beset the route.

Various huts along its course are still occupied, chiefly in the vicinity of the stations. Chinese, French, and odd members of innumerable nationalities, infinitesimal fractions of that once great human mass, still hang on in hopes of a future 'boom,' and eke out a precarious existence, or die in the meantime. And here and there, at various points on the line, a passing glimpse through the window of what was once a sectional engineer's headquarters, displays shelves loaded with myriad plans, dusty and insect-eaten, untouched for more than half a decade. A solitary, emaciated French sentinel awaits the distant time when they may again be brought into requisition. The words of one official struck me forcibly. 'Ah, m'sieu,' he said, 'the original idea of many was the construction of the canal, but with the majority of all concerned the main aim was the amassing of as much money, by fair means or foul, in as short a space of time as possible, that they might disappear from the scene before death or exposure overtook them.'

Undoubtedly the scenes of vice, misery, and debauch in Panama, during these few years, were indescribable. Engineers holding responsible positions were rarely at their duties, and spent their time in the city gambling and otherwise occupied in killing time, and ultimately themselves. Those who, by any possible chance, could absent themselves from the workings proper did so; for fever, consequent on the overturning of tropical virgin soil, was rampant, especially the Chagres variety, now practically extinct. But this was fleeing one evil to court another, as deadly, though less rapid in effect.

Time-keepers and gangers, having perhaps the names of seven hundred to one thousand men on their lists, still drew the corresponding payments for distribution, though thirty to forty per cent. of the supposed workers were under the sod, the surplus going to their own pockets. There was no one to check their methods, and nobody cared. Money was plentiful while it lasted. Every one was well paid, and it was a case of easy come and easy go. A conductor on the Panama Railroad volunteered the information that in the palmy days few or practically no tickets were issued. The regular fare for any distance was from seven to ten dollars gold, half of which, perhaps, reached the coffers of the company, whilst the other filled the pockets of the collector.

It is a well-known fact that European firms of contractors netted no insignificant sums out of the enterprise, and yet never had a practical finger in its development. Original contracts from the Compagnie Canal du Panama were disposed of, let and sublet as many as five and six times. Presuming that the actual operator in these instances made it pay (as the intermediate holders naturally retained a liberal percentage), the original terms must have been truly generous.

After these authenticated details, one can wonder but little at the ultimate catastrophe. A deadly climate, over-sanguine hopes, the utter absence of efficient management, with the resulting temptations and scope for the practice of countless irregularities and crimes, accomplished the disastrous end in due course. The following is a signal instance of sinful waste and swindling. A Belgian firm had contracted to supply several hundred light locomotives for use in the excavations. These on being erected proved absolutely worthless, mere bundles of scrap-iron, and immovable by the action of steam. Consequently over three hundred of these machines were dumped into the sea as foundation for the erection of a mole at the Atlantic outlet. Over them stand, as fitting memorials of the interment, the once semi-palatial residences of M. de Lesseps' ill-fated son and other high officials, now in various stages of decay, and inhabited by swarms of natives, West India blacks, and Chinese.

It is maintained by some that there may still be a possibility of achievement for the canal, and that all is not yet at an end. But its successful conclusion would be a marvel. The Suez Canal never had the same engineering difficulties or climatic disadvantages to overcome. Besides, a new canal is being industriously promoted at present. Opinions differ as to its feasibility and prospects. It has some advantages over a Panama route; it has not the Chagres river and its floods to contend with, and has free navigation along the whole length of Lake Nicaragua. But the climatic conditions are hardly more favourable; two very high ridges have to be pierced by cuttings, and the scheme has some difficulties of its own, so that Mr Colquhoun is probably not wrong in thinking that the estimate of £20,000,000 falls far below the sum that would ultimately be required for completing a canal by the Nicaragua route.

## THE MODERN TITYRUS.

'Tityre, tu, recubans.'—VIRGIL.

With a carelessly calm composure,
I lie in the grassy enclosure,
And in delicate, dainty, diaphanous gushes
The smoke from my *brûle-gueule* is rolled:
The circle of trees round me planted
By summer's green wand is enchanted,
And the red-laden, white-laden, mauve-laden bushes
Beyond it are sweet to behold.
And whoso goes past me, me spying,
May the 'ease without dignity' mark
Of the latter-day Tityrus, lying
Long-stretched in the Kennington Park!

How close to one's memory lingers
The charm of that choicest of singers
Of old-time, whose gold-time (the bold time of wooing)
Was passed in the beech-casten shade;
Who, piping with shepherdly skill his
Fond love for his fair Amaryllis,
Set soft echoes, suave echoes, sweet echoes cooing
The name of that beautiful maid!
But the olden-time Tityrus, crazing
The woods with his love-litten spark,
Less blest was then I, lightly lazing,
Long-stretched in the Kennington Park!

In the music the love-passion teaches
(Such Tityrus made to the beeches)
Dark undernotes, deep 'neath the wonder-notes creeping,
Change gladness to sadness anon:
But the eyes of me fortunate glisten
With bliss which endures, as I listen
To glee-notes that, glibly from glee-founts upleaping,
Sink, soothing, my senses upon.
And my heart, proof to love-pangs, rejoices,
As, making no music, I hark
To that music of juvenile voices
Which thrills through the Kennington Park!

The strains by old Tityrus lifted
Were far through the beech-branches drifted;
But his measure, his treasure, his pleasure were merely
The offspring from Selfishness grown.
So hear ye the song, O my brothers,
Which, glad from the gladness of others,
I 'm raising, here lazing, through gazing so cheer'ly
On infantile antics—and own
That the former-day Tityrus, plying
His reed, was less worthy of mark
Than the latter-day Tityrus, lying
Long-stretched in the Kennington Park!

WM. EDMONDSON.

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# ATTRAY'S WIFE.

By H. F. ABELL.

## CHAPTER I.

'A very pretty place for a fellow to be condemned to serve at!' remarked Lieutenant Eustace Hirst of His Britannic Majesty's Preventive Service, as one gray October afternoon of the year 1805 he stepped out of Martello number forty, his temporary quarters, on to Dymchurch Wall. 'Twenty-five years old, and practically shelved because of a rascally French bullet shot by a Boulogne land-lubber!'

It was not a pretty place. Right and left of the Martello stretched the gray sea-wall; in front moaned and tossed the gray channel; behind lay the great Marsh, green enough actually, but now enveloped in a gray ground-fog characteristic of the season of the year; and at the time of which we are writing more remote from the influences of civilisation and refinement than are many places in Eastern Africa.

Wounded in a boat action with the Boulogne forts, Hirst had been treated as were most officers by no means incapacitated for duty, but not strong enough for the exceedingly strong sea-life of those days—he had received 'blood-money,' and had been sent to a Preventive Station. He was lucky in getting even this billet so soon, for there were hundreds of wounded officers and only scores of billets; but having got it, he employed the privilege of Englishmen in general, and of sailors in particular, of grumbling. He called to mind brother officers who had got snug billets such as Dover, and Hastings, and Brighton, but he didn't think of the many for whom there were no billets, and who, still young men, were fretting away their lives with the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick.

So here he was, with some twenty bluejackets and as many coastguardsmen under his orders, with the sole consolation of having to look after a bit of coast as famous as any in Britain for the numbers, the daring, and the enterprise of its smugglers.

Eustace Hirst had been here a month; he had seen nothing but the gray world upon which he now scowled, had heard few voices but those of his own men, and had only achieved one thing—he had made an enemy of the only gentleman in the neighbourhood, the Reverend Mr Texter, Vicar of Broadmarsh, simply by establishing a night patrol in the reverend gentleman's churchyard. 'As if,' growled the divine angrily, 'as if he hadn't plenty of room elsewhere for his blessed patrols.'

But the young officer, if new to the preventive business, had not been born on a smuggling coast without learning that its churches had a secular as well as a sacred use.

He stood, spy-glass under arm, scowling at the gray, tumbling sea. A speck appeared on it; he mechanically brought his glass to bear upon it, but turned on his heel with a snort of disgust when he saw but a sea-bird.

Presently, however, his attention was directed nearer home.

A hundred yards away he saw the figure of a girl walking rapidly along the wall towards where he was standing, but stopping every now and again to gaze out at the sea, and shudderingly to wrap closer around her the long cloak she wore. 'Funny day to choose for an airing!' remarked the lieutenant. 'I wonder if'——

He dropped behind a low parapet, built on the edge of the wall for the convenience of outlook, and finished his sentence: 'I wonder if

she's up to anything. "Hirst," said the chief at Hythe before I came here, "Don't trust anything that can walk or run, where you're going to, neither male nor female, human or animal." And I don't.'

The girl came within fifty yards, and the young man saw beneath the hood she wore a face almost angelic in its beauty, but with a sad, despairing look upon it.

'Who on earth can she be?' thought the lieutenant, 'and what in the name of all that's sensible is she going to do—not bathe surely—and I here—I'd better cough or'——

At that instant, with a ringing cry of 'God forgive me!' she sprang off the wall into the tumbling waves.

Hirst was out and over after her in a very few seconds; there was a minute or two's stern battling with the struggling figure, and the sea, which swept with a nasty undertow round a projecting groyne, and he brought her up the steps, saved but insensible, and hurried with her to the Martello. 'Bathsheba!' he roared to the native savage who acted as his cook, 'put this lady to bed, mix a strong grog, and tell me when she comes to.'

Bathsheba uttered a little scream of course, but obeyed with alacrity, and the lieutenant had just time to exchange his dripping garments for dry, when the girl announced that Miss Mountjoy was sensible.

'Mountjoy! How do you know who she is?' asked the young man.

'Why, sure-ly, bean't she the young lady as has come with her mother to Green Place?' replied Bathsheba.

This knowledge did not astonish the lieutenant, for he had early found out that in the marsh world everybody was more or less related to everybody else, and that nobody's business was his or her own; and as it was a public duty to keep all knowledge from him, he was only annoyed at his own ignorance of the fact that Green Place was at last tenanted. He entered his tiny bedroom. The girl was lying quietly, with closed eyes, and he paused at the door to gaze with admiration upon the calm beauty of her face—a beauty of strong contrasts, for her skin was as white as marble, and her hair jet black.

She opened her eyes with a start, and fixed them upon Eustace Hirst, with the peculiar intensity of one awakened from another world.

'Who are you? Where am I? What am I doing here?' she asked angrily.

'Please don't talk, Miss Mountjoy,' said the young officer.

'I will talk. How dare you tell me not to?' retorted the girl almost fiercely. 'What has been going on?'

'I have prevented you from committing a great crime,' said Hirst.

The girl passed her hand over her brow.

'Did you?' she said presently, 'and how dare you call it a crime to make one's self happy? I am miserable, and I determined to be happy. What made you do it?'

'Duty,' briefly replied the lieutenant.

The girl raised herself and looked at him. She saw a tall, well-favoured young man, in a naval rough-weather uniform.

'Are you in the Preventive?' she asked.

'I am. What made you attempt to take your life?'

'Duty.'

'To whom?'

'To myself. I'm sick of the life I lead. That to which I should have gone, if you had not been impertinent enough to interfere, might have been better, and could not have been worse.'

Strength of will had enabled her to speak so far. Then the effect of the sudden immersion in the icy water, and the strong cordial which Bathsheba had given her, made itself felt; she muttered a few incoherent words, her head sank sideways on the pillow, and she was fast asleep.

Eustace Hirst went gently out and called Bathsheba. 'Now tell me all about the Mountjoys and the Green Place,' he said.

So Bathsheba, a great, strapping, red-cheeked Marsh wench, described how about two months previously the news ran through Broadmarsh that Green Place was going to be lived in once more; and it *was* news, for the last person who lived at Green Place disappeared mysteriously, and was said to walk 'same as Squire Oxenbridge of Brede Place,' and it was thought none would take the house rent free. However, said Bathsheba, about a month agone, the new people moved in; nice, handsome old lady, and this young miss, with lots of fine furniture and pictures, and they was to church the next Sunday, and the Sunday after; and Pilcher, the beadle, seeing they was quality, put them in the Squire's pew with the red curtains, and they behaved just like gentlefolk, and went fast asleep during the sermon; and Mr Texter had called upon them, and had got to know them quite well, which was more than anybody else did, they led such a ter'ble quiet life, never going outside the garden walls—and that was all she, Bathsheba Garson, knew about them.

Here, at anyrate, there was promise of something to break the monotony of existence. Mysterious arrival of two ladies at an out-of-the-way corner of the world; attempt upon her own life by the younger lady within a month of arrival; said young lady beautiful, and, from the evidence of manner and speech, of good if not of high position; actresses in a strange story without a shadow of doubt.

As a rule, Eustace Hirst did not care twopence about other people's affairs, and if there had not been a pretty girl on the scene, probably would have bothered his head no more about the new tenants of Green Place, except to keep a professional eye on them. But, as there was a pretty, nay, a beautiful girl on the scene, the young man's curiosity was piqued, and he resolved to find out all that he could. He was thus musing when his door opened, and Miss Mountjoy walked in.

'I suppose I must acknowledge your great bravery in jumping into the sea and pulling me out,' she said, 'but I cannot add my thanks. However, I am a predestinarian, and evidently my fate is something else.'

The lieutenant bowed.

'Are you strong enough to walk?' he asked. 'May I offer my escort?'

Miss Mountjoy did not seem to hear what he said. She was reading a printed notice stuck with others in the frame of the looking-glass. It was as follows:

'FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD.

The above sum will be paid by the Government, and by the relatives of the undermentioned deceased officers, for the apprehension or for information which will lead to the apprehension of William Attray of Alnmouth, in the County of Northumberland, farmer, who did, on the night of December 24th, 1804, feloniously kill Captain Adams, Lieutenant Armstrong, and Lieutenant Roddam of the Preventive Service, in the execution of their duty, at Alnmouth.'

'Ah! it would be a stroke of luck,' said the young officer, 'if I could accomplish that!'

'You would procure the arrest of my father!' said the girl.

'Your father! Attray your father!' exclaimed Hirst.

'Yes; why not?' replied the girl, quite calmly.

'I—I am sorry—very sorry to hear it,' replied Eustace.

'Not so sorry as I am to know it and feel it,' said the girl. 'Have you an idea where he is?'

'Not I! not I! Well — I am amazed! Then you don't know where he is?' said the young man, and added: 'not likely you would tell me if you did.'

The girl turned to leave the room. The lieutenant repeated his question about escorting her home. She declined his services, but added that if he liked to call at Green Place, her mother might be pleased to see him.

So saying, she bowed and went out into the dark, chilly night.

## LOCH KATRINE IN GLASGOW.

By Benjamin Taylor.

When Fitz-James, emerging from the Pass of the Trossachs, looked down upon Loch Katrine, bathed in the light of the setting sun, like 'one burnished sheet of living gold,' he beheld a physical picture of the priceless value of these gleaming waters. 'Living gold,' indeed, they have become to one of the greatest cities in Europe, and one of the busiest populations in the world. Thirty miles or more, as the crow flies, to the south of where Snowdoun's Knight gazed in rapture and amazement upon the beautiful lake, lies the 'Scotch town called Glasgow,' for which Frank Osbaldistone ignorantly inquired, until Andrew Fairservice made him understand that 'Glasgow's a ceety.' When Bailie Nicol Jarvie traversed the intervening country, or some of it, in search of his lawless relative, he little thought that his successors in the Bailieship would advance with set purpose into the Macgregor country. Rob Roy had often invaded the Lowlands, and carried off cattle and gear; so there was a sort of poetic justice in the Lowlanders invading the Highlands to carry off some of the wealth of water to sweeten their homes and feed their thirsting mills. Indeed, the bringing of Loch Katrine to Glasgow was not only one of those great engineering feats at which all the world wonders: it stimulated, if it did not create, a great social and industrial revolution. Glasgow may have been a 'ceety,' as Andrew Fairservice insisted, in the days of the romantic freebooter; but all its growth into Imperial importance has been since its roots were watered from the springs of Loch Katrine.

Do we always realise the vital importance of the water-supply of a populous city, and the difficulties attending it, apparently simple as the result may be? The very lives, not merely the comfort and health, of the people depend upon the skill and vigilance of the water engineer. He must not only secure the present, but must stretch a hand through time to provide for the future. Like Mr Gale, the renowned engineer of the Glasgow Water Commissioners, he must keep his eye steadfastly on the probable wants of twenty years hence; for unless he does so, the citizens of the future will be left athirst. And he has to provide a supply that shall never cease, no matter what accidents may happen. When the supply has to be brought by artificial channels for thirty miles through moss and moor, over hill and crag and torrent, the provision is such as to tax the highest mechanical skill and the deepest scientific thought. Consider what pure, clean, sweet water means to each single individual of us, and how irksome is even the slightest temporary restriction in the supply, be it even but by a broken ewer; and then consider what it means to a palpitating hive of a million souls.

At the beginning of the present century the water-supply of Glasgow was derived from some thirty wells (more or less impregnated with deleterious matter) and from the river Clyde. By the end of the first decade the river supply was collected and distributed through works constructed by the two celebrated engineers, James Watt and Thomas Telford. But they had not looked far enough ahead, and in other twenty years more works had to be constructed and fresh filter-beds laid down. By the middle of the century the supply was about twelve million gallons per day, from a source which could not well yield more, and which was daily becoming more impure as towns and works increased and multiplied along the banks of the river. Then it was that the Corporation stepped in, and acquired parliamentary powers to buy out the old Water Companies and to tap the natural reservoir of Loch Katrine.

It was not to this lake, however, that the attention of engineers was first directed. Fifty years ago a company obtained an Act empowering them to take water from Loch Lubnaig, along which the Cross of Fire was sped by

Norman on its way up to Strathyre. Before preparations could be made to convey the water from this lake to Glasgow, the mill-owners and other owners of water-rights on the River Teith had to be compensated. It was arranged with them that they should be guaranteed as much water as should flow down the river in the months of May, June, and July, but it so happened that in these particular months set apart for the gaugings, there were tremendous rains and heavy floods, with the result that the quantity bargained for was more than the loch could supply in normal conditions. Thus, rather oddly, ended the Lubnaig scheme.

When the Corporation resolved to take over the water-supply, they employed a number of engineers to report and advise on the best source. Among them was the celebrated engineer, Mr J. F. Bateman, who reported in favour of Loch Katrine. But when parliamentary powers were sought for the work, some curious opposition was encountered. Municipal economists declared that it would add half-a-crown in the pound to the rates. A learned professor of Chemistry declared that the purity of Loch Katrine constituted its great danger, because of the effect which lead piping would have on it. And the Admiralty objected to so much water being taken from Loch Katrine, as it would interfere with the navigation of the Firth of Forth, because the water ought naturally to flow out by the loch into the Teith, and thence into the Forth. These objections, if amusing to recall now, were successful at the time in defeating the project. It was not until 1855 that the Corporation obtained parliamentary powers to tap the lake; and four years later the water was turned on by the Queen.

For thirty-six years, then, the population of Glasgow have been daily drinking the garnered drops of the most famed of Scottish lakes. The drain began with eight million gallons per day. It is now fifty millions. Fifty million gallons of water per day! It is a big drink. So big a drink that one wonders what would have become of the million or so of people had they only the municipal wells and Clyde filters of eighty years ago. But the million people would not be in that busy area to-day were it not for Loch Katrine water, and this is why we say that Loch Katrine has made modern Glasgow. Fifty million gallons of water per day means upwards of two million gallons per hour, morning, noon, and night. As a matter of fact the greatest consumption is through the day, but within the twenty-four hours the fifty million gallons must be forthcoming—in every single-roomed tenement as in every lordly mansion, in every tiny workshop as in every palatial mill, for the street watering-carts as for the public baths and wash-houses, and for ornamental fountains as for pumps and fire-engines. The work of distribution is almost as difficult as, and much more complex than, the work of conveyance from the parent source to the gates of the city. The vast, dark stream of pure water that is ceaselessly flowing from the heart of the mountains to the heart of the town is broken up, and diverted into innumerable subterranean streams that spread like veins and arteries beneath its streets. Could some Asmodeus give us a bird's-eye view of the under-side of a great city, what a sight it would be!

But Loch Katrine does not come bodily into Glasgow as Birnam Wood once came to Dunsinane. Some six miles beyond the centre of the city, on the slope of the Kilpatrick Hills, has been hewn out of the earth and built up of stone, a new abiding-place for the waters of the lake. It would never do to keep a town dependent on the daily flow through thirty miles of piping. The demand is constant, but the overflow may vary with atmospheric conditions, and may at any moment be interrupted by the choking of a tunnel, the break-down of an aqueduct, the arrest of a sluice. The thirst of a great community cannot be left at the mercy of such accidents; besides, pure as the water is in its natural state, it becomes on its journey more or less charged with floating debris, from which it must be freed. Therefore Loch Katrine is transported by tunnels through rocks, and in siphons across valleys, and by aqueducts along levels, right over the rivers and streams, and through the Kilpatrick Hills to a new resting-place just above the little town which appears on the maps as Milngavie, but is known to the natives as 'Milguy.' Here in the Mugdock Reservoir it has been stored to the extent of four hundred million gallons, which at first was equal to about three weeks' supply. Whatever happened to the chain of aqueducts, then, there was always a store ample enough at the city's gates to prevent any scarcity while possible damages were repaired. And out of this reservoir the water is passed through strainers into the great service-pipes, so as to leave all foreign matter behind. But the city has grown far ahead of the design of this second edition of Loch Katrine, and a new and revised edition has been called for, and is being provided under the skilful management of Mr Gale, the water engineer, to whom we are indebted for the facts relating to the new works now in process of completion.

The original design was to bring Loch Katrine to Glasgow at the rate of fifty million gallons per day, but forty years ago there was not the same experience to found on, and sufficient allowance was not made in the calculations for the effect of the resistance to be encountered in the flow of water through thirty miles of tunnels and piping. Without going into technicalities unsuitable to these pages, it must suffice to say that the resistance presented in the artificial channel reduced the expected discharge from fifty to forty-two million gallons per day. This was more than enough at the time, and was ample even ten years ago, but at that time the rapidly growing consumption made it evident that immediate steps must be taken to provide for the future. When the Loch Katrine works were first designed, the population to be supplied numbered only about three hundred thousand, and the probable increment up to the end of the century was computed at eight thousand per annum. But the actual increase of population, decade by decade, has come to be from twelve thousand to nineteen thousand per annum, while the consumption of water (with the modern appliances of baths, lavatories,

and the like) has increased from forty to fifty gallons per head per day. For trade purposes alone the consumption has grown from about three to sixteen gallons per head per day. Therefore, it was resolved to double the whole works and make provision for a supply of one hundred million gallons per day.

How was this to be done? Well, first of all, the connecting-link between the lake and the city had to be doubled—that is to say, an entirely new aqueduct had to be constructed for the whole distance. Then a new reservoir had to be built to hold in reserve the supply brought by the new aqueduct. And lastly, the storage capacity of Loch Katrine itself had to be enlarged by raising its high-water level so as to retain more of the hill drainage. As a supplement to the scheme, Loch Arklet, which lies between Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond, is to be converted into an assistant-reservoir and made to flow into Loch Katrine, instead of, as nature intended, into Loch Lomond, whereby an additional supply of ten million gallons per day can be obtained when required.

Such gigantic works necessarily required a great deal of time as well as a great deal of money, and the operations have been spread over ten years; indeed, they are not yet all completed. The first thing to be considered was the best kind of bridge for carrying the water-channels across the ravines. On the old aqueduct there are five such bridges, consisting partly of iron troughs supported on masonry, and partly of iron tubes carried upon piers fifty feet apart. These bridges run in length from three hundred and seventy-two to nine hundred and ninety feet, and they are exposed to very severe strains by the variations in temperature; while to prevent corrosion they require periodical painting, during which the water has to be shut off at the loch. To avoid a repetition of these objectionable features, the new aqueduct is made to cross the Duchray Valley at a higher point than the old one, so that instead of crossing the hollows on bridges it is run through the hills by tunnels. It is now much easier to form long tunnels than it was when the first aqueduct was constructed, the use of compressed air for drilling and more powerful explosives than gunpowder having considerably simplified the process. By diverting the line, too, a saving in distance is effected, for whereas the old aqueduct is twenty-five miles and twenty-nine chains long, the new aqueduct is only twenty-three miles and forty-eight chains. The construction of this aqueduct has been a very interesting engineering feat, the details of which, however, are too technical to set forth here. The leading design has been to keep the water-channel underground, so as to avoid atmospheric influences and sun-heat. There are only five short bridges on the whole line, and these are very strongly built, with a covering over the water-channel two feet thick. The bottom of the aqueduct is laid with concrete the whole length, and for the most part is twelve feet wide, and nine feet high. In parts where the whole channel is lined with concrete the width is reduced to ten feet. The fall or incline towards Glasgow is one in five thousand five hundred.

This aqueduct is to discharge seventy millions of gallons per day direct from Loch Katrine into a huge service reservoir, which has been constructed near the old one at Mugdock. It is really a lake with a surface of eighty-six and a quarter acres, and a capacity of seven hundred million gallons. It is called the Craigmaddie Reservoir. It holds enough to supply the city for fourteen days at the rate of fifty million gallons per day, and Mugdock Reservoir holds a ten days' supply at the same rate. With twenty-four days' supply at its very gates, the city need have no fear of a water famine in the present generation. The two aqueducts together are able to discharge one hundred and ten million gallons per day into the reservoirs, but with a deduction of ten per cent. for occasional stoppages for repairs, inspection, &c., the maximum supply is reckoned at one hundred millions per day. This, it is calculated, will serve to liquidate the thirst of Glasgow for the next forty years.

The construction of the Craigmaddie Reservoir has been a very costly business, as the public road and several streams had to be diverted, and excavations had to be carried to a great depth to secure a suitable water-tight foundation. The estimated cost of this reservoir, before the works were begun, was £169,000; the actual cost has been over £300,000. The cost of the aqueduct will be above three-quarters of a million, and the entire cost of the whole scheme for duplicating the water-supply of Glasgow, including lands and compensations, will be about a million and a half sterling. The capital expenditure in connection with the old works and allied piping was about two and a half millions.

A very interesting part of the new scheme, which, however, does not need to be carried out all at once, is the raising of the level of Loch Katrine so as to increase its storage capacity to nine thousand eight hundred and forty-nine million gallons. This will involve the construction of a new dam, several miles of new roads, and new steamboat piers to suit the altered level. A tunnel will also be constructed to draw ten million gallons per day from Loch Arklet, the level of which will be raised twenty-five feet by means of embankments. The value of Loch Katrine as a feeder lies in the fact that it is in a district in which the rainfall never falls short of ninety inches, and is usually over one hundred inches per annum, and that the purity of the water is insured by the general shallowness of whatever peaty ground there is within the gathering area. The natural purity, however, has to be preserved from artificial contamination, and for this purpose a very strict agreement exists with all the proprietors in the neighbourhood to prevent the fouling of the water by drains, &c. There are very few houses within the water-shed, and supervision is strictly exercised over the use of boats on the lake.

The tourist steamer has taken the place of Ellen's shallop, and the Silver Strand has disappeared—if it ever existed to any considerable extent out of the poem and the guide-books. But the peculiar romantic beauty of the loch is not impaired by having added to its waters the beauty of utility. Day by day a

million human beings engaged in the fever and turmoil of industrial life, thirty miles away, drink at the spring which inspired the author of the 'Lady of the Lake.'

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

By Guy Boothby.

### CHAPTER IV. (*continued*).

For the remainder of the day we steamed slowly on, the view changing with each succeeding hour. At one time we were making our way through the virgin forest, as yet well-nigh innocent of the tread of a white man; at others we were passing between high cliffs that stretched up and up, till one had to crane one's neck to see the palm trees growing on the top of them; then the landscape would undergo a change, the timber would grow less dense, and large tracts of plain would present themselves to the eye. Taken altogether, the day's steam afforded us an excellent opportunity of observing the quality of the country; and when I saw it I felt compelled to admit that, as far as its natural advantages were concerned, one of the king's prophecies looked as if it might very well be fulfilled.

Towards four in the afternoon, the stream grew somewhat narrower, and the country ashore a degree more hilly. Occasionally it became necessary for us to use considerable caution in proceeding, for the current was treacherously strong, and in places large rocks bared their teeth at us from either bank. For at least the sixth time during the day's journey we found ourselves approaching a rocky defile, the advantage of which in case of war the king was quick to point out to me. In fact, in this particular instance, on emerging from the cañon, if I may so call it, we discovered ourselves face to face with a substantial fort, erected on a slight eminence and commanding the whole stretch of water. On a flagstaff above it floated the royal standard of the Médangs, a gorgeous piece of colouring that I had never seen before. As we observed it I stole a glance at the king's face. As long as I live I shall never forget the look of pride and affection that had settled upon it. No parent watching the face of his first-born child could have equalled it.

Suddenly a flash of flame and a cloud of smoke broke from the battlements, and almost simultaneously the thunder of a gun greeted our ears, and echoed among the hills. It was followed by another, and still another, until a complete royal salute had been fired. It was plain that the fort had recognised the presence of the king on the bridge of the yacht, and had been quick to welcome him. Had we possessed a flag similar to that upon the fort, I should have run it up out of compliment to our royal guest; but as we had not got one, we contented ourselves with the Union Jack. At the king's desire the yacht was stopped, in order that the commandant of the fort and his officers might be permitted to embark and pay their respects. To my surprise, they proved to be, without exception, natives of the country; manly fellows, with bright, intelligent faces, and a confident air about them that was very pleasant to see. They were dressed in full uniform, not unlike that worn by our own garrison artillery in India, and, from their appearance, should have made excellent soldiers. While we were awaiting their coming their sovereign went below; but as the boat which conveyed them from the fort drew up to the accommodation ladder, he reappeared on deck, clad in full uniform, a helmet with plumes upon his head, and wearing the order of Marie I. upon his breast. Much as I had always admired him, when I glanced at him now I experienced a thrill greater than I had ever yet felt. Such a truly kingly figure I had never seen in my life before, and I say *that* as one who in his life has had a fair experience of monarchs.

When the officers had in turn paid their respects, the king inquired if his arrival had been expected, and in reply was informed that not only was it already known in the capital, but that preparations were being made there to receive him. Either he did not deem it politic to ask for information regarding the state of affairs in the country, or he imagined, as was more probable, that the occupants of such an isolated fort would be scarcely likely to be well informed on such a subject; at any rate I noticed that he put no questions to the soldiers. When they had left the ship we got under weigh again, the Union Jack still flying in its place at the gaff end.

'In six hours from now,' said the king, as the screw once more began to revolve, 'our journey will be accomplished, and we shall be at my capital. My friends, I cannot express to you my gratitude for all you have done for me. Believe me, I will never forget it. As I have said so many times before, if ever the chance should occur, you will not find Marie ungrateful.'

He held out his hand and I took it. At that moment I believe that Marie I. would have given me anything, even to the half of his kingdom. God bless him for a brave and generous-hearted man!

Fortunately it was the night of full moon, and for this reason our progress was not delayed. Had it been otherwise, it would have been necessary for us to remain stationary until daylight, a proceeding which would have consorted ill with the king's impatience to get to his journey's end. By nine o'clock we were within eight miles of our destination, and were already able to distinguish signs of cultivation on the banks, with here and there clusters of habitations. At the king's suggestion, Olivia and I descended to our cabins, and donned riding attire. Having done so, we rejoined him on the bridge.

At half-past nine we could see ahead of us the myriad lights of the city, and by this time the stream was crowded with canoes, each of which carried a lantern, and many some peculiar kind of musical instrument, the like of which I have never heard before. The din thus created may be better imagined than described.

Suddenly, from the summit of a hill lying beyond and above the city, there flashed out

a jet of fire. A moment later the thunder of a large gun greeted our ears. Once more the royal salute welcomed us, and this time we returned the compliment with our one brass piece forward. The excitement was intense, and I could see that the king, who stood in the full light of one of the lanterns I had caused to be hung round the back of the bridge, was almost overcome by it. His pale, sensitive face quivered with emotion as he bowed his head repeatedly in acknowledgment of the greetings of his people in the boats on either hand.

Having arrived exactly opposite the town—the white buildings of which presented a picturesque effect in the moonlight—we brought up beside a wharf, upon which hundreds of persons, so it seemed, were crowded. The majority of these carried torches in their hands; while from the citadel on the hill, overlooking the town, the welcome of the artillery still crashed forth. It was a moment when any monarch might have felt his heart swell with pride within him; and Marie was as proud, if not prouder, of his country than most that I have met.

As soon as we were safely alongside the wharf, a gangway was run out. Upon this a carpet was spread, and over it came a number of richly-uniformed officials, the foremost of whom, I rightly conjectured, was the prime-minister who had despatched the telegram I had seen in Venice. He was a fine-looking old fellow, a pure-blooded native, and carried himself with a dignity I have seldom seen equalled. His pleasure at having his master back again could not have been exaggerated, and it did one's heart good to observe the cordial way in which his greeting was reciprocated. One by one the officials came forward and made their obeisances, and when that ceremony was finished a move was made to the street above, where a square space had been roped in and prepared for the reception of the sovereign. All round this stood the populace, with torches, to the number of many hundreds, while the street leading from the wharf, a path through the centre of which was kept by military, must have contained many thousands more.

Reaching the reserved space just mentioned, the king bowed his acknowledgments of the vociferous greetings of the populace, and then, preceded by his chamberlains and other officials, and accompanied by Olivia and myself, made his way towards the spot where a group of horses were standing. Two of these, each of which was a noble animal, reminding me more of a well-bred Arab than any other breed, were jet black; the third, which was more elaborately upholstered than his companions, was as white as snow. As one of the former carried a lady's saddle, I gathered that the blacks were for our use, the white being intended for the king. This proved to be the case.

At the king's invitation we mounted, and, preceded by trumpeters, and accompanied by a host of officials, all more or less gorgeously attired, made our way up the street towards the citadel—the troops, meanwhile, presenting arms, and the populace waving their torches and cheering with all the strength of their lungs. The effects were peculiar in the extreme, and I wish you could have seen them with me. Even after this lapse of time, I can plainly recall the reflections of the dancing torch flames on the white houses—the sea of faces in the street and upon the roof-tops—and the king riding a few steps before us on his beautiful steed, his helmet in his hand, bowing his acknowledgments of the enthusiastic welcome he was receiving.

At the end of the long central street which, as I have already said, led from the river to the citadel, we arrived at the foot of a steep hill; this we commenced to ascend. On reaching the top we found ourselves confronted by a pair of enormous gates, let into a wall forty feet high if an inch, which was built right out on the face of a precipitous cliff, something like three hundred feet from top to bottom. Indeed, the path up to the gates was the only possible approach to the castle, and even that might have been held by fifty swordsmen against an attacking force of quite a thousand. Above our heads the cannon were still thundering their greeting, while at the gate a guard of honour was drawn up to receive us.

Behind the king we rode through the great entrance into the citadel itself. Here the scene was extraordinary in its weird picturesqueness. Occupying all the southern side of the enormous courtyard was the king's palace—a noble building, covering a large area of ground, but of a style of architecture which I could not locate. To afford you some idea of the appearance the place presented, I might say that it was not unlike the rock castle of Trichinopoli, though scarcely so high or so massive. Unlike that massive fortress, however, it was white as curds, was covered with sculpture from end to end, and boasted a long flight of steps leading up from the yard to the main entrance. Opposite the palace were the barracks and the arsenal; a fine old temple occupied the space midway between, with the stables behind that again. It was not until the day following that I learned the history of this extraordinary place. Originally it had been a Buddhist monastery of a peculiar design, but was fast falling to decay when the grandfather of the previous ruler of the country, the sovereign from whom Marie inherited, took it into his head to transform it into a palace. Living on none too good terms with his people, he had heightened the walls ten feet, replaced the old insecure gates with new ones that would have required a battering-ram of enormous power, or a large charge of dynamite, to break them down, and had transformed the quarters of the priests into an enormous palace. His successors had further improved it, as had his heir. The present ruler had carried on the work, added the battery and the arsenal, and the picturesque pile we had before us when we entered the courtyard was the result.

On reaching the palace His Majesty descended from his saddle, and then assisted Olivia to alight. When she had done so, he escorted us up the steps into the Great Hall, where all the officers of his household were grouped, waiting to receive him. The hall, once the refectory of Buddhist priests, was a fine one in every way, raftered with teak, and boasting a polished floor of the same impenetrable wood. At the farther end was a dais covered with a red

carpet, upon which stood an ivory throne, elegantly carved with the figures of bulls and elephants, and approached by three ivory steps.

When he had ascended the steps and taken his place under the canopy, a speech of welcome was made by the prime-minister. His Majesty returned thanks with his customary eloquence, and brought the ceremony to a conclusion by bowing to his court. Then, inviting us to follow, he led the way from the Great Hall across a tesselated courtyard, in which a marble fountain played in the moonlight, to a suite of rooms on the other side. In the first of these he paused, and, turning to us, said :

'I am now about to introduce you to a person of whom I have never hitherto spoken to you—my sister.'

'Your sister?' we both cried in astonishment, for, up to that moment, we had never dreamed that he possessed a relation in the world.

'Yes, my sister,' he answered, 'the Princess Natalie. Poor child, she leads a lonely life shut up in this great fortress; but I think you will like her, Lady Olivia; she is gentleness and sweetness itself.'

'But does she live here altogether; does she never go out?' asked Olivia, who, like myself, was growing more and more mystified.

'Never,' replied His Majesty; 'my sister is blind.'

As he spoke, a door at the farther end of the apartment opened, and a white hand divided the curtains that half concealed it. A moment later a young girl entered the room, and, without hesitation, walked towards where we stood. When I saw her I gave a little start of astonishment. You know, Forsyth, that I can scarcely be considered a lady's man; still, I have seen some pretty faces in my time. Yet I confess to you that, up to that moment, I had never beheld so beautiful and yet so frail a creature as stood before me then. Olivia is an acknowledged beauty; but to my mind she could not compare at all with the girl who now stood before us for true feminine loveliness. It was a face of the purest Greek type, surmounted by a wealth of golden hair, the latter so fine and silky that it seemed as if to touch it with the softest brush would be to spoil it for ever. She was dressed completely in white, in a mixture of styles, half Oriental, half European, that was very attractive. Though her eyes were open, her affliction could be easily detected by the carriage of her head.

'So you have come back to me, Marie,' she said in French, stretching out her hands before her as she spoke. 'You have been so long away.'

'Yes, dear, I have come back to you at last,' replied the king, taking her hand with a tenderness infinitely touching, and drawing her to him that he might kiss her forehead. 'And what is more, my sister, I have brought some friends with me who have been very kind to me, and whom I know you will thank. They will help me to cheer your loneliness. Let me present you to Lady Olivia Wokingham.'

'Ah, madame,' said the girl, turning without hesitation to where Olivia stood, 'it is kind of you to help my brother, and still kinder of you to come here. Marie knows how gladly I welcome all his friends.'

Then, when in my turn I had been introduced, she held out her little hand to me, and bade me welcome too.

I am weak enough to own, if it is a confession of weakness, which I do not admit, that when I went to bed that night it was not of the king, his castle, or his popularity I dreamt, but of his sister, the blind Princess Natalie.

## THE DROVER.

Towards afternoon of the day before the weekly cattle-market, the person who strolls about our typical country town in search of fresh 'types' has his attention attracted by little knots of men, twos and threes who gather at the street-corners and especially about the doors of the 'agricultural' hotels frequented by dealers and farmers. They are not country labourers; they are not tramps. The tramp never congregates with his fellows as these men are doing, but slouches through the town on his route with a wary eye for the police, or goes straight to the 'casual ward,' or the common lodging-house in the back street. Nor are they town-loafers, the men who wheel round travellers' samples from shop to shop, and sit smoking on the truck-handles in the long intervals while the bagman is wresting an order from the cautious tradesmen. Their unkempt appearance, sunburnt faces, worn and muddy boots, tell of a rough, hard life beneath the open sky; their long sticks, tough ash-plants, speak of connection with animals. Little better clothed than the tramp, but easily distinguishable from a member of the loafing fraternity by a bolder eye, a louder tongue, and a quicker step, the drover is an important and interesting component of the great agricultural total. Low in the social scale he may be; useless he is not. Were it not for this 'unattached' camp-follower and his fellows, to-morrow's vast head of stock would block the market and streets, a helpless, inert mass.

Let us see for a moment if we can do without him; we will suppose him 'improved' out of existence. On Wednesday morning—our market-day is Wednesday—a farmer sets out for market with the intention of buying ten or twelve bullocks, if prices are reasonable, to eat off some superfluous swedes. Drovers being non-existent, he must take a labourer—a man getting fifteen shillings a week and a cottage rent free—to bring home his prospective purchase. If he has a particularly steady boy about the place, he perhaps takes him, running the risk of the cattle being driven home too fast, and arriving 'blown,' weary, and 'off their feed.' They will not get over it, and begin to put on flesh for several days.

But arrived at the town, our farmer soon finds prices 'ruling high.' If he buys to-day it is doubtful when he will see his money back again, so he keeps his cheque in his pocket. His time is not wholly wasted; he sees a pork-butcher about a draft of young pigs he has ready, perhaps meets an artificial manure or

seed merchant's agent; but his man's day is a dead loss. It is some two or three hours before it is certain there will be no bargains to be had, and he can be told to set off home—nine miles, say. Of course he must have something to drink first with his bread and cold bacon. Now your countryman is not, as a rule, a good walker. He can plod slowly after the plough all day, through heavy clay soil, without much trouble, but several miles on a turnpike road soon 'gets him down.' By the time he gets back it will certainly be 'unhooking-time,' and his day's work must be entered in the wages-book — one is nearly always kept on good farms now—with a 'dash,' the farmer's 'nil.' He may return home sober; he may not. In the latter case his head will ache next morning, and materially affect his working powers. If he were the cowman or shepherd, selected for trustworthiness, casualties will very likely be discovered, or reported by his *locum tenens;* the calves not fed, the bullock-yard water-trough drunk dry, or a fat wether or ewe found dead on its back, in a slight hollow of the pasture.

So we cannot yet dispense with the unattached, jobbing drover. There may be, and probably are, those who see nothing of interest in him; but some there are, I am glad to know, who see beauty, more or less, in every phase and figure of country life, and it is for such that I would draw a slight outline of the drover and his life.

On Tuesday afternoon, then, we see the drovers appearing here and there in the street. Some of them have already obtained and completed a preliminary job. Sheep and cattle deteriorate very much in condition with fatigue, and if driven several miles to town on market morning, perhaps fail to fetch their full value. For this reason sheep are often sent in wagons at their ease, while many herds of cattle are sent quietly in the previous evening, and lodged for the night in meadows close to the market, at a small charge per head, and this small outlay of money and forethought may bear substantial fruit in the sale-ring. It is these droves which have already provided work for the drovers.

Throughout the evening they loiter about the street, comparing notes, sometimes quarrelling, but always watchful and ready to waylay a possible employer. There are many dealers and graziers who live in or close to the town, and these are generally moving about on the eve of market-day, interviewing auctioneers, 'standing drinks,' and the like. Dealers from a distance, too, arrive in the town over-night, to be ready for the 'early worm' in the shape of bargains. On all these the drover has his eye, eager to receive the promise of a job.

In the morning he is early afoot. Stock will be coming in along every main road continuously from seven till ten o'clock or later. At the railway station, cattle-trucks will be discharging their contents. At the entrances to the town the drover will pick up coppers if nothing more. Shepherds and cowmen, who have brought their charges single-handed for miles along the broad high-road and through lonely lanes, will have had a few pence given them to engage help through the narrow street and round the troublesome corners of the town—a cheaper plan than sending one of the farm boys to idle away a day in the town.

At the market gates there is constant work. Carts and wagons are being emptied of a varied living load. Sheep, as every one knows, are awkward creatures to drive, and require many hands and much shouting. Pigs are even worse; as quick a way of emptying a cart-load as any is to carry each one singly, kicking and squealing, to their allotted pen. A pig loose and alone is an eel for slipperiness. I have seen one keep a dozen pursuers at a distance for ten minutes, merely by dodging among the legs of a drove of cattle; as the cattle were 'shifted' to get at him, the pig 'shifted' too, and gained breath for a fresh run later.

The drover works everywhere with a will. He is not particular as to whether his assistance is called for or not. A piece of gratuitous aid, well-timed, generally gets rewarded, and serves, too, to secure him a good name, and a good word from farmers and men alike. In the auctioneer's sale-rings extra help is often welcome at an extra 'big market,' when the lots must be got in and out of the ring with more than usual despatch.

But by about noon the drover, if he is a well-known and reliable man, will probably secure a job for the rest of the day. A farmer has just concluded a deal for some cattle, and before adjourning with the vendor to an inn to write a cheque, and conclude the business with a glass of spirits and a chat, he looks round him as if in search of something. Our drover is at his side in a moment; he has been watching the 'deal' for the last twenty minutes, perhaps longer, and now touches his greasy hat cheerfully. There is no need to tell him the whereabouts of the farm, or the best way to it; he knows every acre of the county, and every farmer or dealer of any standing who attends this and the neighbouring markets. For country work he might make a detective. There is no one like the man who is always afoot in a district for knowing its people and their affairs.

With the help of one of the scores of boys who swarm about the pens, looking out for fun and halfpence, he soon has his drove clear of the crowded market, and before long is out on the high-road. Away from the noise and bustle of the town, cattle are easily driven. The drover lets them take their own pace, which, if they are young animals and fresh, is for the first mile or so often a pretty smart one. But after half an hour the hard road begins to tell on their unshod feet, and they settle down to two or three miles an hour. The drover does not attempt to hurry them; his voice, not his stick, is the only encouragement they receive; and so man and beasts jog easily along, the latter now and then pausing for a hasty mouthful of roadside grass or casting longing looks over gates into pastures, doubly tempting after the long standing in market and the weary tramp along the dusty road.

The drover usually does without a dog. A dog's great value to a shepherd consists chiefly in penning sheep in fields, singling one and

'cornering' him at a sign from his master's hand. Out on the road sheep will go fairly well, and a dog not unfrequently alarms them and causes a wild and exhausting stampede. Dogs—unbroken curs at any rate—are apt to bite the heels of cattle needlessly; and, on the whole, a farmer looks rather askance on a dog when he trusts his stock to the drover. So the latter trudges alone, unless we allow his stumpy clay pipe to count; and who shall say that a pipe is not a companion?

Very likely the farmer passes him on the road and is at home before him; but if not, he is pretty sure of being given a substantial supper, in addition to his pay, which may be anything from a shilling to half-a-crown, according to distance. Farm-house hospitality, if not what it was, still extends to the giving of a meal to such chance comers as this. He will be allowed to pass the night in a barn or outhouse, though the farmer's wife is generally uneasy on the score of his pipe and the chances of fire; and the accounts of fires in country newspapers prove her fears to be by no means groundless. The drover and his like certainly cannot be relied on to forego their 'smoke' under any circumstances; and if the farmer is wise he will himself remove the man's pipe last thing, or see that he is accommodated in an isolated shed, with no more straw about than is necessary to his comfort.

If there is a market in a neighbouring town next day, the drover is early on the road to be on the scene betimes. Otherwise, he probably sleeps late, and may be seen towards afternoon loitering back to his headquarters—a lodging-house in the town. To some extent, all through the year, but more especially in spring and autumn, about Lady Day and Michaelmas, when farmers are retiring or selling young stock, and holdings are changing hands, there is plenty of work for him at sales. Practically open house is kept as regards liquid refreshments. Lunch is obtainable by ticket—money returned to buyers—but all through the afternoon, men circulate about the ring which forms round the auctioneer, with great cans of ale, cider, and glasses of whisky or gin and water, and of these the drover gets his share.

This brings me to the vices and virtues of his class. And without undue impartiality—though I must confess to a considerable affection for the drover, and an occasional fit of envy of his free, roving life—I contend that his virtues are more conspicuous than his failings.

He is honest and reliable. One rarely hears of a theft by a drover. Such debatable matters as mushrooms, or turnips and swede greens may be very occasionally urged against him, and still more rarely a solitary hen, straying too far down the lane, is caught up by deft hands; but such cases are very unusual. Self-interest, no doubt, comes to the aid of conscience here, for the farmers are his livelihood. Alienate them and their 'missuses,' and where will be his half-day's job or the savoury meal in the back-kitchen or 'tommy-house.' Of course there are black sheep, and perhaps the most usual offence is the theft of money or clothes—a neckerchief say—from a fellow-lodger in the lodging-house, or a sleeper under a rick or hedge.

He is eminently reliable as regards his charges. He understands animals well—few better. He can detect the first sign of fatigue, knows when a halt of ten or twenty minutes will do good, and nearly always brings his drove to their journey's end in good condition and order. Accidents on the way, such as gate-jumping or hedge-breaking are rare. Yet he never seems anxious, or—once the streets are left behind—excited; the secret of his success lies in his instinctive, unfailing tact.

His vices? Well, my comfortable, well-clothed reader, they are what yours might perchance be, placed in his position. Trudging mile after mile behind cattle or sheep is slow, chilly work in winter, and very, very 'dry' work in summer when the drove moves on in the midst of a perpetual cloud of dust; try following a flock of sheep half a mile in August, when there has been no rain for days or perhaps weeks. The roadside public-house offers a tempting opportunity of combining duty with pleasure—resting the animals and refreshing himself with a pint. But even when far from sober, he still seems able to take care of himself and his beasts.

He is inclined to be quarrelsome now and then among his mates. Disputes soon arise, especially when drovers frequent other markets than their own; accusations of taking a job promised to another man are made, and the disputants settle it with fists on the spot. The language used is no worse than might be expected.

He is not needlessly cruel. He lives too much with animals not to have a certain rough sympathy with them. But animals driven hither and thither among noise and crowds turn stupid and obstinate; they must be moved somehow, and it is difficult to gauge the precise number or weight of blows required. Many a seemingly merciless thwack on a tender spot is unintentional; the cow moves as the stick falls perhaps, or a sheep thrusts its head over a companion's back and the mischief is done. The charge of wanton cruelty is made, and who shall speak for the defence?

Sometimes a chat with one of these men will elicit the fact that he has been in the army. After the rigid discipline of twelve or fifteen years in the ranks, one can well imagine the attraction of the freedom and *abandon* of the drover's life; the constant wandering in the open air, the utter absence of all restraint and regularity.

And when years of exposure, in summer and winter, under fair skies and foul, have done their work, what then? Usually the workhouse, where, in spite of the attacks levelled from certain quarters at that institution, the drover finds food and shelter, tobacco, and—more than all—society. In the men's ward he can tell o'er and o'er the records of doughty deeds in battle, or queer tales of the countryside. An almshouse rarely falls to his lot. His life shows a fatal lack of permanency in the matter of residence; almshouses are for the 'oldest inhabitant' and his kind.

Sometimes the end is sudden. The shelter of a tumble-down barn and a few armfuls of straw is not always proof against the hard black frosts of January. Often the drover 'down on his luck' has not the pence to spare for a 'doss' at the lodging-house. This does not trouble him much; it is only September as yet, and the nights are fairly warm. He has a job for the morning to bring up some cattle from a riverside meadow; he will go and sleep in the shed which stands by the hedge-side under the chestnut-trees.

He goes off down the street, reeling a little, but saying 'good-night' civilly to the policeman who paces to and fro on the bridge. But the night is dark and rainy, and the path by the riverside, leading through two or three meadows, is not very distinct. His feet soon lose it and wander this side and that. The bank just here is steep and smooth, the water below deep and still. He misses his footing, there is a heavy plunge and a splash. No saving projection comes readily within his grasp; the mud gives way from hands and feet, and very soon all is quiet again; only the ripples curve away fan-like from something which lies just under water at the head of the shallows below.

The morning is bright and clear after the rain. A workman, who comes in daily from an outlying hamlet to his work, sees the 'something' and makes sure of its nature. Another man or two to help, a policeman, a boat and the ambulance, and then 'something' lies awaiting the verdict of 'found drowned.'

The verdict is soon found; but not without something of the nature of a *dénouement*. For a respectable tradesman has to come forward and identify 'deceased' as a ne'er-do-weel brother, and a long-standing trouble to his family.

Respectable parentage, decent up-bringing, and sound education; enlistment in the army, preceded and followed by a life of doubtful repute; and, after years of casual 'droving' with few assets but his stick and an old pipe—a lonely river-grave within sight of light and help.

## 'MAÑANA.'

### A REMINISCENCE OF ARGENTINA.

> In human hearts what bolder thoughts can rise
> Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
> Where is to-morrow? In another world.
>
> —YOUNG.

### I.

THE visitor or new resident in the Argentine Republic will, very soon after his arrival, become inconveniently aware that one of the customs of the Spanish inhabitants is to reverse a well-known proverb, and render it thus: 'On no account do anything to-day that can possibly be put off until to-morrow.' With natural politeness, or perhaps to save the trouble of discussion, they promise anything and everything for 'to-day,' if so required, but the sun will set, and rise, and set again, before the promise is fulfilled. He who promises thinks 'Mañana' (Spanish for 'to-morrow') will do equally well; why be in such a hurry? Oh, these Inglés; they cannot wait; they have no patience!

Less, however, does this indolent habit prevail in the great city of Buenos Ayres than in smaller centres and camp-towns; for there every nationality has its representative, business is stirring, competition is keen, and the order of the day is—'Look alive—seize your opportunity; make your dollars to-day—there may be a revolution to-morrow.' But out in the camp (or country), in the small towns or villages, life is taken very easily, and no one is 'troubled with much serving.'

Many are the dilemmas in which an Englishwoman, for instance, will find herself placed before experience teaches her to provide against contingencies. Happy for her if she is a woman of quick resources, and can contrive the invaluable 'something else,' when butcher, baker, or vegetable-cart fail her. Happy, also, if she can see the humorous side of the situation and laugh away her vexation, instead of giving place to anger and despair.

The following incident will illustrate the 'putting off' till to-morrow, and doubtless be more interesting than any of the writer's personal experiences, numerous and varied though they were.

In a small camp-town in the province of Santa Fé there dwelt one Manuel Rodriguez, a good-looking fellow, according to his kind, with sleepy black eyes, thick masses of dark hair, and a well-built frame. He owned the principal Panaderia in the place, and besides being a baker, carried on a small trade in shoemaking and repairing. All these qualifications raised him to the position of an eligible young man, and one looked up to as a desirable beau by the señoritas of his own class, who cast side-glances from behind their fans as they passed his open doors.

When not too much trouble, he had no objection to a little conversation with one or other of these damsels; but being very indolent, and very fond of his ease, he had not yet decided whether he preferred Anita to Maria, or if Mercedes was not more to his taste than Emilia.

It was the hottest hour of a very hot day, 100° in the shade, and not very much shade either to be found in that flat and treeless part of the country. But Rodriguez had a portion of the patio well covered in, and there he lounged in loose attire, drinking 'maté'—the tea of the country—before taking his usual siesta. All was silent, every one resting, the doors and the shutters of the Panaderia were closed against the scorching heat of the sun; the bread had all been delivered in the early

hours (before eight), and no one would be so mad as to venture out until evening. He would therefore take a long rest; true, there were those shoes of the señora's, promised for to-day, and still unfinished—but—there would be to-morrow —'Mañana'—his eyes closed, his head fell back —and Manuel Rodriguez was in the land of dreams.

He was not allowed to remain there long; scarcely had he begun a nice comfortable snore, when there resounded in the still air a loud clapping of hands. A man on horseback thus announced himself in the usual fashion at the door; both he and his horse were jaded with the heat, and covered with dust. A second clapping producing no effect, the man, muttering impatiently, alighted, and knocked on the closed shutters. A voice was heard within, and presently there appeared, from behind the house, a youth who inquired of the new-comer what he wanted.

'The master,' was the reply.

'But the master is asleep, señor,' said the boy.

'Then wake him,' exclaimed the stranger, 'and tell him to come quickly.'

Rodriguez, already awakened by the noise, rose from his chair, stretched himself, yawned, and very leisurely opened the doors, greeting his customer with a 'Buenos tardes.' Responding in like manner, the stranger held out a foot to show the plight he was in, the sole of his shoe having parted company from the upper leather, and revealing a considerable portion of the wearer's sock. He requested Rodriguez to repair the shoe whilst he rested and dined at the nearest restaurant, promising to send for it towards sunset, before resuming his journey.

'*This* is a small order to be roused from one's necessary rest for,' Rodriguez thought, but he was too sleepy for anything but an assenting 'Buenos;' so the stranger, placing his now shoeless foot in the stirrup, thanked him and rode away.

Rodriguez closed the doors, threw the shoe into an inner workroom, returned to his chair, resumed his slumbers, and this time enjoyed them undisturbed.

The strange señor was kindly entertained at the restaurant, supplied with slippers, refreshed with a bath, and his dusty clothes shaken and brushed. After partaking of the inevitable 'maté,' and enjoying a short siesta, he was now dining, previous to resuming his journey. A boy was now despatched for the shoe, with generous payment for the repair.

Ah, señor,' said the mistress of the house, 'if it is that lazy Rodriguez you have left your shoe with, it will not yet be done.'

'Not done!' he exclaimed; 'but it *must* be done, or what shall I do?'

'Quien sabe?' ('who knows?' 'who can tell?') said the woman with her soft lisp, and a sympathising shake of her head. The boy returned without the shoe, reporting Rodriguez would do it to-morrow. This made the señor very angry, and the boy was sent a second time to say he must have it, however roughly stitched, and he would wait one hour longer for it. But the answer came that Rodriguez was going to dine, his man was drunk and unable to work, and therefore the shoe could not be repaired until the morrow; the señor had better stay all night.

'It is impossible,' said the señor, who was now in a great rage, and ordering his horse to be brought, he rode off to see what *he* could do in the matter. Rodriguez took it very coolly when asked the reason of the delay, saying he had been 'indisposed,' which was perfectly true in one sense, and he was now going to ride out in the camp; it was too late to work.

'But,' said the stranger in a despairing voice, 'it is time I started; what *am* I to do?'

'Quien sabe?' said Rodriguez unconcernedly, with a shrug of his shoulders.

The stranger took a good look at him, and without another word, rode away, muttering to himself, however, 'I'll make you pay for this, my fine fellow; you'll see me again before many "mañanas" if all goes well.'

The mistress of the restaurant found a half-worn pair of shoes which fitted the señor, and for which—his good temper being restored—she received ample remuneration. Then after paying for his own refreshment, and not forgetting that of his horse, he left the place. Outside the little town he drew in rein, turned round, kissed his hand in the direction from which he had come, saying, 'A good omen! other men's shoes! Ahah! it is very good. Adios hasta luego' ('until we meet again').

The last train passing through this little town the same night brought the resident judge, who had been absent a few days. He was somewhat agitated, and made instant inquiries concerning a man whose description answered exactly to that of the shoeless stranger, and whom he was most anxious to seize and imprison. He sent vigilantes to all the restaurants, and on their return, hearing that such a person had not only been in the town, but had remained there for several hours, leaving only at sunset, he exclaimed:

'The rebel! he knew too well I was far away. Ah! my bad luck.'

II.

An exciting time now followed. Rumours of a rebellion had been floating in the air, and the day came when it broke out. There is no need to enter on any description of this, as it is only connected with the present narrative by a slight link. It may, however, be mentioned that the sympathy was mostly with the insurgents, the rising being in consequence of the unjust and one-sided administration of those in power; and apropos of this, it is worthy of note that on the handsome buildings of the Administration, in the principal city of the province, there is (or was) a full-sized figure of 'Justice' with *unbandaged* eyes!

The rebels gained the victory, and a general 'turn out' of officials took place, followed by a putting in of new men. Another judge was appointed in the little town of which I write, and matters soon settled themselves very com-

fortably as if nothing had occurred. Certainly, to outsiders, the revolution had caused less inconvenience than a late invading army of locusts.

Meanwhile, Manuel Rodriguez had been roused from his usual apathy, and the question of his preference for a certain señorita definitely settled. An energetic suitor for the hand of the fair Anita having come forward, caused Rodriguez to realise the state of his own heart, and the fact that Anita, and she only, was its mistress. He then lost no time, but made such favourable overtures that he was accepted, and the marriage arranged for the next 'Fiesta.'

A few days previous to the wedding he called at the residence of the newly appointed judge to notify that he should present himself with his betrothed, her parents, and usual witnesses, on the morning of the Fiesta, for the civil marriage. The judge was seated at his official table, clad in brand-new dress of office, hair cropped, mustachios waxed, calm and dignified. It was not surprising Rodriguez failed to recognise in him the dusty, unkempt, worn-out traveller of two months ago, whose shoe still remained, unmended and unclaimed, on the shelf of the workshop.

But the judge recognised Rodriguez, and listened gravely while the latter stated his business, and said they would, with the permission of his excellency, assemble before him at nine o'clock on the morning of the Fiesta. The only response of the judge was a brief 'Buenos;' and taking up a paper signified that the interview was closed. Rodriguez, thus dismissed, uttered his thanks and bowed himself out; he thought the judge might have been a little more pleasant, considering the agreeable nature of the occasion; but, ah well, possibly he was a bachelor, poor man!

If Rodriguez had glanced back, on leaving the room, he would have seen the grave countenance of the judge instantly relax, a smile spread over his face, and his eyes twinkle with fun, as he rubbed his hands together, exclaiming: 'Ah, revenge is sweet; I shall now be even with you, my friend.'

. . . . . .

It was a glorious morning; the Fiesta was one of the great ones, and a general holiday; the tinkling bell of the little church had been calling worshippers together, at intervals, from a very early hour. There was no lack of them, for besides the residents, there came from the outlying estancias and smaller farms every kind of vehicle, literally packed with men, women, and children; and there were also horses carrying whole families on their backs. The Plaza in front of the church presented an interesting scene, crowds of holiday-attired people waiting their turn, watching for the doors to open, the congregation to pour out, and the bell again call to the next service.

The Argentine colours were displayed over the residence of the judge, and a few minutes before nine o'clock the wedding party came in sight, a gay procession of some length, threading its way across the Plaza by a well-trodden path under the acacia trees, thus avoiding the dusty road. The invitations to participate had been well responded to, and the party crowded the room where they awaited the appearance of the judge.

Ten minutes passed, and Rodriguez, becoming impatient, rose and looked out; a vigilante was walking a saddled horse to and fro before the door of the judge's bedroom, which opened on the Plaza; at the same moment, dressed for riding, out came the judge himself, and to the utter consternation of Rodriguez, proceeded to mount his horse! He was then about to start, but this was too much. Rodriguez dashed forward.

'Pardon, señor,' he gasped; 'the marriage—we are all assembled in the office.'

'Eh?' said the judge; 'marriage?'

'Si señor; it was arranged for this feast-day at nine o'clock, with the permission of your Excellency, and we are now waiting.'

'Ah?' said the judge frowning, 'but I am "indisposed." I am going to "ride out in the camp;" the marriage can be put off until to-morrow.'

Rodriguez was furious, but dared not show it. 'Pardon, Excelencia,' he cried, in agitation, 'but my bride! the company! The priests too will be waiting at the church; what *am* I to do?'

'Quien sabe?' coolly replied the judge, as he rode on a few paces. Then turning his head, he added, 'Perhaps you will now mend my shoe, my good fellow. Adios hasta mañana' ('adieu until to-morrow').

'Shoe!' In a moment it all flashed on Rodriguez, and the angry blood rushed to his face; but catching a glimpse of Anita peeping out in alarm, he swallowed down his anger and pride, and rushing after the judge, begged a thousand pardons for his fault, entreating that his bride, so young, so happy, who had done no wrong, should not be punished and put to shame. Ah! his Excellency should see how grateful he would be.

Now there was not in the whole province of Santa Fé a kinder-hearted man than the judge, and although he had determined to punish Rodriguez, he did not intend to give him more than 'a bad half-hour.' The priests, who were to be the guests of the judge at his breakfast-table that day, being in the secret, thought the lesson was well-merited, and might prove beneficial. But as the judge glanced back at Rodriguez, he also saw the pretty Anita's troubled face, and this, together with Rodriguez's appeal on her behalf, was too much for his kind heart; he could hold out no longer. So, dismounting, he led the poor fellow back to his bride, said a few gracious words to her, and remarking generally that there had been 'a little mistake,' proceeded with the marriage contract.

Before Rodriguez and his bride left the room, the former placed on the table a double fee, and assured the judge of his grateful feelings. They then proceeded to the church, where the religious ceremony took place.

That day week the judge received a present—the handsomest pair of shoes Rodriguez ever sent out of his shop.

. . . . . .

There is an odd shoe hanging up in a conspicuous place in Rodriguez's workshop, with the word 'Recuerdo' painted under it. Old

habits are not as easily got rid of or mended as old shoes, and he needs this 'remembrance;' for he still occasionally fails to keep his promises, in spite of the judge's lesson, and continues to cherish a fondness for the visionary 'mañana.'

## ON GOSSAMER WINGS.

By T. L. Phipson.

Many of my readers have, no doubt, sauntered forth early on a fine morning in August, before the sun has had time to evaporate the dew which still clings to the grass, and they will perhaps have observed innumerable small spiders' webs stretching in all directions over the soil, and shining brilliantly, like diamonds, with all the colours of the rainbow. If they are sportsmen they may have noticed that their dogs' noses, borne near the ground as they run through the stubble, become covered with these silky threads to such an extent that the animals will sometimes stop and endeavour to remove them with their paws.

A little later in the year, say from the middle of September to mid-October, they may also have witnessed the floating gossamer borne along in the air by the soft breeze. These gossamer threads are in certain years so plentiful about the middle of autumn that the writer has seen the funnel of a locomotive which had travelled in October from Paris to Erquélines, in Belgium, so covered with them as to appear as if wrapped in a thick white shawl. Occasionally I have seen them also in March, both in England and France, but such a thing appears to be rather exceptional, as autumn is doubtless the true season for their appearance; and it usually occurs when the weather is very fine, the air warm, the sun brilliant, and its heat tempered by a mild, delicious breeze. It is probably owing to such circumstances that poets have often alluded to these mysterious gossamer threads, floating in fine, white silky streams through the atmosphere at a time when all nature is smiling, when the scent of flowers still perfumes the gardens, when the sun's rays have lost their midsummer violence, and the commotions caused by storms have ceased to trouble us.

The nature of this curious phenomenon has only been discovered in modern times. The learned men of the beginning of the last century were quite as ignorant of the cause of the gossamer flights, as were poets, and many of the most absurd opinions have been put forth to explain this singular appearance. The French call these filmy, floating cobwebs *fils de la Vierge* ('threads of the Virgin'); the Germans allude to them as *Sommer-fäden* ('summer threads'). The English 'gossamer' is, according to Dr Skeat, simply *goose-summer*, the *summer* meaning *summer-film*. Another derivation is from *God* and *summer*, the latter word being then a corruption of Romance *samarra*, 'a skirt,' from the legend that the films are threads of the Virgin Mary's shroud, thrown away when she was taken up into heaven.

Gossamer threads are now known with certainty to be formed of spiders' web; several persons have found the spider itself in them, and others, among whom the writer may be included, have been fortunate enough to see them formed, and have actually seen them used by the little creature to transport itself to enormous distances through the atmosphere, just as men travel in balloons. It is believed that several species of spiders—and perhaps immature insects—make such threads. One particular kind of spider which produces the floating gossamer is a small species of a dark chocolate-brown colour, about the size of a small split pea, having rather long brown and yellowish legs, and a considerably developed spinning apparatus, easily visible at the extremity of its body. These spiders, which never inhabit houses, have been named *Aranea obtextrix*. They are very numerous in our English gardens and among the stubble, but they are rather timid creatures, and apt to run away down a plant or a stalk of corn and hide themselves on the ground if they are incautiously approached.

According to my own observations, when they have covered the soil with their threads so profusely that scarcely a spot is to be found where they have not been, they choose an appropriate day, quit the ground, and find their way to the very highest point of some plant, say the topmost flower of a chrysanthemum. There the little spider turns upwards the end of its body, and darts forth from its spinners an almost invisible thread which floats upwards into the air. This thread is so fine that it can only be seen when the rays of the sun happen to be reflected from it. It is wafted upwards at an angle with the horizon by the breeze, and when it has attained to a certain length it is capable of pulling the spider away from the flower, provided the little creature lets go the grip of its legs upon the petal. During the whole time that the thread is being spun out, and as its length increases, the gossamer spider is seen to make certain abrupt movements upon the flower, allowing itself to be pulled to the extreme summit, then rushing a little way down again towards the centre of the flower, as if to try whether the long thread it has emitted is capable of bearing the weight of its body should the latter be abandoned freely to the wafting breeze. A moment arrives when this occurs, and it is a moment of intense astonishment to the observer; for the little brown spider is seen suddenly to leave the petal of the flower, and to fly up into the air—I can use no other expression—just as a house-fly or a bee would do.

There is, however, a slight difference. A fly or a bee would soar away without stopping; but with the gossamer spider, when it has shot up some six or eight yards, or half the height of a house, its course is somewhat

arrested, its legs are seen to be in violent motion, it seems to be pulling in its thread as fast as possible, rolling it into a loose, light ball, which the soft autumnal breeze finally carries away out of sight—may be for hundreds of miles.

Such is the curious phenomenon as I myself witnessed it on Sunday the 15th of September 1895, at a quarter past one at noon, in a garden near London, the weather at the time being extremely fine. The spider did not rise vertically, but at an angle in the direction of the wind, and as it soared rapidly off over my house a long silken thread was seen preceding it and carrying it away.

I shall not stay to inquire why this particular species of spider migrates in the manner described from one part of the country to another, how long it remains in the air, or to what distances it thus travels. All I know by actual experience is, that gossamer threads are sometimes to be seen at great heights in the atmosphere, and that they travel considerable distances. They have even been seen, so it is said, far out at sea. It appears to be exactly the same species of spider that produces them in England, France, and Germany, judging by the descriptions of it given by various naturalists. It is very abundant in August and September; twenty or thirty may sometimes be seen on a single straw, and thousands might be collected in a few hours from the surface of a stubble field. It is in the last-mentioned month that the departure or migration occurs; but the white gossamer is often seen floating in the air in October, and sometimes, but rarely, in March, as I have before intimated.

The discovery of these curious facts is entirely modern; no account whatever is to be found of them in ancient writers such as Pliny and Aristotle. Even among the moderns the curious little being that possesses this power of flying without wings has been very incompletely observed, so that, common as it is, its habits and manner of life are yet very little known. The gossamer thread, and spiders' web in general, is similar in its nature to silk, a material which is produced by many insects. It is secreted as a glutinous fluid which solidifies the moment it comes in contact with the air; it contains a large amount of nitrogen, and possesses an adhesive quality far greater than that of raw silk. This latter property is so apparent in the substance of the cobweb that when a filament darted forth by the spider touches any object it adheres to it so firmly that the thread will break rather than abandon its attachment. The little gossamer spider may secrete a single thread sufficiently long to carry it into the air, as we have seen; or it may secrete several at the same time which spread out somewhat like the tail of a comet. In the former case the spider, after a while, rises in the air just like a fly and quite as rapidly. In the second case the threads may become entangled by the breeze and remain for hours floating from a bush or a blade of grass, until a stronger gust may carry them off without the spider. As thousands of such spiders rise in the air from a stubble field in the course of a single day, it is natural to suppose that their threads get entangled in the air, and so acquire the flaky appearance generally designated as gossamer.

## COMBS.

On an unknown day very early in the world's history it must have occurred to some prehistoric Narcissus, as he contemplated his not too attractive physiognomy in the clear water of a pellucid brook or well—the most ancient of mirrors—that the tangled masses of hair which covered his head, and fell thickly upon his shoulders, were susceptible of some improvement in the way of orderly arrangement. The reflection would suggest action; and our prehistoric friend would doubtless discover, instinctively, that the passage of the fingers through his matted locks—difficult and painful as the operation may have been—was the initial step towards the attainment of a more orderly *chevelure*. This was the first stage in the history of the comb; for, as fingers were made before forks, so the same useful members just as surely preceded combs. The next step was easy. It must soon have occurred to the least intellectual of our earliest ancestors that an artificial implement, however rude in construction, might easily be made which would do the work of disentanglement more effectually than thick or clumsy fingers. And so, at some unknown but very early date in the history of the world, the first comb made its appearance, carrying with and within it the 'promise and potency' of a world of toilet appliances, of which, assuredly, the untutored savage who first learned to comb his objectionable locks never dreamed.

Combs are found among the relics of the earliest forms of civilisation. In the British Museum, for instance, may be seen combs, with hair-pins, mirrors, and other toilet articles, which were used in world-old Egypt thousands of years ago; and earlier than the wonderful civilisation of the land of the Nile it is hardly possible to go—at least with any attempt at historical precision. Leaving these twilight regions of extreme antiquity, however, and coming to more distinctly historic times, combs are found to have been used by most European nations, whether civilised or the reverse. Ancient Roman combs were made of boxwood, or of ivory, or of still more precious materials; and similar articles have been disinterred from the houses of long-buried Pompeii.

The more barbarous races of northern Europe were equally familiar with these aids to the toilet. The old chronicle history of Ely tells us that our Danish invaders, following the custom of their country, 'used to comb their hair every day, bathed every Saturday, often changed their clothes, and used many other such frivolous means of setting off the beauty of their persons.' These Danish dandies—in whom, however, dandyism did not beget effeminacy—left many traces of their presence in the eastern counties of England. Sir Thomas Browne, of 'Urn-Burial' celebrity, records that in 1658, between forty and fifty urns were dug up in a field

at Walsingham, in Norfolk. Many of these receptacles contained bones—skulls, ribs, jaws, thigh bones, teeth, &c.—besides small combs, brazen nippers, and other implements. 'Now,' continues Sir Thomas, 'that they accustomed to burn or bury with them things wherein they excelled, delighted, or which were dear unto them, either as farewells unto all pleasure, or vain apprehension that they might use them in the other world, is testified by all antiquity.'

It cannot be positively stated that these urn relics at Walsingham belonged to the Danish invaders, who so largely settled in East Anglia, and influenced East Anglian life and speech for centuries; but it is at least certain that the urns and their contents were of pagan origin. Combs that have been discovered in certain other burying-places are just as clearly connected with early Christian sentiment. When the grave of St Cuthbert, in Durham Cathedral, was opened in 1827, there was found reposing upon the breast of the prelate a plain Saxon comb, made of ivory, and measuring $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width. This may now be seen by any visitor to the cathedral. Similar relics have been found in other sepulchres in the same sacred building.

More than one reason has been suggested for this burial of a comb with dignitaries of the Christian church; but there can be little doubt that it was in some way associated with certain liturgical uses of the same article. Full information as to these uses of the comb may be found in various ecclesiastical writers. It will be sufficient here to say that it appears from several ancient rituals that the hair of the priest who was to celebrate mass was combed, before celebration, by the deacon, not only in the vestry or sacristy, but, according to at least one fourteenth century ritual, several times during the service. Many of these ecclesiastical combs were of considerable value. At Sens Cathedral there is still preserved a large ivory comb, adorned with precious stones, and carved with figures of animals. From an incised inscription, it is supposed that this relic dates from the sixth century. Henry III. presented Canterbury with a comb, set with precious stones. Henry VIII. carried off from Glastonbury, together with other plunder, a golden comb, 'garnished with small turquases and other coarse stones,' and weighing altogether more than eight ounces. Dugdale, in his *History of St Paul's*, gives an inventory of the precious contents of the treasury of the old London Cathedral. And among rich vestments, jewelled crosses, and reliquaries, invaluable manuscripts, and service books, and many other things of worth, now nearly all perished, there are entered several ivory combs. At the present time the comb has no ecclesiastical associations, save in the consecration of a Catholic bishop, when an ivory comb is directed to be used in arranging the newly consecrated prelate's hair, after his head has been anointed with oil and dried with bread.

With regard to modern secular uses of the comb there is little to be said. One or two points only are worth noting in connection therewith. In the seventeenth century, and perhaps a little later, it seems to have been not unusual to use leaden combs for the purpose of darkening the natural colour of the hair. A French writer of *Philosophical Conferences*—an English version of which appeared in folio in 1665—says that 'at Ragusa, they black the hair with litharge, black-lead, or with leaden combs.' This folly was not confined to southern Europe. Swift, in his *Journal of a Modern Lady*, writes:

> Iris, for scandal most notorious,
> Cries, 'Lord, the world is so censorious,'
> And Rufa, with her combs of lead,
> Whispers that Sappho's hair is red.

A like use of 'combs of lead' has not been unknown in much more recent times.

When the wearing of wigs came into fashion, combs of special design had to be made for the keeping of the new head-gear in an orderly condition. The instrument case of a hair-dresser of Restoration times is described as containing a set of horn combs with wide teeth—'for the combing and readying (dressing) of long, thick, and stony heads of hair, and such like perriwigs.' 'Stony heads of hair' is good. Beard and other combs were also to be found in the same box of implements. About the close of the seventeenth century the wearers of wigs were accustomed themselves to comb those adornments in public. The beaux carried in their pockets large combs of ivory or tortoiseshell; and to pass these through their wigs, when walking in the Mall, or when at Court, or in the boxes or on the stage of the theatre, was regarded as an act of gallantry. Your true gallant combed his wig almost as assiduously as he took snuff. Butler, in one of his pungently written 'Characters,' describing a 'Modish Man,' says that this hero, when at the play, 'mounts his bench between the acts, pulls off his peruque, and keeps time with his comb and motion of his person exactly to the music.' Such a proceeding seems to us ridiculous and disgusting enough; but the performance was quite in keeping with the manners of the age.

## TO LOUIE.

A SONNET.

THE fainting Arab, doomed in desert lands,
Oft scans the sky-line with despairing eyes
That plead in vain; then staggers, reels, and dies
Dreaming of bubbling springs amid the sands.

Such wretch is he whose craving soul demands
Some treasure unattainable: he sighs,
And life is all a desert till the prize
Is clutched and fondled in his eager hands.

Such fate is mine: I too have crossed the brink,
And life a Libyan desert lone must be
Till, sweet oasis, panting I shall drink

Deep of thy love; yet hope of gaining thee
Oft hopeless seems; then in my misery
I faint, and in the desert prostrate sink.

WILL HILL.

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## THE SHORE AND THE MOORLAND.

The whistle of the curlew overhead told us that the birds were coming from the moorland to follow up the outgoing tide; so taking our stick, we proceeded for our evening walk by the shore. We had been sitting at the front of the house, watching a blackbird and a thrush hopping out and in from a bean-field, and feeding over the upturned earth where the potatoes had been dug. They had sung their song of courtship, had reared their families, and now in this autumn season were enjoying a well-earned leisure. But it was the larger birds that presently fascinated us; those that bred on moorlands and rocky fastnesses and on the shingly beach, and who, after rearing their broods, met on the shore to mingle their cries with the ever-changing voice of the sea.

Our house stood on a narrow belt of fertile land that divided the shore from the moorland, and it was over this that the birds took their daily migration. To us it was like a watch-tower, for we could tell with precision the time when the waters were about to turn, be it by night or by day, by the clear round whistle of the passing curlew. No bird has a keener instinct of punctuality than he. He never dallies with time, and when he once sets out from the moorland, to keep his appointment with the risen tide, he goes straight for the goal, never halting until he reaches the shore.

The pathway from the house led over the fields, down to the dell where the stream flowed; and it followed the waters until they reached the shore. As we passed the rows of stooks in the wheat-field, a covey of partridges rose, just where we had seen a number of short-eared owls flying at mid-day. The water in the stream was low, and full of soft music as it flowed over the pebbly bed, and fell in gentle waterfalls into the quiet pools, in which were reflected the hanging ivy that drooped from the damp and moss-grown rock. Nearly all the wild-flowers were gone, but there was still left to admire the light-blue scabious, resting gracefully on its tall stem, and the white and the blue pansy, looking out with tender eyes from among the crops and the tall grass. The wild roses and the blossom of the hawthorn had left behind them in their hips and haws a rich provision of winter fare for the birds; the mountain-ash gloried in its clusters of ruddy rowans, the cherished dainty of the starling; and the bramble bushes were offering to thrifty housekeepers a ripe and a plenteous harvest.

On the pasture-fields that rise from the dell were troops of starlings, gathering together for their autumn manœuvres; some black-coated daws; and flocks of seamews, those fair-weather sailors who affect the aquatic costume, but give the stormy waters a wide berth. And there was the solitary song of a yellow-hammer coming from a clump of bushes lying in the hollow of a farther dell, unusual for the time of year, and serving as a reminder of the joyous outpourings of the feathered tribe on the arrival of spring.

On descending to the shore, a quiet and peaceful scene lay before us. The grass flows down from the braes to the great boulder stones that mark the line to which the tide rises. Smooth and freshly green, it is like a great lawn, broken in places by clusters of large moss-grown stones, intersected with bracken, among which the rabbit takes shelter. A few cows and some sheep give a pastoral look to the scene. Pools of dark-brown water are near the edges and round some of the boulders, borrowing their colour from the peaty soil; and numerous holes in the grass, close to the large rocks, show where the British rat has his abode.

No human being is in sight: we are alone with nature. All is tranquillity: there is even rest in the sound of the waves as they break on the shore. We are sheltered from the wind, for the braes, catching the breeze, send it on

to the uplands. These braes are circled and terraced in places, as if designed by nature for amphitheatres. Over one of them is a hawk poising in mid-air, apparently scanning the great cluster of bushes below, where the smaller birds reside at nesting-time. He circles slowly round, then with a swift movement flies farther from us. He is a wary bird, and keeps his distance, thinking, doubtless, from the probings of an evil conscience, that we have sinister designs against him. Farther on the braes are replaced by rocky headlands; waterfalls can be seen trickling their scant supply of mountain stream over them; and where the rock-pigeon has flown there is a cleavage in the headlands in which he and his congeners have their abode. Near are caves where wild-fowl take shelter, and there are holes along the shore in which the otter skulks. Still farther, looking toward the island of Pladda, are great cliffs, on the face of which some descry the features of a man. He has certainly the brow of a Beethoven; and, while the sea thundered below, many memories must have been stored there of the great depth and power of nature's diapason.

Coming slowly from the direction in which these cliffs stand is a gray heron, his great wings flapping clumsily as he flies over the surface of the water. He has left his solitary station by the moorland stream so that he may follow the ebbing tide. He does not fly far, but settles on a rock at the edge of the water, and to the untutored eye appears to form part of the surroundings. Neither curlew nor gull can be seen near him. They have too much of the commonalty about them for him, and are apt to be rough on his high-born manners. He is an aristocrat among the feathered species, and prefers to keep them at their distance. Cautious and wary in his movements, the heron has no faith in man. Yet, what more fascinating figure is there on the solitary shore than this tall and statuesque bird, standing, as he may be, on one leg, and his bill drooping in line with the tapering feathers that form a graceful pendant to the lower part of the long neck.

Flocks of lapwings come over the braes, and skimming along the shore, disappear where the boat and the lobster creels lie. They have not now that restless anxiety, shown by them at the appearance of a stranger, when their young are but nestlings. They pay no heed to us, and their distant cry of 'Peewit' has lost all the mournful tone with which it is accented when the bird tries to decoy the stranger from its nest on the pasture-fields and the moorlands. Moving in the direction in which they have gone, we hear the whistle of the red-shank, and speedily a number of them pass, skimming over the water and flying as swifts do. They also are children of the moorland, and they will make the shore their daily pasture until spring once more beckons them to their breeding-ground. A number of oyster-catchers follow, their full dress of black and white being seen to advantage. As they pass they utter their sharp and piercing whistle, and we can hear it continued as they make toward the stony beach, where in the breeding season they laid their eggs, and where at night they snugly repose with their bills under their feathers. A number of puffins come along, showing their snow-white breasts and their remarkable red bills, which remind us of those of the parrot. They are natives of the great rock that stands some miles out to sea. Ailsa Craig, like her twin-sister at the mouth of the Forth, has a great community of bird life; and some of them come to the shore to join the throng that follows up the tide. Two of her well-known inhabitants are now soaring above and close to us: the gannet, or solan goose, and the herring gull. Other birds are seen floating on the surface of the water, while some show their beautiful white plumage as they sail towards the land.

Many flocks of the feathered tribe have come over the braes from the moorland, and over the breaking wave from the distant rocky community. Notwithstanding these arrivals, one wonders where all the birds have gone to. They come in flocks, and then disappear. Scarce a dozen birds can be seen along the shore. It wants a quick eye to detect the curlew, the lapwing, or the heron; their coats so completely harmonise with the objects around them. Many of the birds must be hidden by the great boulders as they feed among the sea-ware left bare by the tide.

While thus wondering, we turned the corner where the boat lay. Crouching behind a rock was Rover, the gray-coated collie belonging to Frank, son of a neighbouring farmer, and a redoubted sportsman. Rover gave us a look, as much as to say: Approach no farther; my master and I have business on hand. He occasionally raised his head in expectancy, or peered round the rock as if to satisfy his curiosity. We knew the old story well. Frank must have come over the braes, the usual pantomime being gone through on starting, by his ordering the reluctant Rover to stay behind. Rover waiting, then cautiously following at a distance; watching his master, then making up to him at the report of the gun, as if eager to assist in capturing the spoil. We scanned the rocks for a time, but could see nothing of his master. At last a brown cap was seen peering round a rock, and Frank took a farther step in advance, as if every movement required the greatest caution. There he was again, with body bent and head half uplifted, as he moved round several boulders. It was hard work creeping among these rocks, but Frank was a

determined sportsman, and bent on securing his prey. At last he disappeared behind a big boulder, and for several minutes there was silence. A curlew rose as if disturbed, but again settled down. A few plovers flew off with a scream, and some lapwings, after fluttering about, once more resumed their feeding. It seemed as if there was just the breath of distrust among the birds, but it was not sufficiently strong to make them take to flight. At last it came. A flash of smoke, and the gun reported itself over a sheltered sheet of water from which two ducks rose. Rover gave a bound, and we followed.

'Ducks are fine eating, sor,' remarked Frank, as he gave a longing look towards the escaping fowl.

But where were the birds at whose absence we had marvelled? The air was full of them. Crying, screaming, whistling, uttering angry croaks, if not imprecations. They were in hundreds. Moorland bird, shore bird, and bird of the rocky fastness. Did we say we only saw one heron? There were nearly a score: one of them had stood just close to us all unknown. All were now flying from the spot. The shore had been disturbed, the birds would be more wary, and there was little hope of our seeing anything further of them for the night.

Walking along, and leaving the boulders behind, we came on a great stretch of firm sand. In many places it was perforated with holes, where the sandpipers had been probing for food. We discovered, what was unusual at this time of year, the imprint of a hare's foot. Puss generally comes down from the hills when the snow is on the ground, and, with the deer, seeks the more open pasturage of the shoreland. Farther on were the marks of the otter, more especially round a large rock, where they love to scamper when the tide is full. Over the waters we could see a porpoise, and in the distance there was the gray head of a seal. A stoat was observed entering the stone dyke that ran alongside the shingle. He and his confrères build their nests there; they lay tribute on the feathered tribe who frequent the shore, and who may be caught napping, not merely for food but plumage, to assist in the construction of their nests.

The mist came on, and hid the farther coast, covered the trail of the passing liner, and Ailsa Craig became but a shadow. Rain-clouds were approaching from where we had seen Kintyre, and where lay the distant coast of Ulster. We turned to retrace our steps. The tide had receded considerably from the sandy beach, but it did not show so great an ebb by the boulders. There it was deeper, and the descent more sudden. Frank, always on the lookout, crossed the rocks, seized the flotsam and the jetsam which the sea had thrown up; and hauling the timber beyond high-tide mark, left it there for the rain to wash and prepare it for winter fuel. No saying how far some of the wreckage had come, and what spar had been the last hope of the shipwrecked mariner.

The wind blew and the rain poured all night. With the morning it brightened; but there was a heavy gale on, and huge lines of waves thundered on the shore. The waterfalls poured over the cliffs tumultuously. Some of them had a double fall; and, as the wind blew, it caught the waters, and in the sunlight formed spray rainbows over them. The scenery in cloudland was constantly changing, a perfect kaleidoscope of wonders, occasionally obscured in parts by the dash of spray that came from a rain-cloud. It was truly a wild scene, and in marked contrast to the quietness of the previous evening. The bounding waves, the rocks and the sandy beach covered with a solid mass of tangle—a harvest of the sea—torn up by the waters and brought ashore. Few birds were to be seen: this weather was too much for them. A few puffins, some plovers, and a number of sandpipers were facing it out. Doubtless, could we see far enough, we would find it was the delight of the stormy petrel. As we passed along the shore, bending ourselves to the blast, we were stung by the driven sea-spray, and the shelter of a large rock was not unwelcome against a sharp shower of rain. The fishing stream was full, the water coming down from the moorland brown with its night's brewing; and where it rolled over the stones its foam was a liquid tortoise colour. There were two benighted fishermen trying with fly-hook to catch sea-trout, forgetful that a worm, carefully run into the pool next to or under the bank, was the only effective method of sport for the day.

We walked by the side of the swollen waters. It was the stream that came from the moorland, and in its long journey through the heathery uplands knew well the birds that passed to the shore at ebb of tide. The waters ran through a narrow glen, well clothed with trees, and up the steep banks of which heart's-tongue ferns were the envy of the botanist.

We arrived at the moorland. A great stretch of heather, flowing for miles over undulating peat and marsh bog, rising up and over the hills, and covering the land as far as the eye could reach. It was wet, and soaked with the night's rain; and in places there could be seen a misty haze where the shower was falling. Silvery streaks of water were running down the hillsides to join the stream, which, flowing through the hollow in the low-lying ground, took its sinuous way through the moorland. We passed up one of the hill-roads, its stony bottom clean and bare with the rush of the waters. The heather was at its best, and there was something refreshing in its rich honey smell. As the eye roamed over the moorland, it was wonderful to find what a wealth of colour lay on its lap, rich and beautiful, and blended together like some fine piece of tapestry-work. The birds were rising in places, and calling to one another. The lapwing could be heard, and the whistle of the curlew came sharp and weird as if from one of their sentinels. By yonder stream they love to dwell. To them it is the most sacred of all sanctuaries. It is their home, where they have been reared, and to which they resort when the storm rages. And as the days shorten, they will be joined by flocks of their brethren, who,

coming from the far north, will keep them company through the winter in their daily migrations between the Shore and the Moorland. R. A. M.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER V.—LIFE IN THE MÉDANGS.

It was a strange experience that waking next morning in the bedroom of the king's palace. At first I imagined myself back in Venice; but the shape of the room, the walls, the ceiling, and the furniture very soon undeceived me. They were all of a different stamp from any I had met before. After the first confused wonderment had passed away, I sprang from my bed and ran to the window. It overlooked the great courtyard, in which I discovered a company of infantry drilling under a European officer. They were a smart body of men, not unlike our own Goorkhas in appearance, and looked as if, in the event of trouble, they would be able and willing to give an equally good account of themselves. I watched them with considerable interest for upwards of half-an-hour, and then, having taken a bath in an enormous earthenware bowl which I discovered in a curtained alcove, dressed myself and went out into the courtyard we had seen on the previous evening. As far as human beings were concerned, I had it to myself. The fountain in the centre played its tinkling music to the rustling accompaniment of the palm leaves as I sat in the colonnade that surrounded it, and, as if to convince me that I was really in the romantic East, half a dozen small monkeys chattered in the trees and a gigantic peacock preened himself upon the farther wall.

A native servant presently appeared carrying a tray upon which were several cups of coffee and plates containing fruit. I helped myself, and sat down to enjoy it. I had hardly commenced, however, before the king appeared from the opposite side, and on seeing me hurried round the fountain to greet me.

'I trust you have slept well in your new quarters, my lord,' he said, as we shook hands.

'Splendidly,' I answered. 'I did not wake once. Since I got up I have been sitting here trying to convince myself that it is all real, and not some dream from which I shall presently awake.'

'It is very real indeed,' he replied with a laugh. 'If you had been up, as I have, ever since daylight, looking through papers and transacting business with my ministers, I venture to believe you would not find much reason to doubt it.'

'I trust you have discovered that things are scarcely as bad as you were led to believe in Venice?' I said, still wondering what it could have been that had made him come home in so much haste.

'I fear I can scarcely say with truth that I have,' he replied. 'There seems to be an easiness in certain quarters that is cheering, but in others the clouds look black in the extreme. I fear they must of necessity burst of their own weight ere long. I have been informed this morning that the French are pushing up their troops towards my frontier. Before long they will cross it, and then the trouble will commence. Well, let them come, they will not find me unprepared.'

'Can nothing be done?' I inquired. 'Would not a diplomatic remonstrance be of any avail? Surely in that case the troops would either have to withdraw or show reasonable cause for their presence there.'

'Unfortunately they have discovered their excuse already,' he answered. 'It was that very incident which occasioned the telegram you saw. From what I have been told this morning, it would appear that a party of French soldiers, while pursuing a prisoner who had escaped from their ranks, crossed the boundary of the respective countries, and entered a strip of land which I claim as mine, but over which the French government has begun of late to assert its right of ownership. The commanding officer of one of my forts, seeing the soldiers where he considered they had no right to be, remonstrated with them, and was told, in point of fact, to mind his own business. He thereupon warned them that any farther advance would be regarded as an act of hostility. Upon their disregarding him, he fired upon them, killing six and wounding three others. On the strength of this catastrophe, France has demanded from me the strip of country in question, an indemnity of a million francs, and the life of the officer who gave the command to fire. Naturally my ministers declined to entertain such a monstrous proposal for a moment, and when you know that, you have the situation placed clearly before you.'

'And what is your own feeling in the matter?' I inquired. 'Are you prepared to resist by force of arms in case it should become necessary?'

'I am prepared for anything rather than to allow myself to be deprived of what is undoubtedly my own lawful property,' he answered. 'I have however to remember that a war just now will throw back my young country for years. But better war than injustice. If France gets this, she will want more, and then the life-blood will be slowly but surely drained out of me. But do not let us talk any more about it just now. I am sick to death of the subject. Would you care to accompany me to the battlements and see the view?'

'Nothing would give me greater pleasure,' I answered, as I rose to follow him.

Leaving the courtyard behind us, we passed along a corridor and then up a flight of massive stone steps which eventually brought us out on to the battlements. I only wish, my dear Forsyth, that I could give you some notion of the scene that was then presented to my astonished gaze. The rock upon which the citadel was built rose, as I have already said, directly from the plain to a height of something like three hundred feet. At its foot lay the city spread out like a white pocket-handkerchief. From where we stood we were permitted an uninterrupted view for nearly thirty miles—away to the Mountains of the Wind, as they are picturesquely termed by the natives—before us, and as far as the Hills of Perabundi behind. On our right the jungle

commenced and stretched as far as the eye could reach; while on our left the Médang River twisted and twined like a silver snake till it lost itself in the mists of the far west. In midstream, opposite the wharf where we had disembarked the previous night, lay my yacht, looking scarcely bigger than a cockle-shell, the Union Jack still floating at the gaff end.

'Is it not a country of which any sovereign might be proud?' asked the king, who had seated himself on the battlements, whence he watched my admiration. 'And to think that I came here with but one companion, won it for myself, and now am being threatened with the loss of it again.'

Not knowing quite what to say in answer, I prudently held my tongue, and presently he rose and we continued our walk round the wall. The size and strength of the place amazed me. As far as I could gather, not being a military man trained to find defects in defences, it was well-nigh, if not quite, impregnable. The only weak part about it to my mind was the gate; but even there the path was so narrow that it would have been impossible for an enemy to concentrate a sufficient force upon it so as to make much of an attack upon the woodwork. In order, however, that that might be further protected, a peculiar-shaped gallery had been constructed above it whence a steady fire could be kept up upon assailants without any chance of injury to those besieged.

After we had perambulated and explored the entire walls to our satisfaction, we returned to the Fountain Courtyard by the way we had come. Here we discovered the Princess Natalie and Olivia seated waiting for us. As we entered both rose. I noticed that the blind girl, when she spoke to us, and before she had heard either of us speak, turned her face to the person she addressed on each occasion without making a mistake. Indeed I very soon discovered that this was one of her many peculiar gifts. So acute and delicate was her hearing that she could discriminate among a hundred footfalls and never be in error.

While we were talking, a sweet-toned Burmese gong sounded for breakfast, and, Olivia accompanying the king, I following with his sister, we made our way to the sovereign's private dining-hall. It was a pretty room, furnished in the European fashion, and overlooked the great square before the Temple. In compliment to us, I suppose, the meal was served *à l'Anglais*, though wines and various eastern and continental dishes were placed upon the table for those who cared to partake of them. The servants were all natives, wearing the royal badge upon their turbans. It was clear that they had been excellently schooled in their duties, for they were quick, attentive, and, above all, noiseless.

When the meal was finished we were conducted by the Princess to her own boudoir, which was another elegant apartment, leading off the Fountain Courtyard before mentioned. Like the other rooms, it was also furnished in the European fashion; the walls were panelled and decorated in a most artistic style; a grand piano stood in one corner and a harp in another.

'Natalie,' said the king, as we seated ourselves, 'it would be a pretty welcome to your boudoir if you would sing to us.'

The young girl rose immediately and went over to the latter instrument. Then seating herself, she tilted it towards her, and placing her delicate fingers upon the strings, began an accompaniment. It was a song of Schubert's that she sang; one of those tiny scraps of melody of which one never seems to tire. In this instance I could have listened for hours. Her voice was by no means a powerful one, but its charm lay in its marvellous expression. The recollection of that song has lingered in my brain for three years, and never till my ears are closed by death shall I forget its haunting sweetness.

When she had finished, my royal host invited me to witness a parade of the troops of the garrison. We accordingly excused ourselves and left the ladies to their own devices, while we proceeded to the large courtyard before the palace, where the garrison of the citadel was already drawn up under the command of the governor.

As a just critic, I must admit that the manœuvres were commendably executed, though with scarcely that spontaneity one is accustomed to in European troops. However, all things considered, it was a creditable enough exhibition; and for this reason, when the king asked my opinion, I was happily placed in such a position that I could express my approval without being called upon to tell an untruth.

The parade at an end and the troops dismissed, the officer commanding the garrison, a tall dark Frenchman named Gaspard Roche, approached the king. I scanned him closely as he came up the steps, and from that moment took an instinctive dislike to the man. Why I should have done so I cannot tell, but that I did so is beyond doubt; whether or not my aversion was proved to be well founded you will have an opportunity of judging for yourself later on. That he, on his side, did not take very kindly to me was also evident.

Unfortunately this unsympathetic individual was now formally introduced to me, and for this reason it was necessary for me to be civil to him, otherwise I should certainly have declined the honour of his acquaintance. Little did I guess how intimately he was destined to be associated with our fortunes later on. When he had held his conversation with his prince he saluted and withdrew. The king then led me into the palace, where, in his study, he bluntly asked my opinion of his commandant.

'Am I to be candid with you?' I inquired.

'I hope you will be perfectly candid,' he answered. 'I have great faith in your judgment, and I should like to know exactly what you think of him.'

'In that case I have no option but to tell you,' I replied, 'that I don't like the man. There is something about his face that displeases me, though I'm afraid I am illogical enough not to be able to tell you exactly what it is.'

'You surprise me,' said the king gravely. 'The man has been in my service nearly three years now, and I have always found him a faithful servant and a zealous officer. If he has

one failing, he is a trifle too severe with his men. Otherwise, I have no fault at all to urge against him.'

'I am very glad indeed to hear it,' I replied. 'You will do me the justice to remember that I only gave you my opinion about the man when you pressed me. I know nothing either for or against him. I simply judged by the effect his face had upon me—a rather foolish method of determining a man's character when all is said and done, I will admit.'

The king was silent for a moment. When he spoke it was as if he had been carefully considering my last speech in all its lights.

'For my part, I am compelled to disagree with your last remark,' he said. 'In nine cases out of ten the first impression a face makes upon one is the correct one. It is only when one has become accustomed to a countenance that one fails to notice the subtler shades of character reflected upon it. However, you must see more of the general, and perhaps your bad opinion may be dispelled.'

I answered that I hoped that it might, but I did not tell him that no amount of intimacy would ever change my distrust of his officer.

Whether the king had said anything to the man in question I cannot say; but one afternoon a week or so later, I was sitting on the battlements, watching the sunset effects upon the plain below, when I heard footsteps behind me, and on looking round found the person in question coming towards me. As soon as he became aware that I saw him he raised his hand to his helmet and saluted me.

'A lovely evening, my lord,' he said, with soldierly brevity. 'I congratulate you on your taste. It would scarcely be possible to choose a better place from which to observe the glorious sunset effects. Do you mark that long touch of pearl gray upon the hill-top yonder? How beautifully it contrasts with the salmon pink of the sky above!'

I answered in suitable terms, half hoping that he would see I was not anxious for his company and would withdraw again. But it soon became evident that it was with the intention of seeking me that he had ascended to the wall. He approached and took his seat beside me on the stone coping.

'My lord,' he said, after a few polite commonplaces that deceived neither of us, 'I have a question that I should very much like permission to put to you.'

'What is it?' I asked abruptly, with a sort of uneasy conviction that I knew what his question would be. 'If you will ask it, I will do my best to answer.'

He paused for a moment as if to consider in what manner he could best put it, and having made up his mind said:

'What I wish to know is why your lordship has taken such a prejudice against me?'

Though I half expected that that was what he was going to say, I was so staggered by the way in which he put it that for a moment I could only sit and stare at him.

'I trust, General Roche, I have never given you cause to think I have a prejudice against you?' was all that I could say.

'Perhaps not in your speech, nor in your behaviour,' he answered. 'I am prepared to say that both have been courtesy itself. Nevertheless, I am convinced, in my own mind, that you have taken a dislike to me. Can you deny it?'

'My dear sir,' I replied, 'I must let you know that I object to being cross-examined in this way. I hold myself responsible to nobody for what I may say or think. And surely, whatever may be my feelings towards you, this action on your part will scarcely better them. I don't think you will ever have reason to complain of my behaviour; pray, do not give me cause to complain of yours.'

'I suppose I must be content with that,' he said. 'But I should like to have understood why your lordship bears me such ill-will.'

'There you are quite mistaken,' I answered. 'I do not entertain the slightest ill-will towards you. It quite depends upon yourself whether I ever shall.'

'And I am to rest tranquil with this meagre assurance?' he asked.

I rose to my feet, as if to terminate the interview.

'General Roche,' I said sternly, 'you adopt a tone with me that I do not like. I have assured you that I have no animus against you. You imply that you doubt the truth of my assertion. After that, I leave you.'

In his turn, he leapt to his feet.

'Mon Dieu,' he cried, 'you treat me like a child.'

'Is that my fault, if you behave like one?' I replied. 'But I cannot stay to discuss the matter any further. I have the honour to wish you a good evening.'

I raised my hat, and walked away, leaving him standing looking after me, the picture of impotent rage. From that day forward, however, I was not again molested by him. He went his way, I went mine, and as we met but seldom, our quarrel bade fair, if left alone, to die a natural death.

## AFTER A MINE EXPLOSION.

In *Chambers's Journal* for December 1st, 1894, we spoke of the terribly explosive character of the fine dust that lodges in every nook and on every cross timber in many of our coal-mines. We told how the Destroying Angel, with sword of flame and sooty wings, comes tearing through the air-ways of the mines leaving death behind him. Fine coal-dust suspended in the air is a far more dangerous explosive than gunpowder. When once the explosion has been started—usually by the flame from a blasting shot igniting the dust—it travels with terrible rapidity, being constantly fed with fresh dust as it goes, and supplied with fresh air by the ventilating fans.

Formerly the death of the miners who were not killed outright by the force of the explosion was thought to be due to suffocation. After the explosion, which always travels with the air-current, the passages traversed by it are full of what miners call after-damp. This after-damp is the vitiated air left behind by the explosion, and its dangerous character is well

known. Until quite recently the deadliness of the after-damp was thought to be due to its lack of oxygen and the large excess of carbonic acid it contained. In spite of the remarkable experiments of Dr Haldane, which showed that no difference was noticed in breathing air when half the oxygen had been removed and that excess of carbonic acid was not noticeable until it reached three per cent., or one hundred times the normal quantity, and that even air containing ten per cent., although distressing to breathe, was not actually dangerous to life, people, including Dr Haldane himself, still believed that the miners were suffocated from want of oxygen. At the beginning of this year, however, Dr Haldane had a melancholy opportunity of examining the bodies of the unfortunate men killed in the explosion of coal-dust at the Tylorstown Colliery in South Wales; and the results of his investigations have thrown an entirely new light on the causes of death in the mine.

The explosion happened about 5.30 A.M., and was propagated through three pits by the usual whirling rush of exploding coal-dust and air. As it happened, only ninety men were in the mine at the time. Of these, fifty-seven were killed and thirty-three were brought up alive. Dr Haldane, with the assistance of Dr Morris, the medical officer to the colliery, examined all the bodies of the men and the bodies of thirty of the horses. The bodies could be divided into two classes—those killed by actual violence and those who had died from the effects of the after-damp. The latter class contained ninety-one per cent. of the whole number of deaths.

Apart from those actually killed outright by violence, very few of the bodies showed any marks of injury or even burning. Very often the coal-dust on the skin presented the appearance of burning where none actually existed. In nearly every case death had been dealt out by the after-damp. The bodies of the miners presented a most deceptive appearance, nearly all looking as if in a peaceful sleep. The pinkness of their cheeks and of the skin wherever the blood-vessels came near the surface, especially on the palms of the hands, counterfeited health, and was in marked contrast to the usual blue or leaden colour of the dead. This pinkness was so marked that one glance was generally sufficient to determine the cause of death, which was not due in any case to suffocation, but to actual *poisoning* with carbon monoxide, the gas produced by the incomplete combustion of coal or other similar substance.

This gas, carbon monoxide, is one of the most insidious poisons we possess, and has probably claimed more victims than morphia or prussic acid. When coke, coal, or charcoal burns completely, carbonic acid is produced, but under certain circumstances—incomplete supply of air or very high temperature—carbon monoxide is given off. The former contains two atoms of oxygen to one of carbon, whilst the latter contains only one atom of oxygen to one of carbon. In fact, carbon monoxide is carbon half burnt. Carbonic acid, or carbon dioxide as chemists call it when speaking accurately, exerts no injurious effect on the breathing until it reaches a comparatively high proportion in the air; carbon monoxide, however, has quite a different action. Its affinity for the red colouring matter of the blood is greater than that of oxygen itself. Consequently the blood, or rather the red colouring matter that acts as the carrier of oxygen, will absorb even small proportions of carbon monoxide from the air in preference to oxygen. This small percentage keeps on accumulating, the blood continually filtering off the poisonous gas from the air in the lungs until a stage is reached at which the blood is so occupied with the poison that it is unable to carry sufficient oxygen for the needs of the body, and the man falls in a helpless and semi-paralysed condition. If the unfortunate individual remains a short time longer in the contaminated air, death follows.

The after-effects of the gas are very serious, even if the patient recovers. In addition to depriving the blood of its power of carrying oxygen, the gas seems to exert an action on the nervous system similar to that of strychnine. The smallest attempt at muscular exertion results in tetanic convulsions. For this reason it is most difficult to keep up artificial respiration, which is the only means of clearing the poison out of the blood. If possible the rescued men are given oxygen to breathe instead of air; stimulants and warmth, especially the latter, being a great assistance to their recovery. For some reason as yet unexplained, the shock of the fresh air on bringing the men out of the pit seems particularly dangerous. The writer can confirm the results of Dr Haldane's experiments on breathing air containing carbon monoxide. For some time nothing unusual is observed, then a slight headache, and dizzy, bilious feeling comes on; then follows loss of control over the legs, so that it is impossible to stand up without holding on to something. It is this last effect of carbon monoxide poisoning that makes the after-damp so very dangerous. Many rescue parties have lost their lives through going into the after-damp and being unable to get back. The imprisoned miners have generally lost their lives in the same way.

In connection with this last melancholy fact, the plans of the mines accompanying Dr Haldane's report form a most interesting study. The places where the men worked and where each body was found are marked, the former in black and the latter in red ink. From this it is seen at once that nearly all the men lost their lives in their endeavour to reach the bottom of the shaft. If they had stayed at the 'face' of the coal where they were at work, instead of running into the after-damp hanging about the air-ways in the track of the explosion, they would probably all be alive now. Another important point shown by the plans is that the explosion followed the direct air-current, and was stopped whenever any considerable length of the mine was efficiently watered. The explosion rarely approached the face of the coal or penetrated into the return air-ways. It is clear from this that the miners, after an explosion, should either stop where they are, or, where possible, reach the upcast shaft through

the return air-ways. In many cases the lives of the men have been saved by one of the firemen dissuading them from making for the direct air-ways. In one case the men saved themselves by retiring before the after-damp, and erecting curtains and barriers to prevent it from following them.

In almost all cases of explosions in mines the imprisoned men could have been saved by suitable precautions and a proper line of conduct. Probably the explosions themselves might have been prevented if the air-ways of the mines had been efficiently watered, and the question of enforcing this regulation is engaging the attention of Parliament at the present time. Another important point is that the ventilating fans should be strongly constructed, and so arranged that they can be got to work again as soon as possible after the explosion, so as to clear the mine of after-damp. Dr Haldane suggests that as mice are much more sensitive to carbon monoxide than human beings, a few should be kept in cages in the mines—there are always any number running about loose—for the imprisoned miners or rescue parties to take with them. As soon as the mouse begins to show signs of distress, they will know it is time to retreat. Some test of this kind is absolutely necessary, as the miner's lamp, which shows him the presence of the other dangerous gases—black-damp and fire-damp—gives no indication of the presence of after-damp. In fact miners have been found dead with lamps burning brightly beside them.

## ATTRAY'S WIFE.

### CHAPTER II.

Green Place was a *lucus a non lucendo*. There was nothing green about it except the strip of garden with its shrubs and grass. The house was white, the shingle which lay almost at the very door was white, and there was a quarter of a mile of it ere the marsh-land was reached. It was a sun-blistered, shadeless spot in summer, and in winter it was utterly lone and desolate-looking. The high road to Rye went past Green Place, but it was little used, and entire days often passed without a wheel or a foot stirring on it. Small wonder that Green Place had a bad name, that after the last tenant disappeared it remained empty for more than a year, and that belated passers-by saw strange sights and heard strange sounds there. Every preventive officer who came to Broadmarsh kept his eye on Green Place; but the very smugglers avoided it, for it stood far back from the sea, and was too much of a landmark.

The next day Eustace Hirst arrayed himself in suitable uniform, and called at Green Place. Miss Mountjoy, as she preferred to be called, was in the garden, saw the lieutenant approaching, and welcomed him with a smile which set his heart beating fast. She ushered him into the house and into a large room, which was furnished and decorated in a style which, according to the local standard, might be accounted almost sumptuous, and retired, saying that she would tell her mother he was here.

She re-entered presently with a woman who at once inspired the young lieutenant with something akin to awe, and he was of an age and a calling which are not easily awed. She was tall above the average of women, firmly yet gracefully built, and her figure was set off to the fullest advantage by the well-fitting dress of deep mourning which draped it. Her face was of the strong, handsome type—strongly featured, strongly-lined, with strong black brows above a pair of black eyes which seemed to look straight into the hearts of persons and things. Her hair was gray and prettily waved.

But when she spoke in a low-pitched, gently-modulated voice, with the burr of her accent betraying her Northumbrian origin, there spoke the refined lady. 'And this woman's husband,' thought the lieutenant, as he rose to meet her, 'is a smuggler and a triple murderer.'

'You have come'——? she said inquiringly.

'To pay my respects, madam, and to welcome you as a neighbour,' replied the young officer.

'You are very kind. I came here to be out of the way of neighbours.'

An ungracious speech most graciously spoken.

'You will not be troubled here, madam,' said Eustace. 'Mr Texter, your humble servant, and—and that is all.'

'You are in the Preventive Service?'

'Alas, yes, madam.'

'Why "alas?" It is a fine service—plenty of action, plenty of excitement.'

'Of a distasteful kind. You are everybody's enemy: you hold your life in your hand, and there is no honour and glory in it. For a young man it is a hateful service.'

'But there are prizes?' said Mrs Mountjoy.

'Now and then—yes,' replied her visitor, the placard about Attray staring him in his mind's eye.

'If you could, for instance, catch William Attray of Alnmouth, he would be a prize.'

'Indeed he would, madam. Oh, I beg your pardon.'

'Don't do that. I don't want to see him. I bear his name—that is all.'

'Would you give him up, madam?'

'Certainly. He gave me up long since. Catch him if you can, and don't consider his wife in the matter.'

'Excuse me, but have you a picture of him?'

'Not I! God forbid! If I cared for him sufficiently to keep a picture of him, why should I have come to this dead corner of the world under an assumed name? For myself, I don't mind so much. I am an old woman, and my life is past. But my poor Eleanor here'——

She laid her hand affectionately on the girl's arm as she spoke, and something like a tear dimmed her bright eyes.

There was a light tap at the outer door at this point. Eleanor hurried out of the room, and presently returned, saying that Mr Texter was without and would like to see Mrs Mountjoy.

'Let him come in,' said that lady carelessly. 'I suppose he wants a subscription for something.'

So Mr Texter walked in—a parson of too common a type at the time—a coarse, open-faced, jowly man, shabbily dressed, and dirty; one, in fact, who had sunk with his surroundings, and who had ceased to be ashamed of so doing. Living, as he did, in a breezy, hearty world of smuggling and storm-braving and shot-exchanging men, his manner was intended to be appropriate, and innocent people were taken in by it, and spoke of him as a regular sailors' sky pilot and no mistake, not a bit like your wishy-washy young chaps from the 'shires.'

He came in airily and jauntily, but when he saw the lieutenant there was a perceptible droop in his manner. He checked his off-hand salutation, and replaced it by one of more formal cut. Eustace rose, and took his leave as the parson entered. Eleanor followed him.

'I dare say you thought it strange that my mother should have made no allusion to your saving my life yesterday, Mr Hirst,' she said, as they walked to the garden gate; 'but I said nothing about it. It would only make her more unhappy than she is to think that I was so miserable as to be driven to such an act. What do you think of her?'

'I think she is the most striking woman I have ever seen,' replied Eustace.

'You would hardly think that she was bowed beneath a sorrow greater than even most men could bear?'

'Indeed, no; and yet there is something about her which speaks of trouble. Parson Texter seems pretty much at home.'

'A great deal too much. He 's after me, I think, and he has half won mother round.'

'But you, Miss Attray'——

'Not that name, for God's sake! As for me marry Parson Texter! No! I may be the daughter of a—of you know what, but before I would accept him I would get out of life in some way which even you could not prevent.'

'I am glad to hear that—I mean, your feeling towards the parson.'

'You don't like him?'

'I don't.'

'Why not?'

'I hardly know. I cannot say yet, but I am watching him.'

'I see what you mean. You think he is in league with the smugglers. Where was he before he came here?'

'I don't know. Somewhere in the north, I think, but I will try and find out if it will please you.'

'Thank you, do not trouble,' said the girl listlessly. 'Now I must go in. Good-morning, Mr Hirst, and thank you.'

They bowed and parted, but the lieutenant, looking back after he had gone a few paces, was overjoyed to see that Eleanor was in the porch looking after him, so he saluted. She replied with a wave of the hand, and the happiest man in the Marsh that day was Eustace Hirst.

Duty occupied the lieutenant until dusk, when he was at liberty to turn in and think over the new world which had been opened to him by the formation of the acquaintance with the Mountjoys. Texter occupied the chief place in his thoughts—after Eleanor, of course. When he had told the girl that he had not made up his mind about the parson, no question about the association of the reverend gentleman with the contraband trade was in his mind, simply because he knew very well the parson to be, like every parson for miles around, hand in glove with the smugglers. This was no secret, and the fact that it was none had been the cause of estrangement between them. No. There was something deeper than this, something which accounted for the evidently familiar footing upon which the parson stood with Mrs Mountjoy, something which had led that stately and reserved lady at anyrate not to resent his paying his addresses to her daughter when that daughter might, with her beauty and her grace, command a very different husband from a snuffy, boosy Marsh-land parson.

His thoughts turned to Eleanor's attempted suicide, attempted, she had told him, because she was weary of life, and because the life to which she would have gone, had he not prevented her, might have been better and could not have been worse than that which she was leading.

Why was her present life so miserable?

Not because she was the daughter of a murderer, for both she and her mother had avowed this fact without any apparent consciousness that any stigma clung to them, although they did choose to live under an assumed name. Not because her life with her mother was unhappy, for Mrs Mountjoy exhibited the greatest tenderness towards her.

In the lieutenant's mind, therefore, Eleanor's unhappiness could only be on account of Mr Texter's courtship and its favourable acknowledgment by her mother.

Could it be possible, thought the young man, that Mrs Mountjoy was under any obligation to the parson?

So he pondered and wondered until, wearied with a long vigil, his pipe tumbled from his mouth, and he fell fast asleep.

He was called at ten o'clock by the quartermaster for the rounds. This was no mere formality, for the preventive posts extended over a long line of coast, and had severally to be visited. Moreover, the runners were keen enough to seize every opportunity, and were full of ruses and dodges which demanded the exercise of constant watchfulness on the part of the Preventive men. However, all was well; the lieutenant dismissed the patrol and, being now thoroughly awakened, directed his steps almost mechanically towards Green Place.

All there was dark and silent, and Eustace had to content himself with the usual lover's promenade outside, wondering which of the many upper windows marked the shrine of his goddess.

Suddenly he became aware that he was not alone. Clearly cut against the line of light which marked the horizon where a moon was rising behind great banks of clouds, he saw the figure of the parson, strolling methodically up and down as if keeping watch and ward.

The parson saw him, for he came towards him.

'Hullo, lieutenant; on watch, eh?' said he cheerily, and apparently not in the least put out at finding his rival on the ground.

'Yes,' replied Eustace; 'and you, ditto, eh?'

'Well—um, yes.'

Then there was a pause. The parson broke it:

'Look here, Hirst. We may as well talk here and now as at any other place and time,' he said.

'I don't want to talk. I didn't come to talk,' replied the young officer curtly.

'Nor did I. But I've been wanting to talk to you, and I've been waiting for an opportunity.'

'Fire away, then!'

'If you married Miss Mountjoy'—— began the parson.

'Good heavens, man, what are you talking about?' interrupted Hirst; 'why, I've only known her a couple of days.'

'If you married Miss Mountjoy,' continued the parson, without heeding the interruption, 'I suppose you know what sort of a connection you would be forming?'

'But who the devil said I was going to marry Miss Mountjoy?' said the lieutenant angrily.

'I don't know. I've never heard any one say so,' replied the parson quite calmly; 'I'm only putting a supposition.'

'I hate suppositions. My dealings are with facts.'

'Very well, then. It's a fact that you're very fond of Miss Mountjoy, although you have only known her a couple of days, and that she is not unkind to you.'

'Really I don't know what business this is of yours,' said Eustace, now thoroughly roused. 'If you weren't what you are, I should be disposed to kick you.'

'That's simply bullying,' said the parson quietly, but edging off a pace or two.

'Come to the point, man, if you can,' said Eustace.

'That's what I'm trying to do, but you're so peppery. If—grant me this "if"—if you make love to Eleanor Mountjoy, perhaps you don't know that you're making love to Eleanor Attray, daughter of Bill Attray of Alnmouth, the murderer of three men of your own service?'

'I am quite aware who she is,' said the lieutenant.

The parson whistled.

'And your fond parents would bless your union with the daughter of such a man, eh?'

'Confound you! Let my fond parents be.'

'I will. Let me indulge in another little supposition. Suppose you married her, you couldn't very well give up her father as a murderer, could you?'

'But, granting your silly supposition, what chance have I of giving up Bill Attray?'

'If the chance was put in your way, you would be bound to take it, wouldn't you?'

'Yes, of course.'

'It would be a grand thing for you. Five hundred pounds in your pocket—special *Gazette*—promotion—ball of fortune at your feet.'

'I suppose you mean'—— said Eustace.

'Don't let us have suppositions,' laughed the parson. 'This is what I mean. I am in love with Eleanor Attray, alias Mountjoy. If she accepts me, I bind myself not to say what I know, or what I think I know, for I am not yet sure. If she refuses me, I shall know what to do.'

'You're a pretty parson, you are!' sneered Eustace. 'Look here; I've had enough of this. I don't want anything more to do with you. I wouldn't believe your information on oath, and I'm going to mind my own business. Good-night.'

So saying, he turned on his heel, and walked rapidly towards his quarters; but, turning his head back for a moment, he fancied he saw the parson's figure against the sky-line cutting a caper expressive of exuberant delight.

## SOME LANDLADIES OF FICTION.

We have, most of us, at some period or other of our lives, taken up a temporary abode in lodgings, and have thus become acquainted with the landlady of real life, whom we have probably found to differ somewhat from her conventional portrait. In the pages of fiction she was, more often than not, forbidding of aspect and grasping of disposition, with many of the unamiable traits of the shark. She was inexorable as to the punctual settlement of her little bill—which, however, somehow always managed to attain very considerable dimensions. She was often the possessor of a cat, with a fine appetite for cold mutton, and a nice taste in tea. From an interview with her, the lodger retreated discomfited, content in the future to put up with any exaction, if only he might be left at peace. She was altogether a sufficiently terrible person, even though her fury was at times comic enough. Not that all authors have drawn the landlady in such dark colours; but, generally speaking, one rises from the perusal of the novelists' pages with an unfavourable impression of the class: and if we include under the heading landlady the hostess of an inn, we find asperity of temper a very prominent failing in that walk of life also. Thus, Meg Dods forms a pendant to Mrs Raddle or Mrs MacStinger. From personal contact, however, we come to realise that the landlady is, as a rule, neither better nor worse than her neighbours. Occasionally she possesses much of the milk of human kindness. Not unfrequently she has played an important, though unconscious part in the lives of men of letters. If no man is a hero to his valet, the same might perhaps be said of the relation of an artist or author to his landlady. But to a touch of nature she responds at once. Thus, Mrs Angel, the landlady of the marvellous boy Chatterton, is associated with the sad story of his last days in Brooke Street, Holborn. Knowing that he had eaten nothing for three days, she begged him, on the 24th of August 1770, to share her dinner. But his proud spirit took offence at words which seemed to hint that he was in want, and her kindness did not avail to avert his end.

Goldsmith, again, experienced much kindness

from Mrs Fleming, his Islington landlady; and we are assured that her bills are again and again significantly marked £0, 0s. 0d. His arrest for debt may perhaps, therefore, be laid at the door of some other landlady, or Mrs Fleming's long-suffering patience may at length have become exhausted: at any rate, we find the poet in his need sending for Dr Johnson, whose sympathy, as usual, took a practical form. 'I perceived,' says the Doctor, 'that he had already changed my guinea, and got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork in the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated.' Thus it came about that Johnson sold the book—*The Vicar of Wakefield*—which was to add such lustre to Goldsmith's name, to Francis Newbury, the publisher, for the sum of £60. Mrs Piozzi tells us that when Johnson came back with the money, the poet 'called the woman of the house directly to partake of punch, and pass their time in merriment.' Boswell, however, quotes this statement as 'an extreme inaccuracy.'

But, to turn to the characters of fiction. Dickens has perhaps given us more examples of the landlady than any other author. Every reader of *Pickwick* remembers that little fierce woman, Mrs Raddle of Lant Street, Borough, who was of opinion that if Bob Sawyer could afford to give a party, he ought to be able to afford to pay her little bill. It is in vain that he tells her he has been disappointed in the city. Mr Benjamin Allen's attempt to pour oil on the troubled waters, by addressing her as 'my good soul,' only provokes her to retort: 'Have the goodness to keep your observashuns to yourself.'

Under these circumstances, Mrs Raddle's wrath at the supper-party cannot fairly be ascribed to pure malevolence. Indeed, one has a sort of sympathy with the poor lady, 'having her house turned out of window, and noise enough made to bring the fire-engines here at two o'clock in the morning,' as she remarked. The supineness of her spouse, who regretted that his strength was not equal to that of a dozen men, was another irritating factor in the situation. One can hardly wonder, therefore, that the guests of the evening were treated with scant ceremony as 'a parcel of young cutters and carvers of live people's bodies,' or that Mr Pickwick was included in this terrible indictment. That amiable philosopher, in fact, was told that he was 'worse than any of 'em,' and old enough to be Bob Sawyer's grandfather.

The landlady of Captain Cuttle is a termagant of a similar type, and without so much justification for her outbursts. She, however, was no doubt presuming on the Captain's well-known kindness of heart. There in Brig Place, on the brink of the little canal near the India Docks, that unfortunate mariner lived in constant trepidation. Here it was that Walter one day—washing-day, of all others—called to see him, and was told by the Captain to 'Stand by and knock agen—hard.' Before he could enter, however, he had to surmount the 'little wooden fortification extending across the doorway, and put there to prevent the little MacStingers, in their moments of recreation, from tumbling down the steps.' The landlady thereupon asks an imaginary audience whether she is to be broken in upon by 'raff,' and opines that a boy who could knock her door down could get over that little obstruction. From which we gather that her temper was none of the sweetest, and I can sympathise with the Captain, who never owed her a penny, in his remark that 'she was a vixen at times.' When Walter advised him to go elsewhere, he replies: 'Dursn't do it, Wal'r—she'd find me out wherever I went.' Later on, it will be remembered, the Captain, on one of his rounds, meets the 'awful demonstration, headed by that determined woman, Mrs MacStinger, who, preserving a countenance of inexorable resolution, and wearing, conspicuously attached to her obdurate bosom, a stupendous watch and appendages—the property of Bunsby—conducted under her arm no other than that sagacious mariner. Although on this occasion Mrs MacStinger vowed she bore no malice, but hoped to go to the altar in another spirit, Captain Cuttle (having dearly bought his experience) in vain advises Bunsby of the *Cautious Clara*, in nautical phraseology, to 'sheer off.'

Mrs Bardell, on the other hand, is of a much gentler disposition; and in spite of the breach of promise action, much that is good can be conscientiously said of her. She was a comely woman, of bustling manners and agreeable appearance, with—that most excellent thing in a landlady—'a natural genius for cooking, improved by study and long practice, into an exquisite talent.' We know that in her house in Goswell Street Mr Pickwick's will was law; and we expect he had very little to grumble at in his apartments, which, though on a limited scale, were very neat and comfortable. Beside these advantages there were no children, no servants, no fowls. If she had a fault, therefore, it was that of being too easily led away by her feelings.

Humour and pathos are happily blended in the story of Mrs Lirriper, the genial landlady of No. 81 Norfolk Street, Strand, who did not advertise in *Bradshaw*, like her rival, Miss Wozenham, lower down on the other side of the way. Of the ways of servant girls no one had more experience: they 'are your first trial after fixtures,' and in her opinion, were more trying even than the 'wandering Christians,' as she styled the individuals who amused themselves by going over apartments they had no intention of taking. What life-like sketches she gives us of the willing Sophy, always smiling with a black face, and of the violent Caroline Moxey! Sophy, indeed, was the cause of a good lodger giving warning—for though he had arrived at the point of admitting that the black is a man and a brother, it was only in a natural form, 'and when it can't be got off.' 'I took a deal of black into me, ma'am, when I was a small child,' poor Sophy explains, 'and I think it must be that it works out.' Caroline Moxey's temper was the cause of a deal of unpleasantness, particularly on the occasion of her letting down her hair, and rushing up-stairs to attack the unfortunate lodgers—a newly

married couple. Mrs Lirriper had a soft spot in her heart for her faithful lodger, Major Jackman, who was not to be outdone by her in his love for little Jemmy, the trust committed to them by the dying Mrs Edson. How forgiving, too, was her conduct to Miss Wozenham when that rival had fallen on evil days and was being sold up—the systematic underbidding and the enticing away of the servant being buried in oblivion.

Mrs Todgers, the proprietrix of the commercial boarding-house near the Monument, was a rather 'bony and hard-featured lady, with a row of curls in front of her head shaped like little barrels of beer, and on the top of it something made of net—you couldn't call it a cap exactly—which looked like a black cobweb.' We have it from her own lips, that presiding over such an establishment makes sad havoc with the features. 'The gravy alone,' as she informed Miss Pecksniff, 'is enough to add twenty years to one's age.' In her opinion, there was no such passion in human nature as the passion for gravy among commercial gentlemen. Nevertheless, she owned to feelings of a tender nature for Mr Pecksniff—unworthy though he was—and befriended his daughter Mercy after her unfortunate marriage with Jonas Chuzzlewit.

Landladies abound in the pages of Thackeray, and he treats them with a mixture of humour and pathos all his own. To be forced to leave a fine house, and subside into lodgings, or to have seen better days, and subsist by letting them, are changes of fortune which furnish many illustrations for his text, 'vanitas vanitatum.' Among his lesser characters we have Mrs Creed in *Pendennis*, who, in addition to being pew-opener, was landlady of Miss Fotheringay, the daughter of Captain Costigan. According to her own account, she watched over that young lady's doings with the vigilance of a Cerberus rather than an ordinary chaperon. Thus it was that Doctor Portman and the Major, anxious as they were to win Pen from his infatuation for the fair actress, could find nothing to object to in her behaviour. 'Whenever he came,' Mrs Creed informed them, 'she always have me or one of the children with her. And Mrs Creed, marm, says she, if you please, marm, you 'll on no account leave the room when that young gentleman 's here. And many 's the time I 've seen him a-lookin' as if he wished I was away, poor young man.' From the same novel we have Madame Frisby, the dressmaker, who lets apartments to Mr Smirke, the curate, and encourages his affection for the widow, Helen Pendennis. No one in all Clavering, we are told, read so many novels, from which, doubtless, her sentimental views of life were mainly derived. The history of Mr and Mrs Sedley after the crash is associated with their landlady, Mrs Clapp, at Brompton. The old lady, we are told, was occupied and amused with the doings of the Irish maid, Betty Flanagan, 'her bonnets, her ribbons, her sauciness, her idleness, her reckless prodigality of kitchen candles, her consumption of tea and sugar, and so forth,' almost as much as she had been with the doings of her own household in former days. Mrs Sedley was always a great person for her landlady when she descended and passed many hours with her in the basement or ornamental kitchen. But this was in comparatively halcyon days. The question of rent was even looming in the background, and gradually the pleasant intercourse between the landlady and lodger ceased. Mrs Clapp, in her nether realm, 'grumbles in secret to her husband about the rent, and urges the good fellow to rebel against his old friend and patron and present lodger.' Finally, one day Jos's carriage arrives and carries off old Sedley and his daughter to return no more. Amelia had always been kind, and when she was going away, the landlady bitterly reproached herself for ever having used a rough expression to her. There was genuine regret for their departure. 'They would never have such lodgers again, that was clear;' and the author tells us that after-life proved the truth of this melancholy prophecy, and that Mrs Clapp revenged herself for the deterioration of mankind by levying the most savage contributions upon the tea-caddies and legs of mutton of her locataires. 'Most of them scolded and grumbled, some of them did not pay, none of them stayed.' Then we have Mrs James Gann, in *A Shabby Genteel Story*, who lets lodgings at Margate; Mrs Brandon, the 'little sister,' in the *Adventures of Philip;* and Mrs Ridley, in the *Newcomes*, of whom, did space permit, much might be said. Thackeray's finest portrait in the way of landladies, however, is that of Miss Honeyman, the aunt of Clive Newcome. A woman of a thousand virtues, cheerful, frugal, honest, laborious, charitable—such is the character of the little, brisk old lady in Steyne Gardens, whose superior manners and prosperity won her the title of Duchess from the neighbouring tradespeople. We can imagine her to ourselves with her 'large cap, bristling with ribbons, with her best chestnut front, and her best black silk gown and gold watch,' as she stands prepared for the interview with Lady Anne Newcome. Mine hostess of the inn has been not infrequently portrayed in poetry and prose from the days of Mistress Nell of the Boar's Head onwards.

Suffice it in conclusion to give one or two examples of the sisterhood drawn from the pages of Sir Walter Scott. What a wonderful picture is that of the wild inn at Aberfoyle, and of its no less wild landlady, Jean MacAlpine, on the night when Frank Osbaldistone and the others arrive there. Reluctant to receive her guests, she appears before them, a pale and thin figure, with a soiled and ragged dress, a lighted piece of split fir blazing in her hand. With her black hair in uncombed elf-locks, she looked, indeed, like a witch disturbed in the midst of her unlawful rites. She had little opinion of the idle English loons that went about the country 'under the cloud of night and disturbing honest, peaceable gentlemen that are drinking their drap drink at the fireside.' Alternately, however, after the stormy interlude of the fight between the Bailie and the Highlander, she consents to prepare a savoury mess of venison collops for the tired and hungry travellers. As a contrast to Jean MacAlpine, we have the landlady of the small and comfortable inn at Kippletringan,

Mrs MacCandlish, who so well knew the reception to which each of her customers was entitled. With unfailing tact

> To every guest the appropriate speech was made,
> And every duty with distinction paid,
> Respectful, easy, pleasant, or polite,
> 'Your honour's servant! Mister Smith, good-night.'

Such we find her on that cold and stormy night in November when she receives Colonel Mannering seventeen years after the disappearance of little Harry Bertram. Most elaborate of all is the description of that old-world landlady, Meg Dods, who ruled with the despotism of Queen Bess herself. We can picture her with long, skinny hands, and loud voice, as she ordered about not only men and maid-servants, but her guests themselves—members perchance of the Killnaketty Hunt or ancient brethren of the angle from Edinburgh. The members of this hunt, it will be remembered, were treated with some indulgence. 'A set of honest men they were,' Meg said; 'had their song and their joke, and what for no?'

## THE MARKED HALF-SOVEREIGN.

By J. S. Fletcher.

It was a dull, damp, December afternoon, and the trees and hedgerows by which I walked were dank and wet with the clinging vapours that rose from the sodden fields beyond. A slight rain had begun to fall, and my clothes—unprotected by umbrella or mackintosh—already felt not a little damp. It would have suited my mood to go walking on, no matter in what direction; but I reflected that to get wet through might produce serious results in the way of illness; and in my then position, sickness of any sort was a luxury that I could not possibly afford. So I turned and went back to my lodgings, at the same time dreading to go there lest my landlady should again ask me to discharge my debt to her. I was in bad case: I had gone to Hillford in order to join a theatrical company then performing there, and had been stranded at the end of the first week by the failure of the manager. We had played to poor houses all the week, and the manager looked obviously worried; and I think none of us were surprised when there was no 'treasury' on the Saturday morning. My fellow-actors and actresses melted away somewhere and somehow; as for me, I stayed on, hoping that something would turn up. The truth was, I was on my beam-ends so far as money was concerned, and I saw no way of escape. But, being stranded, I tried to make the best of things by endeavouring to find employment. I wanted to pay my landlady—in fact, I couldn't leave the town until I had done so. But, try as I would, I had no success; and now it was the Friday of the second week, and there I was, walking along the country road, with just sixpence and some coppers in my pocket, a blank helplessness before me.

I turned into my lodgings with a sort of callous despair. I expected to see Mrs Smith in the passage, with her bill extended to me. But instead of Mrs Smith I met her maid-of-all-work, who at sight of me immediately disappeared into the kitchen regions, to return presently with a letter held gingerly between her finger and thumb.

'Please, sir,' said she, 'this 'ere come by the afternoon post, and missus says will you please to give me the penny that she paid for it?'

I took the letter from the girl's hand, and looked at the address. A sudden thrill of surprise and hope shot through me—the letter was from my Aunt Maria, with whom and her husband, Uncle Robert, I had been at variance for some time. They—good, honest folk—had wanted me to go in for commerce, in which Uncle Robert had made a fortune: I had wished to satisfy my absorbing passion for the stage. Now, they were the only relations I had in the world, and they had not only brought me up, but also educated me at their own expense; and it was a matter of deep surprise to them, as of great pain to me, that we could not agree as to my future. But I was bound, being young and headstrong, to have my own way—and so there I was, practically penniless, with Aunt Maria's letter in my hand.

I tore open the envelope, and rapidly read the enclosure. My Uncle Robert was ill—so ill that there was next to no chance of his recovery. As soon as he had learnt that his decease was imminent, he had expressed a strong wish to see me. Would I go to him at once? He might linger a few days, but I must lose no time.

I glanced at the date, and then at the envelope, which had been readdressed to me twice. Alas! the letter was written on Monday, and it was then Friday. But I would go—poor old Uncle Robert! he had always been good to me, even though he had never understood me. It might be too late, but even then I might be of use to Aunt Maria. Yes—I would go, and at once! As I started to my feet, I suddenly remembered that Southchester, where Uncle Robert and Aunt Maria lived, was just a hundred miles away, and that I had only tenpence in all the world. What was I to do? I had pawned my watch and all the clothing that I could spare a week earlier—there was literally nothing left to me on which I could raise money. Would Mrs Smith lend me ten shillings? I put the thought aside at once—why, I owed the poor woman three times as much already! Then what was I to do? Was there no one to whom I could apply for help? The express left Hillford for Southchester at seven o'clock, and it was now within a few minutes of six—I had an hour wherein to raise ten shillings. How could it be done?

I suddenly bethought myself of a young gentleman with whom I had struck up a sort of random acquaintance during the week of our

performance at the theatre—a bright, companionable fellow who seemed to like me. We had met casually in the billiard-room of the 'White Hart,' and had somehow engaged in conversation. I would go round to the billiard-room at once—he was usually there about six o'clock, enjoying a game before going home for the evening. Comparative strangers that we were, I felt sure he would lend me half-a-sovereign when I explained my position to him. So I seized my hat and departed. In the passage Mrs Smith confronted me.

'Good-evening, Mrs Smith!' I cried, professing to be in a desperate hurry. 'I can't stop to talk just now—I've just received a most important letter.'

Mrs Smith sighed, and looked at me doubtfully.

'I hope it contained them remittances that you was a-speakin' of, Mr Howard,' said she. ''Cause'——

'All right, Mrs Smith. Don't stop me now—there's a good soul—your bill shall be discharged, I promise you,' I answered as I fled down the steps into the street. I smiled grimly to myself as I walked away, for I felt that it was highly problematical as to when my liability to my landlady would be discharged. But a ray of hope came with the thought of Aunt Maria, and I ran on to the 'White Hart,' hoping to find young Jones, and borrow from him the wherewithal to take me to Southchester at once.

There were several people in the billiard-room when I entered and looked eagerly round for young Jones. At one table two townsmen were playing a friendly game before going home for the evening; at the other a young midshipman, evidently having a holiday ashore, was hugely enjoying himself, and delighting the onlookers by the happy-go-lucky character of his play. Three or four men sat about, smoking and watching, but I saw no sign of the man I wanted. I went up to the head marker, and asked if Mr Jones had been in. The man answered in the negative: he had not seen Mr Jones at all that day. He called across the room to his assistant at the other table, repeating my question. A man seated near the fire turned round, and addressing me, said that he had seen Jones that morning on his way to Manchester for two or three days.

I nodded to my informant, and sat down, feeling inexpressibly disappointed. It had been my last resource—my plans had failed. Already it was drawing near half-past six—I had only half-an-hour in which to raise the money that was absolutely necessary if I meant travelling to Southchester that evening. And yet, what could I do?—I knew no one—I had nothing whereon money could be raised—every channel of assistance seemed closed to me. Visions of travelling without ticket, hiding myself under the seat of a carriage, throwing myself on the mercies of the railway company, flashed across me, and were rejected. I sat there, miserable, helpless, a feeling of dull despair at my heart. The midshipman made a wild shot, and scored, amidst general laughter. He himself laughed, too, and called to the marker to order a drink for himself and his opponent. He pulled out a handful of loose coins, and threw a half-crown on the table. How greedily my eyes watched his hand! I saw the gleam of gold and silver, and coveted his wealth. If only——

He was putting his handful of money carelessly back into his pocket. His opponent was chaffing him about his last stroke, and he was laughing gaily, all unaware of anything but his amusement. But I, watching his hand and the money it grasped, saw half-a-sovereign slip from his fingers, and drop to the floor. The rug was thick—the little coin made no noise as it fell. It rolled a foot or two, and then settled close to my chair; and before I thought what I was doing, I had put my foot over it.

The players went on with their game—it was evident that the midshipman knew nothing of the coin that he had lost. He continued to laugh and jest—his light-heartedness jarred upon me. As for my mind, it was in a whirl of conflicting emotions. There, beneath my feet, lay the means that I wanted. With that half-sovereign I could travel to Southchester, and perhaps arrive there in time to see my uncle alive. But—it was not mine! It was my duty to pick it up, and give it back to its owner there and then. And yet—would he miss it? I thought of all the other coins that I had seen in his hand—what did a paltry half-sovereign matter to him? Now to me——

The players were at the other end of the table, their attention was absorbed in the play of one of them, nobody was looking in my direction. I stooped and picked up the coin. Within the moment I was in the street, walking quickly in the direction of the railway station. I breathed hard—I was a thief—just as black a thief as plenty of those locked up in the county gaol. I half expected to feel a hand on my shoulder at every step and a stern voice charging me with my crime. But I went on, knowing that all was safe, and that detection was impossible. Under a gas-lamp I stopped and looked at the coin. It was a half-sovereign—yes—and on the face there was a triangular mark, evidently stamped there by a chisel. That rather frightened me—supposing the midshipman missed his money and remembered the mark upon it, might I not be traced by it? I hurried on, wanting to get out of the town. Turning down a dismal street that led towards the station, the sight of a pawnbroker's shop gave me another idea. Of course I must pay the midshipman back. Aunt Maria would find me in ready money—I knew that—and I must return to Hillford and find the boy out, and give him the ten shillings that I had stolen from him. I felt that I should like to give him his own half-sovereign too. The three brass balls suggested something to me. I hurried inside the frowsy pledge office and confronted the man behind the counter.

'Look here,' said I, laying the marked half-sovereign before him, 'will you lend me ten shillings on that?'

He picked up the coin and looked at it and me suspiciously.

'Why,' he said, 'this 'ere is ten shillings, isn't it? What d'yer mean?'

'I mean what I say,' I retorted. 'That's a

coin which I don't want to lose, and it's the last I have. Give me ten shillings for it, and let me redeem it later on. Come, man, it's always worth ten shillings, isn't it?' The fellow looked at me wonderingly. He bit the coin with his big teeth, and held it up to the gas-jet to examine it more closely.

'Give yer nine bob on it,' he said.

I reflected. The fare to Southchester was eight-and-fourpence—I had tenpence of my own.

'All right,' I said. 'And mind you take care of the coin—I shall know it again from any other—it's got a secret mark on it.'

He made out a ticket, and handed it and the nine shillings over. He still stared suspiciously at me, but I ran off into the street and on to the station. Within five minutes I was rattling away in the express towards Southchester.

It was an eventful week that followed. I was in time to see my uncle before he died, and to find that the dear old fellow had cherished no ill thought of me for taking my own way. He told me, almost with his last breath, that he had left me 'a little matter,' and that I was to be good to Aunt Maria. But I had little chance, glad as I should have been to take it, to fulfil my promise to him in this respect; for my poor aunt, who had been deeply attached to her husband, never got over his death, and she died and was buried within the week. They had no children of their own, and so I came in for the whole of their little fortune. Thus, just seven days after I left Hillford with the proceeds of the stolen half-sovereign, I found myself master of five hundred pounds a year.

I had many things to do, and much business to transact, but on the earliest possible day I travelled to Hillford, intent on personally discharging the debt I had contracted with Mrs Smith, and restoring to the midshipman the money I had robbed him of. Mrs Smith was surprised to see me; she had given me up as 'a bad job' she candidly remarked, but she was delighted to receive her money, and showered blessings and good wishes on my head as I left her door. The midshipman, however, I could not find—nobody seemed to know anything of him. The marker at the White Hart was certain that he was not a resident or native of the town, but simply a traveller or passer-by. I tried hard to come across some trace of him, and failed. But I went to the pawn-shop and redeemed the half-sovereign; and when I got back to Southchester I locked it up, intending to keep it in case chance ever brought the midshipman and me together again.

I was now provided for, and I gave up all thought of the dramatic profession as a career. Instead, I turned my attention to the cultivation of roses—a hobby which had formerly had much attraction for my uncle Robert. In time I married. My life was quiet, uneventful, and happy. I had my books, my rose-garden, and my pipe, and if I spent my life somewhat lazily, at least I did no harm. But some of my townsmen felt that I ought to devote a little leisure to the affairs of the town, and so they made me a councillor and procured my appointment as a borough magistrate. After that I began to be busy in a new way.

It was, I think, just ten years after my uncle's death that I went down to the town-hall one summer morning to take my seat on the bench. It was the holiday season, and I was the only magistrate present. The clerk leaned over to me and whispered that there were only two or three cases to dispose of, and that only one was of any consequence. They would take that first—and therewith the constables put into the dock a young man in naval uniform who looked very much ashamed of himself. I glanced carelessly at him at first, then more closely, and suddenly I recognised him as the midshipman! My brain was all in a whirl at that, but I knew that he did not recognise me, so I composed myself and listened to the evidence. It appeared that he was now second mate on a liner, and was taking a holiday at a neighbouring town. He had come over to Southchester, had taken too much to drink, and got into a brawl with the police, who had promptly locked him up. He denied nothing of this, but on the contrary, apologised for his misbehaviour, and expressed his deep regret. He was, he said, very foolish at times, and lost his head. I ordered him to pay a fine of ten shillings and the costs—at which a somewhat curious expression came over his face. I sent word round to the charge office to detain him awhile, and then I settled the other cases, and went to the magistrate's room. The officer who took the fines was waiting me there. 'That young man has no money on him, sir,' said he. 'He thinks he must have spent or lost it all last night; but he says that if you'll let him walk over to Peterborough, where his friends are, he'll send the money at once.'

'Bring him here,' I said. 'I'll speak to him myself.'

When he came, I shut the door and bade him take a chair.

'So you've no money?' I said.

'No,' he answered, looking very uncomfortable. 'You see I got rather excited last night and'——

'Do you remember me?' I asked, interrupting him. 'Look well at me.'

He stared at me in blank surprise.

'No, sir!' he said. 'Indeed I don't—I never saw you before that I know of.'

'Do you remember playing billiards at the White Hart at Hillford, ten years ago — one December evening?' I asked.

'Yes,' he said. 'Of course, I do. I had gone over there to see an old school friend, and I dropped into the White Hart while waiting for a train. Were you'——

'I was there,' I answered. 'And I stole half-a-sovereign from you.'

He stared at me in still greater surprise.

'You—stole—half-a-sovereign from me!' he said. 'I don't know what you mean.'

Then I told him all, as I have set it down here. When I recalled the mark on the coin he remembered it.

'And now,' I said, 'I'm at your mercy. But if you won't prosecute me, I'll pay your fine and costs, and you shall have lunch with me, and I'll show you the half-sovereign. What do you say?'

'Agreed!' said he, laughing. 'Certainly agreed!'

'But there's one more condition,' said I, 'and that is that you let me keep the marked half-sovereign.'

So I still have it, reposing in a little glass case on my study mantelpiece—a reminiscence of my only exploit as a thief.

## SHEEP-SHEARING IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

Most of our readers would probably think that to shear, say, twenty or thirty sheep, would be as much as the most skilful and industrious shearer could do in a long day's work. They may, therefore, be interested to know what vastly greater numbers are expected to pass through the deft hands of a capable craftsman in the pastoral regions of the great sheep-keeping colony of New South Wales. Our notes have been collected on the spot.

The number of sheep a man can shear in a day of eight and a half hours is governed by several circumstances over and above the shearer's expertness, depending mainly on the class of sheep and the nature of the country over which the sheep have pastured.

Of all breeds of sheep merinos are the most difficult to shear. In the first place, they are very 'throaty'—that is, the skin covering the neck lies in large, loose folds, so that manipulation with the shears is at best tedious and troublesome. Then, again, they possess what is technically known as the 'points' of the breed—they are woolled to the tip of the nose and down the legs to the hoofs; it is these so-called 'points' that take up time.

Sheep grazing over pastures where burs, grass seeds, twigs &c. are numerous, or over coarse, sandy country, pick up in their fleece quantities of foreign matter that blunt the shears during the process of shearing. It will at once be seen that this especially applies to short-legged sheep, heavily fleeced as the merinos are to the extremities of their limbs. The time taken up sharpening his shears is a serious consideration to the shearer.

Bad or careless shearers, in order to give the sheep the appearance of being properly shorn, may either 'shingle' or 'feather' the fleeces they cut off. By 'shingling' is meant making a second cut over the same part of the body of the sheep, the first severing the staple towards the centre, and the second close to the skin; yet the whole fleece holds together and the damage may not be detected till closely examined. On the contrary, 'feathering' is plainly seen as soon as the fleece is shaken out; here the clip has been uneven, leaving patches of longer wool to be severed by a second cut. This leaves a quantity of short wool in the inside the fleece, which readily separates when the fleece is unrolled. 'Shingling' is the worst fault, as it quite ruins the staple for combing purposes.

In the mountain districts west of the tableland the average number of sheep a fairly good man will shear in a day of eight and a half hours varies from seventy to one hundred and twenty. On the northern plains near the Queensland border the average is one hundred and twenty to one hundred and seventy; and it is on record that the champion shearer of Queensland clipped three hundred and twenty-seven sheep in nine hours. Such a man, in the language of 'the shed,' is termed a 'ringer.'

In the central plains on the Lachlan River the average is eighty to one hundred and twenty. With machines the numbers are of course considerably more. The men are paid £1 per hundred sheep; and out of this they have to provide rations, shears, sharpening-stones, oil, &c.

## AN AUTUMN DAWNING.

Night-visitants of human homes,
Grave Silence, winged Solitude
Creep hand in hand along the street,
With stealthy step, in darkling mood,
Back to their dwelling in deep wood.

The wind, that fiercely howled all night,
Now sobs above the houses' tops,
And wildly whistles through his palms,
With sudden shrieks and sudden stops,
And laughing as to earth he drops.

The dead leaves patter o'er the stones,
And flit before the searching wind,
Like footsteps of dead little ones
Through chambers of the weary mind
Where grief of them is left behind.

Like chieftains stripped of all their pomp
By vile usurper, gaunt and high
The naked trees, erect beneath
Only the morn-star's glittering eye,
Stretch thin arms imprecatingly.

For now the misty moon doth shroud
Her tearful face—like widowed maid
That draws a cloak around her grief,
And goes with it to quiet and shade;
And the wild morn is darker made.

Each dull house stands with stern cold front,
Its secrets hid as by thick veil,
Like epitaphless monument:
And but the wind, with wanton wail
And wandering will, can tell the tale.

A thousand weary souls do rest
In these—false, happy, true, or fair:
Wild youth beside light slumbering age,
Guilt with his arm around Despair,
Sorrow with hand in Fealty's hair.

Perchance one dieth in the dark,
Or haply there some mother brings
An heir to day's swift-coming light,
While here some watcher's 'Ave' rings:
At nights in cities hap strange things.

Day's Angel hastens to the task,
And homes accept the grateful light;
The Dark Guard reads her scroll of doom:
Sister, these souls have taken flight,
Those hearts have broken in the night.

Frankfort Sommerville.

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## VISITING-CARDS.

The visiting-card as we now know it is barely a century old. Like most other every-day articles of use and ornament, it is the result of a gradual process of evolution; and the form which the card now universally takes is by no means so attractive as those which it took in some of the earlier stages of its history. Of late years, indeed, there have been whispers of a new departure in cards. A revolt from the prevailing monotony in 'paste-boards' has more than once been threatened; and the great army of those who suffer from collector-mania have been tantalised with the prospect of new worlds to conquer, in the shape of visiting-cards ornamented with elaborately engraved devices. The idea of those who mooted the change was to give to the visiting-card a touch of individuality, so that each card, like a book-plate, should be a witness to its owner's individual taste and inclinations, and not a mere machine-made reproduction of a universal pattern. But nothing came of the proposal, and the present-day visiting-card still wears its uniform of plain black and white. Had the proposed change been carried out, however, it would simply have been a revival of a fashion that prevailed little more than a hundred years ago.

Visiting-cards were a development from the old style of message and invitation cards. Throughout the greater part of the last century it was customary to write messages and invitations on the backs of used playing-cards. The particular card used was often chosen at random; but occasionally it was picked out with an eye to the delicate suggestiveness of some one suit. This sometimes gave the recipient an opportunity for airing his or her wit. A Rev. Mr Lewis, who was minister of Margate from 1705 to 1746, once received an invitation to dinner, from the Duchess of Dorset, written on the back of a ten of hearts. The reverend gentleman promptly replied by the following epigram:

> Your compliments, lady, I pray you forbear,
> Our old English service is much more sincere:
> You sent me ten hearts—the tithe 's only mine;
> So give me one heart, and burn t' other nine.

One of the many stories that are told to account for the name of 'Curse of Scotland,' which is given to the nine of diamonds, attributes its origin to the alleged action of the Duke of Cumberland in writing his cruel order, refusing all quarter to the defeated Highlanders after Culloden, on the back of this particular card. But as the term was in use before the battle of Culloden was fought, the explanation can hardly be true. Much earlier the Irish name for the six of hearts—the 'Grace-card'—is said to have had its origin in a message written thereon. The tradition goes that a gentleman of Kilkenny, named Grace, was being strongly urged by a representative of Marshal Schomberg to declare for William of Orange and against James II. The marshal's emissary in his master's name made lavish promises of future rewards; but the Irish gentleman wrote the following answer on the back of the six of hearts: 'Tell your master I despise his offer, and that honour and conscience are dearer to a gentleman than all the wealth and titles a prince can bestow.'

An amusing example of the use of cards for messages can be seen in the fourth plate of Hogarth's 'Marriage à la Mode,' which dates from 1745. In a corner of the picture are several playing-cards lying on the floor, with inscriptions which show a considerable devotion to phonetic principles of spelling on the part of the fashionable world of that day. One bears the following: 'Count Basset begs to no how Lade Squander sleapt last nite.' Another has: 'Lady Squander's company is desir'd at Miss Hairbrane's Rout.'

Sometimes the backs of playing-cards which were used for invitations and similar purposes were elaborately engraved. The writer of a

once well-known book called the *Spiritual Quixote*, published in 1772, speaks of the use of playing-cards for the sending of messages as a new fashion; but it is clear from what has been already stated that they had been in common use for at least thirty or forty years. A curious survival of this custom was observed in the island of Madeira some years ago. A visitor who was staying in that delightful isle about 1865 recorded that the invitations given by the bishop for the Easter ceremonies in the cathedral of Funchal were written on the backs of playing-cards.

From the use of such cards simply for invitations and other messages it was an easy transition to their use for visiting purposes. At first the person who so used them simply wrote his name across the back of a card. Dr Doran, in one of his pleasant books of gossip, declares that it was in Paris, about the year 1770, that the custom was introduced of visiting *en blanc*, as it was called, that is by leaving a card. Old-fashioned folks, he says, who loved to visit in state and display their costumes, called this fashion fantastic, and strongly opposed it. But, of course, opposition of this kind was bound to fail. The ceremonial leaving of a card as equivalent to a visit may have begun in 1770, but the writing of the name on a card and leaving it when the person called upon was not at home was certainly practised somewhat earlier. In a French satire of 1741 on *Les Inconvénients du Jour de l'An*, the writer says:

> Sur le dos d'une carte on fait la signature
> Pour rendre sa visite au dos de la serrure.

The play upon the word *dos* is not very translatable, but the meaning of the couplet is plain—the person visited was not at home, but the card with the name written on the back paid the visit to the back of the lock, conveyed the visitor, as it were, to the other side of the locked door.

Writing the name on the back of a card was soon found to be too simple a matter, and it became the practice to write the name either on the backs of playing-cards, or on the face of cards adorned with engraved devices. Classical ruins and the like designs were highly fashionable. Cards so engraved appear to have been sold in packs, with assorted views; for two or more cards have been found bearing the same name written across them, but with quite different pictures as backgrounds. The practice of writing the name seems to have been soon superseded by engraving the name as well as the background. Much artistic ability and ingenuity were devoted to these cards. Sir Joshua Reynolds's card was engraved by Bartolozzi. The paste-board of Canova, the great sculptor, represented a block of marble, rough hewn from the quarry, and inscribed with the name in large Roman capitals, A. CANOVA. Miss Berry and her sister, who were well-known figures in London society from the days of Horace Walpole till near the middle of the present century, used a curiously adorned card. On it were shown two nymphs, classically draped, who pointed to a slab like a tombstone, grown over with weeds, on which was engraved the name 'Miss Berrys.' One of the nymphs led a lamb by a ribbon, to typify, so it is said, Miss Agnes Berry!

Miss Busk some years ago described a beautifully engraved visiting-card, then in her possession, which had belonged to a Mr Richard Twiss, once well known as a writer of travels. This card, which was designed in 1793, had an outline border with *à la Grecque* corners, beyond which at the two top corners were two rings, from which depended a wreath of flowers and grapes intertwined with a strip of drapery, in the folds of which was engraved 'Mr Twiss.'

Visiting-cards seem to have been known by various names. Madame D'Arblay in her *Diary* uses the term 'name-card.' They were often spoken of as 'tickets.' A lady writer of the last century enters in her journal, under date November 16, 1799, when at Hanover: 'At six Madame de Busche called to take me to pay my visits. We only dropped tickets.' In Scott's *St Ronan's Well*, Captain Jekyl of the Guards introduces himself by presenting his 'ticket.' The same novel, by the way, the action of which is supposed to pass at the time of the Peninsular War, contains a somewhat belated example of the use of the playing-card for 'ticket' purposes. When Captain M'Turk, on hostile thoughts intent, asks Luckie Dods if Mr Tyrrell is at home, that undaunted heroine retorts, 'Wha may ye be that speers?' The captain, as the most polite reply to this question, says Scott, and as an indulgence at the same time of his own taciturn disposition, 'presented to Luckie Dods the fifth part of an ordinary playing-card, much grimed with snuff, which bore on its blank side his name and quality.' But Meg would have nothing to do with the 'deil's play-books,' as readers of the novel will remember, and Captain M'Turk had to state who he was and what he wanted.

A very large collection of eighteenth-century cards of various kinds—shop-bills, invitation, trade, funeral, and other cards and certificates—was formed by Miss Banks, the daughter of the famous naturalist, Sir Joseph Banks, who sailed round the world with Captain Cook. This collection is now in the Print Room of the British Museum; and the visitor who looks through this very interesting gathering of the flotsam and jetsam of the printing-press will find many valuable and curious specimens of the visiting-cards of long ago.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER V. (*continued*).

THE week following we made an excursion up the Médang River; the next we visited the ruins of a prehistoric city, fifty miles or thereabouts to the southward. In this fashion the first month of our stay in the Médangs went by. A pleasanter time could scarcely be desired. Dutiless though I was, my days hardly contained an idle moment. The mornings I usually spent with the king, either riding about the country, inspecting troops, visiting forts or works in course of construction, consulting upon others about to be commenced, or in a hundred ways endeavouring to make myself useful to my host. During

the great heat of the day I read or painted in the Fountain Courtyard, conversed with the Princess Natalie and my sister; while the evenings were occupied, when there were no official receptions, either with music in the Princess's drawing-room or smoking in the cool upon the battlements above. The life interested me immensely. It was small wonder, therefore, that at the end of the first month I gladly accepted the king's pressing invitation to prolong my stay. Nor did Olivia seem any more anxious than I was to bid the Médangs farewell. It was easy to see that she had taken a decided liking to the blind Princess, for which I was glad, as also, I could tell, was the king.

By this time, as may be supposed, I had come to understand a good deal of the politics of the infant kingdom, and had seen more than a little of the methods by which our late fellow-traveller governed his subjects. That he had succeeded in his attempt to gain their esteem was self-evident; indeed, it would have been a difficult matter to have found a more popular ruler. At the same time, he was severe in his dealings with evil-doers, and any attempt to prevent or divert the due course of justice was certain to meet with condign punishment. By reason of his beneficent rule, trade was flourishing in every direction; those merchants who under the previous monarch had been driven, by extortion and robbery, into leaving the country were gradually returning to it, and taking up their former businesses; while others, having heard of the security in which their fellows dwelt, were fast entering the country and settling down in it.

Strange to relate, the king, once back in his own dominions, seemed to be quite himself again. He ate better, looked better, and found himself able to bear more fatigue without suffering so acutely afterwards than he had done for months past. What had brought about this hopeful state of things it was impossible to say, but that there *was* a decided improvement in his condition no one could deny.

At the end of the second month, and by the exercise of the most careful diplomacy, the French incident seemed to have been lulled to sleep. A greater feeling of security was noticeable along the borders than had been the case for years past. It looked as if the king's return had acted like oil upon the troubled waters, so quickly had the waves of discord settled down into the calm of peace. Still, month after month went by, and each one found us remaining in the kingdom. Once or twice I had hinted that it was almost time we brought our visit to a close, but on each occasion our host, assisted by the Princess Natalie, had pressed us to remain. At last, when we had been six months his guests, I felt compelled to put a definite period to our stay; and after a consultation with Olivia, I accordingly informed our host and hostess that in a week's time we should be obliged to leave them, and to proceed upon our journey.

The evening that I arrived at this decision was a hot one, and after dinner the Princess suggested that we should betake ourselves to the roof of the palace. Accordingly we ascended thither, and settled ourselves down to enjoy the cool breezes that came up to us from the plain. The king, I noticed, was very silent, as was his sister, the bulk of the conversation falling upon Olivia and myself.

The night was truly magnificent, such an one as only those favoured latitudes can produce. From the roof of the palace we looked down upon the plain and the native city nestling at the foot of the giant crag; the latter was dotted with innumerable lights. Away beyond the mountain range to the eastward a faint glow betokened the rising of the moon. The only sound to be heard was the barking of a dog far away and the voice of a man singing in the courtyard of the barracks. After we had been sitting for some time talking of Venice and a dozen different things, Olivia rose and went forward to the parapet, where she stood with her hands resting on the coping, looking down into the abyss. Presently the king rose and followed her. They stood side by side for some moments, and then strolled together along the battlements. During the time they were absent I remained where I was, talking to the Princess. I cannot hope to make you understand how sweet and fragile she looked in her white dress. The moonlight sparkled upon her rings, and the perfume of her laces came distinctly to me, though I sat some feet away.

'And so it is your intention to leave us in a week, Lord Instow?' she said, when the footsteps of her brother and his companion had died away. 'We shall miss you very much.'

'We shall be equally sorry to go, I can assure you,' I answered truthfully. 'We have both enjoyed our stay in the Médangs so much that the place seems like a second home to us.'

'Marie will miss you terribly, I know,' she continued. 'He was only saying so this morning. He owes so much to his talks with you. My life too will be very lonely without your sister. You are proud of her, Lord Instow, and you have good cause to be. If only I could see her face. I know it must be very beautiful.'

'Yes. Olivia *is* beautiful,' I answered. 'And what is better still, she is a good woman. I am very proud of her, as you say.'

'She has been very kind to me, and I have no other friends.'

'I fear you have a very lonely life, Princess,' I said; 'but, if I may transpose your own words, you have a brother of whom any sister might be proud.'

'Dear Marie, I *am* proud of him,' she answered softly. 'But he is too busy to be able to give much of his time to me. He is so wrapt up in his country, he thinks of nothing else. He denies himself no trouble, he spares himself no pain; in fact, he seems to live for it alone.'

My heart was touched by the loneliness of the blind girl, shut up in this great barrack, without companion of any sort. For the first time, a sense of her real desolation came over me, and I was about to say something to her on

the subject when I was interrupted by the return of the other couple. Both seemed unusually quiet; and presently Olivia, with a little shiver, suggested that it was growing cold, and that it would perhaps be better if an adjournment were made to the rooms below. We accordingly rose, and I was about to follow the party down the steps when the king turned, and laying his hand upon my arm detained me.

'My lord,' he said, with unusual gravity, 'I should be glad if you could allow me a few minutes' conversation before we go downstairs. I have an important communication to make to you.'

'With pleasure,' I answered, but not without a slight feeling of alarm in my heart.

We accordingly walked back to the chairs, and took our former places.

'Lord Instow,' began the king, 'I am a plain man, and I like to say things in a plain way. Therefore, let me tell you at once, that to-night I have asked your sister, Lady Olivia, to be my wife and to share my throne with me. She has consented.'

For a moment, though for several reasons I had expected it, I sat dumbfounded by his news. I could scarcely believe it. It must have been nearly a minute before I recovered my wits sufficiently even to remember that I had offered him no reply.

'I'm afraid your lordship scarcely approves of my action?' said the king, who had evidently been studying my face.

'It's not that,' I blurted out, like a great schoolboy; 'but you have surprised me beyond all measure. I cannot say that I have never contemplated your loving her—for I presume you *do* love her?'

'God knows,' he answered, 'that I love her better than my own life. To call her mine I would sacrifice everything I hold dear.'

'You will not be asked to do that,' I said. 'But I must have time to consider it. At present I am all in a whirl, and can think of nothing. I must see Olivia too. You say she has accepted you?'

'She has been merciful enough to tell me that she loves me. Heaven alone knows what I have done to deserve so great a boon. My lord, I will simply say that I love your sister with a true and honest love. When I tell you that my father was that French Marquis de Meraut, who was murdered by the Commune, while my mother was the daughter of the Count Guilacci, for many years Italian Ambassador at the Court of St James, you will see that my birth is equal to your own. Moreover, by my own endeavours, I am the sovereign of a country that has undoubtedly a great future before it. As my queen, I will love your sister, honour her, and protect her. Come what may, she shall always be my first care.'

'You must pardon me,' I said gravely, but not unkindly, 'if I ask you to allow further consideration of the matter to stand over until I have seen my sister. When I have had a talk with her I shall be in a position to tell you whether I can give my consent or not.'

'I am in your hands entirely,' he answered. 'By all means, since you wish it, let us defer consideration of it until such a time as you feel that you can give me the answer your heart dictates.'

'I will promise you an answer to-morrow morning without fail.'

'I thank your lordship. Now perhaps we had better go downstairs.'

In the Fountain Courtyard below we found the ladies waiting for us. Olivia greeted me with an anxious face, and I could see that she was hoping for an opportunity of speaking to me alone. This she found when we had all bidden each other good-night, and had separated to retire to our various rooms. Following me along the corridor, she caught me up as I passed through the sitting-room, which, since our arrival, had been set apart for our own private use.

'Instow,' she said, standing before me, 'I want to speak to you.'

I took her hand.

'I can guess what you are going to say,' I answered. 'The king has told me all.'

She looked up into my face, and I noticed that there was a light in her eyes that I had never seen there before—the light of love.

'You approve, do you not?' she asked, as if the fate of all the world hung upon my reply.

'Tell me first, dear, if you love him?' I said; 'I can answer you better then.'

A rosy blush suffused her face, and she hung her head a little. 'I love him as I shall never love another in my life,' she answered. 'He fascinated me from the very first, though I would not admit it even to myself. Now I would do anything, dare anything for love of him. Oh! Instow, I love him better than life itself.'

'But have you considered what it will mean to you?' I said. 'Have you thought what a change it will make in your life. You will probably not see England again for years; you will be cut off from home and friends—in a great measure even from myself. You will miss all the surroundings, and a great many of the luxuries to which you have been accustomed. Are you prepared to sacrifice so much?'

'I love him,' she answered simply; 'and nothing I can do will be a sacrifice. As to the other things you speak of, I shall find an equivalent in helping him in his life's work.'

'But you know his state of health. I do not wish to be unkind, but you must remember that seven months ago the Venetian doctors gave him but two years of life.'

'You are cruel to remind me of that,' she cried. 'But if it is so, the greater reason that I should make his life happy while it lasts.'

'In that case I will say no more. If you love him, and he loves you, and your happiness lies together, Heaven forbid that I should withhold my consent.'

She put her soft arms round my neck and kissed me. Then, before I could prevent her, she had slipped away again, and vanished from the room.

I passed from the sitting-room into my bedroom. But it was not to sleep. Hour after hour I tossed upon my couch, thought succeeding thought, and every one bringing me back to the original question:

'Had I done right in giving my consent?'

Alas, that was a question for which only time could find an answer.

## PAPER FLOWER-MAKING.

Who is there among us that does not like flowers, from the Queen on her throne, to the child revelling in the field among the poppies? but as our own poet says, we find to our chagrin and dismay, that 'pleasures are like poppies spread; we seize the flower, its bloom is shed,' and our lovely flowers, though 'things of beauty,' are not 'joys for ever;' and when, as often happens, our vases are empty, how very bare our rooms look! Myself an ardent lover of flowers, I felt this acutely, and would fill them with grasses or anything that came handy, using a little taste probably in my arrangements, and then it struck me the flowers could be copied. I was brought up to the artificial flower-making certainly, but now I was married, and had no appliances for making them in muslin or satin, what was the next best? Tissue paper. So I bought paper, wire and moss, and set to work to make my paper flowers. This was more than twenty years ago, and my paper flowers have found their way all over the kingdom, in the home of our bonnie Princess May, and in the humble cottage, as well as to foreign countries. Last winter, I started my classes, and most successful and enjoyable they were, both juvenile and adult; I hope I shall have the same pleasure this winter. The pupils find, like myself, that the making of these flowers is a most fascinating study; and another thing, it is causing both young and old to take a more lively interest in the beauties of Nature. They study the real flower, count the petals, note their shape, and the form of the leaves. Why? Because they are going to copy it in paper, and they continually find fresh charms to delight them. It must take away a good deal of the dryness from their botany classes: and I really think botanical teachers ought to feel very much obliged to me. At any rate, I do not intend to shelve Nature, for I will not make, or allow to be made, flowers that are not like the real ones; we make them as near a copy as possible 'on paper.' One lady of my acquaintance sat and cut up real flowers to 'see what was inside,' and said it was all through me; but she said she had no idea of their beauty till she had done it. I told her botanists had found that out before her. But the fact remains, we have 'eyes but we see not,' that is, we do not use them intelligently; and if my paper flowers make young and old, for both can make them, love the real ones more, and understand them better, I feel I shall not have worked in vain.

Now, before proceeding any further, I would like to say a few kindly words to amateurs, for there is a good deal of these artists' work going about. It is very pleasing to see ladies taking such a keen interest in this delightful occupation. But to these ladies I would say take a few lessons, and then you will be able to finish your flowers properly, for it is not nice to see flowers with bare stems, and no leaves to speak of. Poor things, they look quite forlorn, like half-clad children; and another thing, there seems to be a very general idea among these ladies that if they can do some sort of a curly rose, a poppy, or a curly chrysanthemum, they have learnt all there is to learn. This, I need hardly say, is a very great mistake; there are numbers of charming flowers for you to copy, every one different from its neighbours, but all charming; so try and get out of the common rut, ladies, and seek 'fresh fields and pastures new.'

Now a word about materials: First, the paper. Don't buy cheap tissue. It is not satisfactory, and will not turn out good work. Good paper is delightful to work with. Fletcher & Sons' tissue I find does very good work. Try it, ladies, and be sure to notice when you are flower-making that there is a smooth side of the paper; keep that next you, except in the case of curly roses, when you turn it from you and curl it on that side, curling from you, so that when your rose is made the smooth side faces you after all. This is not a hard and fast rule, however; it varies, but it applies to a great many flowers. Then when you are cutting your paper be careful as to waste, allow, of course, a margin for cutting so as to insure your flower to be the correct size, or at least as near as possible. Second, the wire. Of this I use two kinds: a fine wire, No. 26 on the wire gauge, and a coarser kind for stems. This you can get at the metal warehouse at sixpence and eightpence per lb. Cut your fine wire yourself, but get the coarse wire cut at the warehouse, or you will break your scissors over it. They will cut any length you require if you ask them politely. The fine wire I use in about five or six inch lengths; the thick wire of course is cut longer; in that also you can follow your own inclination. In making up my flowers I use a great deal of moss. Third, this is called French moss, as it is prepared in France, and you can buy it at any fancy warehouse or florist's at fourpence and sixpence a bunch. Some of it is very pale, and does not show well in contrast. I seldom buy this kind, although I do not like it too high coloured either. You see, ladies, in this matter one has to use a little judgment as well as taste. Another point to which I would like to draw your attention is this: be careful in your choice of colour, as on that a great deal of your success will depend, and this includes not only the purchasing of your paper, but the mixing of your flowers after you have made them. Do not let one shade kill another. Choose shades that are good foils to each other. You will not regret paying attention to this rule. Some people err greatly in this respect; they have no

eye for colour, but this is most essential in our paper flower-making. For instance, pale straw and daffodil yellow go well together; pale lavender or mauve with violet, and so on; but, as I said before, your own taste must as a rule guide you in this matter.

Now the next item on our programme is the folding of the paper. Everything depends on this being done correctly. They are paying a great deal of attention to folding in the Kindergarten work in the schools, and it is a good introduction to proper flower-making. I had a good many board-school teachers, all of them very nice young ladies, and they said the paper-folding for the flowers was of the greatest service to them in their Kindergarten work. Now when folding your paper for cutting, keep the paper's own fold intact, and fold the paper parallel with it. Fold it until it is about two inches wide; it is then divided easily. For crocuses cut your sheet, which is twenty inches in length, into six parts; for tulips, seven or eight as you may desire; for Iceland poppies, into eight parts; for Canterbury bells, into six parts; for field poppies, into six, or five, if large ones are required. This brings us to the question of crêpe paper. Ladies can use it of course at their own discretion, but as I like my pupils to do their own crinkling, it is never on my table, though very pretty things can be done with it — flower-pot covers, lamp-shades, and so forth. Still I prefer the plain sheet of tissue to any other—it is easily handled. Now for our colours. For crocuses, white, mauve, orange, and violet; for tulips, white, scarlet, and yellow. You could, of course, get shaded paper for these, but it would come more expensive, so I just use these three shades. If you want them 'all a-growing and a-blowing,' put two or three in a small pot, cover the top with moss, but only put one shade in each pot, and they look very pretty. I have several pots filled in this way in my room. When cutting your tulips, fold your strip of paper three times, taking care your edges are even, or the petals will not be regular; then fold it three times again — this we call three into three. Begin cutting nearly an inch from the bottom, cutting upwards to a round point down the other side, finishing opposite to where you began. For the heart, you could fringe a little yellow or orange paper, which you will paper on a wire, taking the wire in your left hand and the paper in your right; damp the tip of your finger, twist straight forward until you secure the wire, then slant your paper, and run it down to the end; place your heart in the centre of first petal, and make a little pleat or fold; continue this, counting one each for petals and spaces. Don't forget to invert your petals as you go on, for the tulip petals curl inwards. This flower looks well with large dark leaves; for which I use dark moss-green tissue. For these leaves you fold your strip of paper twice, and get your four leaves at one cutting. Take a good hold when you paper on your leaf, or it will not stand up straight. A very favourite flower with me is the hydrangea, and it makes a brave show; for this flower you can use white, blush-pink, and several shades of mauve. We, however, affect the pale pink mostly. It is very delicate and pretty. Cut your sheet of paper into eight parts, open, and refold five times; begin cutting half-way up your fold, cutting round the top in a scallop form; divide into sections of five, counting four petals a flower, and tie these round a tipped wire. From twenty-four to thirty-six blossoms are required to make a full flower, and as you tie your flower keep the petals perfectly smooth, and when spraying up, one must overlap the other a little. I use about ten large leaves with this, and it is most effective.

Pansies are also most successful, quite easy to make, and, like sweet peas, there is room for much taste in the combination of colours, so that, though it is only a paper flower, yet a good lesson may be learnt from it.

I often wonder if our little friend the wasp, the first paper-maker, ever thought of the very wonderful results of his labours. It is said the pen rules the world, but the pen would be nowhere without the paper to write on. It is indeed wonderful when one thinks of the numberless things—and now our flowers are included—that are made from a simple piece of paper.

## ATTRAY'S WIFE.

### CHAPTER III.

Eustace Hirst had plenty of food for reflection. What he had suspected, that the Reverend Mr Texter had some hold or other upon Mrs Mountjoy, was now almost verified, for he had more than hinted that if he chose he could lay hands on Will Attray; and, despite the apparent indifference of mother and daughter to the fate of the redoubtable smuggler, it was not a pleasant reflection for a lover that he might be called upon to bring his sweetheart's father to the gallows.

He began to think he was likely to make rather an ass of himself. He was in love with Eleanor, short as was his acquaintance with her; but, as Mr Texter had put it, how would his family, eminently respectable and particular Clapham folk, regard a union with her? He had, sailor-like, never thought of this when her sweet face and her refined manner bewitched him, and, to tell the truth, he was not disposed to weigh it very seriously now.

What was he to do? Throw her over and see her the wife of Parson Texter? Never! Take his chance about Texter's hint? Brave the threat—marry the girl—be brought face to face with an unpleasant duty, and be pointed out as the husband of a murdering smuggler's daughter? Better, but not a rosy prospect.

Call upon Mrs Mountjoy straight away and state his case clearly and boldly? Best of all. He at once proceeded to put his resolution into effect, and was walking briskly along the sea-wall, revolving in his mind how he could least offensively discharge himself of a delicate mission, when he espied Eleanor coming towards him. She looked fairer than ever on

this fresh, breezy morning, for her black locks were streaming in the wind, her cheeks were healthily flushed, and the swiftness of her movement showed her perfect figure off to the fullest advantage.

'Good morning! I am glad to have met you. I was on my way to call on your mother,' said Eustace.

'And I was coming to—to make you my confidant,' said the girl. 'Where can we talk quietly?'

'Where better than under this wall—here, on this groin—the same near which you'——

'I know—I know! Don't recall it. I was hardly myself, and I did not even thank you,' said Eleanor.

They seated themselves side by side on the weather-beaten wood-work, for, though October was half passed, the season was sweet and mild, and for the first time since his arrival at Broadmarsh the young officer had seen the peculiar beauty of the sun-lit marsh country.

'Mr Hirst,' said the girl, 'after you left yesterday morning Mr Texter offered marriage to me. I rejected him. He received my decision strangely. He simply said: "I am sorry, Miss Eleanor. Sorry for myself, and more sorry for you." What did he mean?'

'I will tell you what I think he meant,' replied Eustace. 'Mind—only what I think he meant. I believe, from what he has hinted to me that he is in possession of information which would lead to the arrest of your father.'

'Indeed!' said the girl indifferently; but the lieutenant fancied there was a slight accent of anxiety in her speech. 'And then?'——

'And he therefore imagines that to spare your father you would be willing to make any sacrifice.'

'Do you believe that he has any such information?'

'I am sorry to say that I do.'

'What makes you think so?'

'I can hardly tell you, Miss Mountjoy; but he gives me the idea of being a man who, to gain his own ends, would leave no stone unturned to find the means. It is quite possible that he, a smuggling parson, may possess special facilities for obtaining such news. Your father may be on this coast for aught that you or I know. He would be pretty safe here. None of the fraternity would betray him.'

Eleanor was perceptibly moved by what the young man had said, which was strange, considering what indifference both she and her mother had expressed concerning the fate of Attray.

'Will you come and see my mother and tell her what you have told me?' said the girl, after a long silence.

'Certainly—but'——

'But what?'

There was a strong wrestling going on within the young man between duty and love.

'I must be candid, Miss Mountjoy,' he replied. 'I am a naval officer, and my duty must stand first in the guidance of my conduct. I must ask you to promise me that I shall not be expected to neglect my duty under any circumstances. I mean'——

'I know what you mean, Mr Hirst,' said the girl, somewhat in the proud, imperious tone which she had employed on the occasion of their first meeting. 'You mean that if knowledge of the whereabouts of my father should come to you, no considerations of—of respect for me'——

'Of affection, rather,' put in Eustace.

'Of affection, then, for me shall prevent you from performing your duty. No sir, I may be the daughter of William Attray, but I would never, even on his account, be an obstacle of that sort. Come!'

They rose and walked rapidly to Green Place.

Mrs Mountjoy was walking up and down the pebble garden path behind the house, stately and serene as an imprisoned sovereign. She bowed gracefully to Eustace Hirst, took her daughter's arm, and led the way into the house.

'You have news, I see,' she said, in the quiet, low-pitched voice which was not her least attraction. 'Let me hear it. Any news is welcome here.'

'I have no special news, Madam,' said the young man.

'But you have been telling my daughter something which concerns us. What was it?' asked Mrs Mountjoy.

So Eustace briefly recounted his opinion about the parson's strange reception of his rejection by Eleanor.

'He is a windbag, that man,' said Mrs Mountjoy, smiling. 'He knows nothing. He is only pretending to. Ever since we have been here he has been paying his attentions to my girl. She does not like him, and I don't care for him, although I see no absolute wrong in him. I would not oppose his marrying her, but as Eleanor's happiness is the only object I have to live for, I would not urge her to do what is distasteful to her. Let us be plain with each other—you as a sailor, I as a sailor, for I have passed almost as much of my time afloat as ashore. You have only known Eleanor a few days, but you are attached to her?'

'Yes—yes, I am, but I have never told her so, Madam,' replied the young man.

'Have you thought the thing well over? Have you considered what it means to marry the daughter of William Attray? Have you considered that if information concerning William Attray was placed in your hands, it would be your duty to act upon it, and to bring the father of your bride to the gallows?'

'I have, and it places me in a terrible position,' replied the young man.

'It need not be,' said Mrs Mountjoy. 'Consider well what you are doing.'

'Then may I dare to hope that if I should ask Miss Mountjoy to be my wife, she would accept me?'

'Consider your position first. Then come and ask her. Remember, three days is a short

courtship. You really cannot know Eleanor yet.'

'O yes, yes!' exclaimed the young officer rapturously. 'I need not consider. I will risk all! I will brave all!'

'You are young and inexperienced,' said Mrs Mountjoy, smiling. 'She is my first consideration, and I would never consent to her union with you if I thought there was the smallest chance of her being as a millstone round your neck. Remember, she is William Attray's daughter, and that you will never disestablish that black fact. Remember also, that although William Attray's daughter should be your wife, it will be your duty to allow justice to take its course with William Attray. Not that they will catch him yet. His head has been in a noose before now. But if, upon consideration, you feel that you can take my Eleanor for your wife and will make her happy, I am content. I have nothing more to live for, and I shall welcome the end of an unhappy life.'

The love-lorn lieutenant was profuse in his thanks and promises, and swore that nothing should tempt him from the path of duty either to his love or to his profession, and for the second time in three days walked forth the happiest man in the Marsh.

As was often his wont, Eustace Hirst turned in to the 'Tartar Frigate,' the centre of Broadmarsh life and light, that evening. Here preventive and runner met on equal terms, and often quaffed from the same bowl—a matter of a few hours only sometimes separating the act of drinking to each other's good luck from the act of breaking each other's heads.

The parson was also a patron of the 'Tartar Frigate;' indeed, a score opposite his initials might be seen on the slate in the bar near to that standing against the name of a sea-savage who could neither read nor write. But the parson was not proud, and was consequently a man of many friends. Indeed, the lieutenant did not dislike the man, although he despised and distrusted him.

So it happened that when the lieutenant walked in at about dusk, he found the parson there.

The latter stepped forward with one hand outstretched, and the other supporting a goodly rummer of hot drink.

'Congratulate you, Hirst; I do sincerely. What'll you have?' said he.

'Congratulate me on what?'

'You know, you sly rogue. Gone and stolen a march upon the poor sky pilot, and won the beauty of the Marsh. What'll you have?'

'Well,' replied Eustace, 'you're the last man in the world I should have expected to congratulate me. Mine's brandy hot with. How about what you said to me about—you know who? Look here: before we touch glasses, tell me straight—can you lay hands on him?'

'No, I can't.'

'Then why did you say you could—or rather, hint that you could?'

'Never did any such thing. I only supposed, and you shut me up by saying that you preferred to deal with facts.'

'That's all very well, but I'm an old sailor, and you know, John Texter, as well as you're standing there, that you wanted to choke me off from courting Miss Mountjoy.'

'So I did. I admit it. What then?' replied the parson, with candour written on his open face. 'We were both angling for the same fish. You've landed her. I haven't. All's fair in love and war and smuggling.'

'Then you admit you were not in earnest?'

'Not I. I was very much in earnest.'

'I mean, you admit that what you said about my being bound to arrest Attray if I was shown how to do it was a stratagem.'

'If you like to call it so, yes. But look here. I've thrown up the sponge, and so let's drink to Miss Eleanor's very good health, and happiness, and prosperity!'

'With all my heart!' replied Eustace, and in less than five seconds the stems of two empty glasses rang on the bar counter.

'And you've made up your mind to marry the daughter of Bill Attray, and to run the risk of having to help to string him up, and to be pointed out as the husband of a murderer's daughter, have you?' said the parson, half in soliloquy. 'Well, you're a plucky one, that's all I can say! Let's hope for your sake that Bill won't be run to earth.'

After another glass and a little general talk, the lieutenant turned homewards. He was young, and was very green in the ways of the world outside his calling. He was, like all sailors, over-apt to think of men as he found them, and yet he did not leave the inn with an entirely easy mind.

Texter's acceptance of his defeat was too philosophical to be quite genuine. He was a little too careless and resigned about it to be acting naturally; for, although Eustace Hirst had no experience as a fighter in the lists of love, it did not seem possible to him that any man professing love for a girl with such warmth as he knew Texter had expressed his feeling for Eleanor, could quietly allow a rival to snatch the prize from him with such a show of acquiescence.

No. Texter had yet a card up his sleeve, and would bide his time to plump it down at the right moment, and despite his denial of the fact, Eustace believed that this card was the arrest of Bill Attray.

Another cause of anxiety was the position his own family would take up. He was the younger son of a well-to-do, but by no means wealthy London merchant, who belonged to that rigid circle of purists who made Clapham Common their centre, and who were unsparing in their condemnation of the slightest deviation from the paths of strict rectitude in general, and of improper marriages in particular.

He knew very well that to marry Eleanor Attray would be to bring on his head vials of wrath from the top of the family to the bottom, from one end of Clapham Common to the other.

Yet he believed Eleanor would make quite as true and good a wife as many who had issued from the grim portals of Clapham Old Church, and for the life of him he couldn't see why the sins of the fathers should always be visited on the children. Above all, he was

head over heels in love with her, and Clapham was a far cry from Broadmarsh.

So, sturdy-minded young Briton as he was, he resolved to trust to luck, and to pray for the good fortune which proverbially attends the brave.

## BETTER HOMES FOR WORKING PEOPLE.

As we have always the poor with us, the problem of better homes for working people is a burning question to-day, both in town and country; for in the city as in the village, there are plague spots, which it must be the aim of every lover of his species to remove or ameliorate. Some people sink into squalid and filthy surroundings through laziness, drink, evil-living, or improvidence; some have been more sinned against than sinning in that they had a slender chance to successfully breast the strong currents of misfortune, of heredity, and evil surroundings. Much has already been done, a good deal is in process of being done, and yet there remains much to do. 'Whenever a group of people,' says Miss Graffenried of the U.S. Department of Labour, 'live in want and squalor, their misery lowers the whole social level.' The result of impaired vitality is often relaxed moral and religious standards, with ignorance and crime as a result. There is some truth in the remark that the two civilising agencies of the highest value for labouring people, next to industrial training and baths for American working men, are bay windows and front door bells. These are not everything, for a pig will not change its habits with a change of stye; but there is so much in air-space, plenty of elbow-room, and absence of over-crowding in rearing a healthy and contented people, that the thing is worth struggling for and preaching continually from the house-tops. An acute writer and observer, Mr W. Hale White, ascribes 'the peculiar sourness of modern democracy to deficiency of oxygen and sunlight.' It was the realisation of the bitterness of the lot of many in their sordid surroundings of city life which made Lord Shaftesbury a philanthropist; and his whole life was a struggle with the forces of oppression and evil. George Peabody, the American millionaire, once poor himself, 'felt in his pocket' to the extent of half a million of money, which, as laid out in dwellings for the industrial poor of London, has doubled the capital, and has been doing good ever since it was so hardened into better homes for working people. Mr Ruskin has often contrasted the spirit of the modern builder with that of the builders of our cathedrals: 'the modern aggregate of bad building, and ill-living, held in check by constables, which we call a town, of which the widest streets are devoted, by consent, to the encouragement of vice, and the narrow ones to concealment of misery.' There is much exaggeration and some truth in this language; but we must remember that in 1864 Mr Ruskin encouraged Miss Victoria Hill, in her labours amongst the London rookeries, to the extent of £3000, to purchase two neglected courts, very much misnamed 'Paradise' and 'Fresh-water.' Mr Ruskin, in *Fors Clavigera* and elsewhere, has given his opinion of London middle-class buildings, as reared of rotten brick, with various iron devices to hold them together. He politely calls them 'packing-cases, in which they (the dwellers) are temporarily stored, for bad use.' Also, he likens them to vans full of monkeys, 'that have lost their legs.'

It may be of interest to glance at what beneficent efforts have accomplished in our time, in London and elsewhere, to face the problem of better dwellings for working people. Sir B. W. Richardson has sketched his model city of 'Hygeia,' Dr Parker has talked of rebuilding London, while the Rev. Canon Barnett, in a sensible lecture, has sketched an ideal city, with a quarter of a million of inhabitants, in which, 'Gone are the close alleys in which men and children die before their time. Gone are the houses in which families swarm and foster a pestilence. Gone are the smells, the filth, and the danger.' Let us pass on, however, to those who have actually faced existing conditions, and put their shoulder to the wheel.

In this connection, a peep at London early in the century reveals the need of changed conditions. Mr Weylland of the London City Mission, in a communication to the present writer, says: 'I remember Lord Shaftesbury telling me about his first visit to the slums of Westminster. "I was an M.P. at that time," he said, "and arranged for that energetic missionary, Andrew Walker, to meet me at the entrance of the House of Commons, and to introduce me to his district, which was only about three minutes' walk distant. We spent two hours in Old Pye Street and its neighbouring courts and alleys. The dilapidated and insanitary dwellings were inhabited by wretched, half-clothed people, while swarms of ragged, shoeless children gave the place a heathen appearance. It was evidently a centre of thievedom, as active or discharged criminals were found in every house." His lordship, saddened by what he had seen, at once moved in the direction of helping to found a Ragged School and a Reformatory House for juvenile thieves.

An article in *Chambers's Journal* for August 21, 1847, by William Chambers, describes these slums. It is entitled, 'A Visit to Westminster—but not to the Abbey.' This same Andrew Walker, originally a gardener from Earlston, Berwickshire, was his guide. We have Walker's unpublished MS. diary before us, in which he mentions that twenty-two rooms in New Square were occupied by fifty girls, to whom the rooms were let at four shillings a week for immoral purposes. Would it be believed that some of this slum property so tenanted belonged to the Dean and Chapter of the Abbey? Old Pye Street district, with Duck Lane and surroundings, gave Charles Dickens material for more than one article for *Household Words*. Andrew Walker has some information in his diary about the visit paid by Dickens to this part of London. The Scottish missionary had been asked to visit a sick person at a lodging-house at 20 Ann street. He was shown up-stairs, and had no sooner entered the room than he requested the landlady to open the window, as

there was a sickening smell, fit to breed a pestilence. Mr Walker went round to the front of Westminster Abbey until the room was aired. There he met Charles Dickens, who expressed himself glad to see him, as he had come to have a look at some of the lodging-houses for travellers. He returned with Dickens to the room he had left, and found it ventilated. Straw beds lay upon the floor close together, with about eighteen inches of passage along the centre. About the middle of the room lay the sick woman. Dickens asked her how many persons had slept in the room during the night. She replied, forty men and women, besides a number of children. Other lodging-houses were visited, not excepting the notorious Queen of Spain's, Dickens remarking, when it was over, that this neighbourhood might well be called 'The Devil's Barracks.' At 63 Orchard Street was one house with beds for sixty, at threepence per night; other houses had forty beds; where, when cooking of steaks and chops, fish, or sausages was going on at one time, the odour may be better imagined than described. This visit, Andrew Walker says, led up to the Model Lodging-house Bill for London, one of the most beneficent pieces of legislation, according to Dickens, which has ever been put on the Statute-book. Lord Shaftesbury had much to do with the passing of the Bill for the Inspection and Registration of Lodging-houses in 1851, and his powerful advocacy in the *Quarterly Review* enlightened public opinion on the subject. The improvement after the passing of the bill was gratefully acknowledged in an article in *Chambers's Journal* for 1853.

Old Pye Street and Duck Lane, which Andrew Walker found largely tenanted by thieves and prostitutes, have now been altered by much-needed city improvements. Here some of the Peabody dwellings have been erected. Walker had six hundred and fifty rooms in his district, with an average of four persons in each room; there were eight public-houses, two of them the headquarters of thieves. Another was known as the Beggar's Opera, where members of the 'profession' gathered in the evening, drinking and reciting their street songs. In one thieves' kitchen Walker saw, in the centre of the room, suspended from the ceiling, what was termed 'the doll,' being a wire frame, about the size of the human body, with a lady's dress placed over it. In the centre of the frame hung a bell. In the pocket of the dress was placed a purse containing sixpence. Around the doll Walker saw about twenty boys and girls, from ten to fifteen, receiving instruction how to slip their hands into the pocket and take the purse without causing the bell to tinkle. There was a mock trial afterwards in cases of failure.

This is but a sample of what had to be ameliorated in one district of London. There is no doubt that it was Lord Shaftesbury's influence and example which led Thomas Holloway to found the Holloway Sanatorium near Virginia Water, and the Ladies' College at Egham, at a cost of £750,000. Likewise the same influence led George Peabody to devote half a million of his surplus wealth, as we have said, for the good of the industrial classes of the metropolis. Sir Curtis Lampson, one of the Peabody trustees, estimated that if the money in hand was honestly dealt with for two hundred years, it should in that time have accumulated sufficiently to provide for three-fourths of the industrious poor of London. A beginning was made with the Peabody buildings at Islington, which were opened in 1865 at a cost of £31,690, comprising one hundred and fifty-five tenements, with accommodation for six hundred and fifty persons. Great care has been exercised in drainage and ventilation, dust and refuse are removed by means of shafts, and the passages are kept clean and lighted with gas. There are also free baths and laundries, with every convenience. For one room the weekly charge is about two shillings or two and sixpence; two rooms four shillings; three rooms five shillings; four rooms seven to seven and sixpence. The conditions laid down by Peabody, which have secured good character in the occupants, are that they be of 'an uncertain condition of life, such as brings the individual within the description of the poor of London, combined with moral character and good conduct as a member of society.' By 1889 there were eighteen groups of buildings erected in Shadwell, Chelsea, Islington, Spitalfields, Bermondsey, Westminster, Old Pye Street (where as we have seen there was clamant need), Blackfriars Road, Stamford Street, Southwark Street, Pimlico, Whitechapel, &c. The report of the Peabody Donation Fund up till 1895 showed that the total fund with accrued rent and interest had risen from £500,000 to £1,169,338, and that 11,367 rooms had been provided, besides bath-rooms, lavatories, laundries; and the number of persons in residence on December 31st was 19,914. Of these, labourers constituted the largest section, numbering 684, porters 542; then came charwomen 355, carmen 301, needlewomen 278, and warehouse labourers 186. Thus the vow which George Peabody registered early in his career to do something for the poor of London, if he prospered in business, is being fulfilled.*

There have been other worthy workers in the same field. The method of Miss Octavia Hill, and those who were associated with her, was to purchase property in the slums, call regularly for the rents, gradually work their way into the respect and affections of the tenants, and so insensibly elevate their standard of living. Old buildings were pulled down, and houses like St Christopher's Buildings rose instead. In a few years Miss Hill had £74,000 worth of property under her superintendence. Sir Sidney H. Waterlow, who in 1889 handed over to the London County Council his estate of twenty-nine acres, on the south slope of Highgate Hill, has also been a leading spirit in the 'Improvement Industrial Dwellings Company,' which has erected thousands of houses at Chelsea, Pimlico, and elsewhere. This Company has always paid at least five per cent. to the promoters. The essential principle in the Waterlow dwellings is that each tenement shall be complete in itself, and more attempt is here made than in the

* For further information as to this movement, see *Four Great Philanthropists: Lord Shaftesbury, George Peabody, John Howard, and Oberlin.* (W. & R. Chambers, Limited.)

Peabody buildings to combine beauty with utility. Some are let at two and sixpence a room per week. The stairways are all external, and each set of rooms opens separately from the landings. Sir Edward Guinness in 1889 set aside £250,000 for dwellings for the poor, of which £200,000 were to be expended in London, and £50,000 in Dublin. By the agency of this Trust, 1877 separate dwellings, containing 3738 rooms, besides laundries, club-rooms, coster's sheds, &c., have been provided.

The report of the Mansion House Council on the dwellings of the poor in London for 1895 shows that in West Ham out of 2223 insanitary conditions existing in 596 houses in March 1894 over 1000 still remained unremedied in the middle of 1895. Lord Rowton, chairman of the Guinness Trust, has, on his own account, interested himself in providing lodging-houses for the people. One near Vauxhall Station has 484 beds; another at King's Cross 676 beds; and one building in process of erection at Newington Butts will contain 800.

'Fagin's Kitchen,' so graphically described by Dickens in *Oliver Twist*, with its filthy and insanitary conditions, has come under the ban of the London County Council, and is now closed. It was a registered lodging-house at Viaduct Chambers, Great Saffron Hill, Holborn. The premises consist of the main building and five cottages. The place had fifty-three beds in the main building. Branches of the Mansion House Council have also been doing good work in various parts of London, and have drawn attention to insanitary conditions, most of which have been remedied. The number of sanitary inspectors has increased in recent years, from 94 in 1885 to 127 at the present time; while the London County Council has also erected artisan dwellings at Yardley Street, Poplar, East Greenwich, Deptford, Hackney Road, and Shoreditch.

By bringing into force the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, any town council can force the erection of new houses in place of insanitary ones. The Registrar-general's standard of overcrowding exists wherever more than four people are found sleeping in one room. The Dudley Christian Society Union found that 10,485 persons were so living amongst them, and that only four other towns were worse; Gateshead with forty per cent. of the inhabitants so living, Newcastle with thirty-five, Sunderland thirty-two, and Plymouth twenty-six. In Leeds it has been proposed to deal with an insanitary area of 16 acres, in which are 634 dwelling-houses, in eleven of which the people live underground, and fifteen public-houses. In connection with Dudley, Mr Bean has shown reason why one-half of the worst tenements should be razed, owing to hopelessly insanitary conditions. An article in the *Review of Reviews*, exposing the condition of Dudley, has so far forced the hand of the local authorities.

The working man's building societies, which exist over the length and breadth of the land, have been of immense service in helping him to help himself. A good example exists in the Edinburgh Co-operative Building Company, which began operations in the Water of Leith district of Edinburgh, at Canonmills, in 1861. It has always paid a good dividend, averaging twelve per cent., and has risen as high as twenty-five per cent. in an extra good year. By its aid, hundreds of dwellings have been erected in the town and suburbs. The late Dr Begg wrote an excellent account of its inception in *Happy Homes for Working Men, and how to get them* (1866). While Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1865-69), William Chambers promoted an act for the improvement of the city, which resulted in a great diminution of the death-rate. The Glasgow Workmen's Dwellings Company has started well, and pays four per cent.

'The Working Man's Dwellings Bill,' drafted to enable local authorities, where they think it advisable, to advance money to working men, to enable them to become the owners of the houses in which they live, passed its second reading in the House of Lords on 29th June. Not more than £150 was to be advanced to any individual, under its provisions, and the building of the house was to be superintended and sanctioned by the local authority. This is an experiment; but we believe strongly in the principle of self-help, and were legal formalities in connection with bonds and loans cheaper and easier, private loans would be more popular, and the working man would be independent even of the building society, which extracts a considerable rate of interest over a long period.

In an article, 'Need of Better Homes for Wage Earners,' in the *Forum* for May, Miss Graffenried says that some of the worst barracks in New York are owned by ignorant, irresponsible landlords, often by foreigners. In New England the French Canadians invest largely in property of this kind, and in New York the Italians are buying it up largely. The case is mentioned of a forewoman in a flower factory, who said that she meant to put her savings into a half interest in a tenement of this sort, paying twenty-six per cent. The big lodging houses in New York yield from fifty to eighty per cent., and some of the worst hovels in Philadelphia forty per cent. Buffalo, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Allegheny (where typhoid fever prevails) have all their slum problems also.

The first object of the philanthropist is to drag these extreme cases into the light of publicity. Once public attention and feeling are aroused, the local authority may be coerced into action. For it is still true that one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives.

## THE LITTLE GENERAL.

By Riccardo Stephens.

It being a Saturday afternoon, Timothy M'Carthy, Senior, was very drunk.

He had beaten Kathleen, his wife, much earlier than usual, and young Tim, coming in soon after, got a stray and careless clout on the side of the head, while poking about for a match to light his pipe.

A year ago Young Tim might have stood this, but he was married now, a six months' married man with a one-roomed house of his own, and having only looked in to pass the

time of day, and having also had a glass or two, he felt it to be a breach of hospitality.

'Ye onmannerly ould sinner!' I heard him shout through the open window, 'here's for yez!' and the clout was returned generously.

The free fight that came after is still remembered in Rutherford's Close, off the High Street of Edinburgh. They fought the length of the fairly long room, from the fireplace to the door, and back again from the door to the fireplace, as youth or experience proved the stronger, until Kathleen had screamed herself hoarse, and even the hardened children playing in the dirty court below looked up astonished from their dust and mussel-shells.

They fought back again to the door, tugging and straining, at too close quarters to do all the damage they wished, while I watched them from my window, one flat higher on the opposite side of the court.

Then a cunning back-fall sent Young Tim against the door, which flew open, and staggering out of my sight together, they rolled down the dark stair, fighting into the High Street through a crowd of interested neighbours, who were far too sportsmanlike to interfere.

I, having some weeks of hard reading behind me, and an examination very near, was not so liberal-minded as the neighbours, and, going through the wynd presently, expressed my opinions freely to them concerning Messrs M'Carthy.

'Another such row,' I said, 'and I'll get old M'Carthy to the police station. Some of you can tell him so when he's sober.'

They told him apparently before that desirable state was reached, and standing under my window a little later, flushed with victory, he expressed his opinion of me and my manners—which he offered to improve in one lesson if I'd give him the chance.

This I declined to do until he should be saner, whereupon he classified me as a cowardly water-drinking viper, saying there were none such in ould Ireland, thanks be to St Patrick, and went away to drink again, with the result that a little before midnight Kathleen M'Carthy was yelling murder for all she was worth.

I was awake and dressed, and reading, and I had not forgotten Old Tim's contemptuous sarcasms. It sounded as though Kathleen was suffering for my shyness of encounter, and that stung me badly. Besides, twice, to my knowledge, killing had been done within a hundred yards of that place without any attempt at interference, and I had no mind to risk being a party to a third such affair. The screams continuing, I ran out and knocked up a neighbour.

'Fetch the police for your life!' I said, 'and bring them to Tim M'Carthy's!' and then I bolted down my stair and stumbled up Tim's, until I had groped my way to his door.

There I paused and listened, lurking on the threshold with no thirst for unnecessary risks. Kathleen was now scolding and crying at the same time, so the danger was not pressing. I did not know how many might be in the room, but I calculated that they were likely all to set upon me together, if I presented myself as an unbidden guest, and here I thought I would wait for the police. I listened lest any sudden outbreak should force me to go in alone, but the first fresh sound came from below. A quick step sounded in the wynd, and mounted the stair. It was too quick and light for one of the police, but came up with the decided sound of a foot that knew the place, and had no need to soften its tread. I moved to meet it, and was at once challenged in a clear firm voice, as a shadowy figure rose.

'Ah! Your neighbour met me,' the voice broke in directly I began to explain. 'You frightened him, and he has insisted on going for the police, though I told him I didn't think they'd be needed. Let's go in!'

'They're quieter now,' I whispered; 'shan't we wait?'

'Why?' said the voice brusquely, and, without waiting for the answer which I was cudgelling my brains to shape as concisely as the question, the figure threw the door open and stepped in confidently with a 'Pax vobiscum.'

I, ashamed, followed close upon his heels, and was immediately put on my guard, for Ould Tim, whose whisky-sodden intelligence, I believe, the salutation had not yet reached, scented treachery, and came for me as straight and as swiftly as his condition would allow.

'Pax vobiscum!' The slight straight figure stepped swiftly between us, one hand upraised, and Tim came no farther.

'Stand you back, Tim M'Carthy!' said the little man severely, 'or if you can't stand, then lie, but don't come a step this way, or 'twill be a bad night for you!'

But there was no thought of rebellion. When two tall and sturdy members of the City Police tramped stolidly up a few minutes later, there was nothing for them to do. Tim lay asleep and snoring in the corner; Kathleen moaned and winced a little under the deft fingers of the priest, who was dressing a cut over one well-blackened eye, while I, a medical—though it is true only in my second year—was humbly holding the candle. The two men grinned and saluted, getting a quick little nod in return, as my companion, safety-pin in mouth, made a neat reverse of the bandage round Kathleen's head.

'We're no needit,' said one of them, with conviction, and I saw a little dry smile develop, as well as it might, around the safety-pin.

The two men saluted again and went away, and we finished patching up Kathleen. After that, the little man, having shaken his head sternly over the unconscious Tim in the corner, gave a parting word to his wife.

'Send your man to me by nine to-morrow morning, Kathleen M'Carthy, and see that he comes sober. Come round yourself after vespers, and I'll look at your head. Now, sir, if you and I are going down the stair together, we might introduce ourselves.'

In that way began my acquaintance with Father Munro.

I walked to his door with him that night, and did not decline so unhesitatingly as I ought to have done, when he invited me to come in.

'It's too late, sir,' I said; 'some other time, if I may.'

'Pooh! Nonsense!' said the old man in his sharp, military manner. 'Young fellows like you and old fellows like me are no lie-abeds. Come away in, man!' and I went with no further ado.

He took me into a fair-sized square room, sparely furnished, but having its walls hidden by books from floor to ceiling. On the table stood a plate of cold porridge and a quaint, tall glass of milk, set out daintily with a fine white napkin and an old silver spoon; and this I mention, since later I found that a mixture of simplicity with touches of daintiness were characteristic of Father Munro. These things he looked at whimsically for an instant, first at them, then at me, and making an excuse, left the room. Presently he came back triumphant, a bottle of wine in one hand, and a plate of cheese in the other, and setting them down and paying no heed to my remonstrances, went off again to fetch in more.

'I'm hungry, and can't eat alone,' was all he said, when things were arranged to his satisfaction; after which, pouring out wine for me, he said a short Latin grace, and attacked his porridge with vigour and decision, beaming upon me when I showed a good appetite, but taking none of his good things for himself.

After supper, however, he allowed himself a pipe; while I, at his invitation, lit a cigarette, and he started to chat. Of the actual talk little or nothing is worth repeating. I recall it only because, while I watched and listened, he showed so clearly what manner of man he was.

His demeanour was courtesy itself, yet peremptory, matching well with the fine, closely-cropped head, the benignant face, and strong, firm jaw. A distinguished, almost foreign politeness ornamented his soldierly speech, just as a damascening of gold will ornament a good steel blade. I was sure he had lived abroad; I should not have been surprised to hear that he had seen military service, and in my own mind I then and there dubbed him 'The Little General.' One thing marked him off distinctly from the military types I am accustomed to; he seemed to have no practical respect for the law, as of general application, and that showed itself in the one speech which I think worth repeating.

Speaking of the way in which he had marched in upon Ould Tim, I suggested that he ran more risk than was necessary. At this Father Munro cocked a clear gray eye at me, and asked what I would have had him do.

'The law,' I said, 'and the police, are for such people, are they not, and for such times? Did you need to run the risk of meeting a mad drunkard, and possibly others behind him, when the police were almost at the door?'

But Father Munro was indignant.

'The law, sir! the law! Risk! and the police! The law is meant to protect the weak and the defenceless, is it not? I was there, and you, sir'—with a polite little bow. 'They are my parishioners, and accept me as their judge, yes, and their executioner on occasion. Boastfulness is unbecoming in an old man; but at one time, sir, some said I could use rapier and claymore a bit, and my hand can guard my head yet when I carry my pastoral staff.'

He nodded, twinkling quaintly toward a corner of the room, and looking there I saw a stout blackthorn.

'Do you think I go about among my poor children with the law at my back?' he asked, seeming almost hurt at the notion.

'I noticed that the law evidently thought you could take care of yourself,' I said, remembering the two policemen, and this seemed to please Father Munro. He laughed, and told me that the police were his very good friends, some of them his parishioners too, and then turned the conversation, chatting to me about books and my own work until I got up hurriedly, with an apology for having been led to forget the time.

'I must be in your parish too, sir,' I told him, 'and if a heretic is allowed to come in now and then when you're not too busy, or to hope for a pastoral visitation, I wish you would add my name to your list.'

The little man, rising alertly to see me out, looked keenly into my eyes for a second, and then held out his hand.

'These doors are open to you, my son, whenever you choose, and if an old man's society won't trouble you, you shall see me up your stair before long;' and he bade me good-night.

After that I began to see Father Munro often, and to hear of him still oftener. Every one who knew him had a good word for him, and after having been seen once or twice in his company, I met the Irish among my neighbours on a very different footing. Even the M'Carthys grew friendly, and nothing pleased Young Tim better than to yarn away about the little priest's doings. He told me of the Waking of M'Clure, of the great Orange fight, and of many other matters, in all of which Father Munro was the hero.

'Faith, he's a man!' Young Tim would say at last, in a way that made me think he placed that same man above most of the saints.

One thing, however, Father Munro could not do with either Young Tim or Ould Tim. He could not stop their whisky-drinking. Ould Tim would keep off it for a Saturday, maybe even two, but rarely three. The longer he was sober, the longer and fiercer would be the bout that followed, and the worse for poor old Kathleen. As for Young Tim, he drank much less, but a much smaller quantity put him in the fighting mood. He never struck his wife, and he tried to avoid Ould Tim; but when they met, both in their cups, then and there was a battle royal.

Thus things were, when one summer Saturday evening, a year after my first meeting with Father Munro, I passed into the court as Ould Tim came staggering out. At the foot of his stair were some angry women, who, after he had reeled by, screamed their abuse at him. Up stairs I could hear Kathleen moaning, and I was told that the beating had been much worse than usual, so bad that, just before Ould Tim had left her, one neighbour had gone off for Young Tim and another for Father Munro.

I ran up the stair, and found the woman badly bruised, but nothing more, and then, on

my way to the infirmary, saw Young Tim hurrying away toward the wynd, stick in hand. A little farther on I met the woman who had gone for Father Munro. 'His riverence was out,' she said, 'and wouldn't be in for an hour, when he'd be told,' and I passed on, to forget all about the matter a few minutes later, in the work of what is known as intaking, which is as follows:

Each medical and each surgical ward has its in-taking day and night, during which it receives, if possible, all cases admitted for treatment. On a Saturday night, therefore, there will be a resident surgeon on duty to examine and treat all surgical cases, deciding which shall be admitted, and which must be treated as out-patients. This was receiving-night for the surgical ward in which I clerked; and being a Saturday, was fairly busy.

A battered drunkard or two came in, of course, and battered victims of the same. A child also who had been run over, and a girl from the country, at whom the ever-flourishing fool had pointed the ever-handy loaded gun, though, fortunately, without the usual fatal result. We had seen to the girl, and packed her off to bed; and Macintosh, the resident, was relieving his mind, and amusing us, by telling the fool what he thought of him, what might happen, and what might be the consequences to him, the fool, when another cab rolled to the door. A lively young dresser, who sat on the table swinging his legs, jumped down and ran out to see what was coming, but came back at once.

'A reverend gentleman on the spree!' he announced; and presently in came Father Munro.

His shovel hat was crushed down over his eyes, his coat collar was turned up to meet it, his face—as much of it as could be seen when he came in—was chalky-white, and the face of Young Tim, on whose arm he leant heavily, was not much better.

I stepped forward at once, speaking to him by name as I did so, and 'The Little General' greeted me with a dazed smile.

'Old bones, Mr Tregenna, and old eyes! I've had a tumble at last, you see, and Tim M'Carthy insisted on bringing me here.'

'Quite right, sir,' I said. 'Here's the doctor ready for you,' and I introduced Macintosh, being very careful to let that gentleman know the sort of man he had for a patient.

I might have spared myself the trouble. Father Munro was his own recommendation, and in two minutes was sitting bolt upright—he refused to lie on the table—having two very ugly head wounds examined, and being treated with as much respect as any pope could desire. There were two straight, clean cuts, side by side, across the top of the head, and on one side was another, and the resident stood looking at them curiously before he asked any questions.

'How did you say this was done, sir?' he asked.

'I was going up a dark stair,' Father Munro told him quietly, 'and I had a fall.'

'Did your head strike against anything?'

'I expect I struck it in falling,' said Father Munro; and then, a little more slowly and distinctly, 'it was a mistake made in the dark.'

I might be wrong, but it seemed to me that he meant every one in the place to hear that, and standing by the resident, I looked still more carefully at the head. Two clean-cut, parallel wounds on the top, and one at the side. Where before had I seen such another head? I could not remember, but stood racking my brain with no result.

'Now then, Tregenna! Look alive, man!'

Macintosh roused me from my meditation with a nudge, and I gave him the help that he wanted, wondering all the time.

'Were you alone, sir?'

Macintosh asked this while he pushed the examination further. He seemed puzzled too.

'I was going up the stair alone,' Father Munro said patiently.

'You must have struck your head twice, then?'

'I cannot remember all. I was rather stunned, I think.'

'Rather!' Macintosh muttered to himself, and then seemed to remember Young Tim, who was still standing and watching us anxiously from the far end of the room. 'Were you there at the time?'

Macintosh asked Young Tim the question, but it was Father Munro who answered.

'M'Carthy found me at the foot of the stair,' and Young Tim said nothing.

Macintosh evidently thought that the less his patient talked the better, and he asked no more questions just then.

We got Father Munro to bed, shaved off the thick gray hair, dressed the great scalp wounds, and put an ice cap on the grand old head, and for a time all went well. Before we had finished, I remembered where I had seen other such wounds, but I held my peace and waited.

There was no side-room bed empty, and he was put into the ward for the night.

'In the morning, sir,' said Macintosh, surveying him in a critical way, with his tasselled cap on one side, after all was done, 'we'll get you a quieter crib.'

The old man lay and smiled quietly at him.

'I shall do very well here, doctor, thank you.'

'Hope so, sir,' Macintosh said, and capped as he wished him good-night, which was unprecedented, and made even our never-to-be-surprised staff open her eyes widely for a second.

When the morning came it was not thought necessary to move him after all.

Craig, the street preacher, was lying in the next bed when we brought Father Munro in, and knowing him by sight, was at first strongly antagonistic. I heard the words 'papist' and 'scarlet woman' muttered wrathfully, while we were getting our charge into bed, and we gave a hint both to Craig and to the night nurse before we left.

The next morning, however, things were very different. Craig, who was my case, beckoned me to his bed directly I went into the ward; he held a finger to his lips, and pointed that Father Munro was dozing.

'Yer boots are fair thunderous,' he whispered reproachfully. 'Can't you see the man 's asleep?'

I took the rebuke calmly, but couldn't resist a dig at him.

'I'm glad you leave him quiet,' I said. 'I thought you'd be at him if you got a chance.'

'There 's a time for a' things,' said Craig philosophically. 'I 've kep' an ee on him, an' he 's a guid heart, though sair misled. We 'll hae a bit crack later, maybe, and the doctor needna' be feared. *I'll* keep the ward quiet.'

Twice a day Young Tim came for our bulletin, wild-eyed and anxious, and twice I sent him away comforted. Father Munro lay placid and patient, worshipped by the nurses, and respected by all.

For three days we hoped, and then a change came. He grew restless, turning from side to side, and murmuring to himself. As I stood watching him from Craig's bedside that night he spoke aloud:

'A wife and bairn,' he said, 'a wife and bairn;' and was silent again.

I was reading the chart that hung at his bed-head when the chief and the resident came in together and looked at him, at which he turned over a little, and looked up into the chief's face with a smile, not quite so bright as usual.

'What 's this you want, sir?' asked the chief at last. 'One of your parishioners in to see you?' And Father Munro's smile grew brighter. 'Tut, tut!' the chief went on testily, 'you 're off duty, man! Some one else is seeing to your work.' But Father Munro laid an entreating hand upon his sleeve, and beckoning him to stoop, whispered in his ear.

'Can't be done,' the chief snapped at him when he finished. 'I 'm responsible for you, you know.'

'And I for him?' pleaded Father Munro.

The chief frowned down with the frown that awed so many students before they knew him.

'Man, it 's fair ridiculous!' he said; 'quite unprecedented. I certify that you 're not fit for any duty.' But Father Munro pleaded on.

When he finished, Macintosh, standing with the chart in his hand, held it out for the chief, who, with a snort of impatience, took it, and stepped away toward me. Then he laid a finger on the upward line that marked a rising body-temperature, and turned to Macintosh again.

'Partly this notion of his, I think, sir,' Macintosh said softly. 'He 's worrying over it tremendously, or I shouldn't have troubled you. He slept very little last night, you know.'

'What on earth does he want to confess a man for?' asked the chief impatiently; but that was beyond Macintosh, and he shook his head.

'If things go on like this,' said the chief, with his finger on the chart, 'I shall operate to-morrow morning.'

'What do you think of letting him have his way in this?' asked Macintosh; but the chief was quite indignant, and they went down the shadowy ward—it was growing very late—with their heads together, talking softly, while Father Munro lay and watched, peering anxiously after them all the time.

What Macintosh said further I do not know, but they came back to the bed. What Father Munro said further I don't know either, but at last the chief called me, and at once began to relieve his mind.

'What are you doing here at this time of night, Mr Tregenna?'

'Taking a case, sir.'

'You 've no right to be here, none at all. There 's no discipline here. We can't have this sort of thing, Dr Macintosh! There! there!' (as Macintosh tried to speak) 'that will do! It must be seen to.' Then he turned and bent over Father Munro again.

'You 'll be satisfied if you see this man to-night?' And Father Munro smiled on him. 'Ten minutes are all you want, and you promise to sleep after?'

'I shall sleep,' he promised; and then I got my instructions.

I was to fetch Young Tim to Father Munro's bedside, and I was to leave him there ten minutes. I was to warn him first as to his behaviour, and I was to take him away when time was up. Then we all three left the ward. Macintosh to get a little sleep, for he was to come round again later, the chief to go home, and I to do my errand.

I found Young Tim sitting in his one room, at the top of a seven-storeyed house, staring out at a cloudless sky, in which stars were beginning to show. His wife and the baby were sound asleep, but Tim looked as though he had never known what sleep meant. He heard my errand in silence, and in silence he walked by me until—in the darkened ward, where only here and there a glimmer of gas was shown, and where the only other moving thing was the ghost-like shape of the night-nurse—we stood by Father Munro.

'Ten minutes, my son,' was all that the priest said to me; and then, drawing away to a window seat, watch in hand, I left them. Screens fenced the corner in which the bed lay, the last on that side of the ward. I could not see, I could not hear, what was going on. Once or twice I heard a stifled sob, hushed at once by the voice of the Little General. The minutes dragged like hours. The night-nurse, moving like a shadow here and there down the glimmering length of the place, the silent forms dimly outlined in the nearer beds, were no company to me. Once I raised my watch until I could see the second hand moving, and hear the sound.

I gave them the ten minutes and a few seconds over. Then I went and tapped at the screen. The voices had stopped, and when I went round at the Little General's word, he lay and smiled peacefully at me, his hand laid upon Young Tim's head, while Tim's face was buried in the bed-clothes.

'Tim and I have settled our affairs,' said the Little General, 'and you are a witness to it, my son, if ever witness is needed.'

'Tell him, father!' Tim begged.

'Would ye doubt my authority, Tim M'Carthy? I 've confessed you, and absolved you, with a penance and a promise. Fare ye well!'

The thin fingers were extended in benediction, and then Tim, the tears streaming down

his face, crept away into the darkness, and I knelt in his place.

'Can I do anything for you, sir?'

His hand trembled in the air once more, whether for me or for the vanished man I do not know.

'An innocent wife and a bairn!' said Father Munro, 'Nunc dimittis,' and turning his face to the wall slowly, slipped into dreams from which he never rallied.

The Little General was carried to his grave with more pomp than ever he had encouraged while alive; and many masses were said for his soul before I met Young Tim again, 'Though the use av masses to a holy saint in Paradise,' as Bridget M'Closky said to me, 'is unbeknown.'

I had thought of Young Tim often, having an uneasy doubt concerning him, and passing up the Grassmarket one night, had him in my mind again, when he stood before me.

'Think of the devil!' I misquoted, and then stopped, for there was light enough to see the words didn't apply.

It was a Saturday night, but Young Tim was sober though excited, and when he asked me for a moment's chat, I invited him to my room. We passed up in silence, I wondering a great deal, but determined to ask no questions. I pointed to a chair, and looked dubiously at my shelves. Hospitality suggested an offer of whisky and a fill of 'baccy, but I restrained my instincts and faced him in silence.

'I was thinkin', docthor,' he said at last, 'that as you were friends with the holy father'—— and he stopped again.

'What holy father?' I asked. 'I know none.'

'There's but wan for me,' said Tim, and then stopped again.

'If you mean poor Father Munro,' I answered, 'what of him?'

'He laid a penance on me,' Young Tim said softly, 'an' I'm doin' it, an' will till I die. He giv' me absolution too, an I giv' him a promise.'

'Keep it then!' I said sourly, but Tim went on.

'There's no justice in it. The holy father was always just.'

'Shame,' I said. 'Would you break your promise to a dead man?'

'Sure an' I will if need be,' said Tim fervently. 'You were there, an' what I must know, had he his sinses?'

'As much as you or I,' I said angrily, 'if not more. You can't get out of it that way.'

Tim rose from his chair and faced me, frowning.

'Ye don't know,' he cried; 'I've all to lose if I break me promise. But, if I made it to a senseless saint who couldn't judge me or me sin, I'll break me promise, and be judged by a harder man.'

I sat and puzzled it out, while the voices of the children came up from the reeking court, and Tim leant against the mantel-piece, breathing hard, but watching me steadily.

'He was a better and wiser man than either of us,' I said at last. 'The secret lies between you and him, and you must keep it;' and Tim, sober and hard-working, holds to his promise still.

As for me, I remember that the only time I saw such wounds as Father Munro had was when, in an election riot, a constable felled a rioter who afterwards came under my hands. His staff made two parallel wounds like knife-cuts, and the other wound was caused by the fall. It was night, and the stair a dark one, where the Little General came by his death-blow. If Young Tim, who had often threatened, was waiting there for Ould Tim when Father Munro toiled up, the rest is easily understood. But I have asked no questions, and do not intend to. If Young Tim has ever to give an account of that night's doings, I fancy, somehow, that the Little General will be there to plead for him.

## THEN AND NOW.

THEN the merle and thrush were singing round the homesteads in the hedges
Where the fragrant hawthorn blossoms lay where wintry snows had been,
Then the gorsy fires were blazing, and the marsh lamps lit the sedges,
Then the meadow lands were smiling in their robes of gold and green.

Then your eyes were bluer, brighter than the violets in the valleys,
And your sweet voice filled with envy skylarks soaring out of sight,
And the pale, pink apple blossoms in the orchard's grassy alleys
By your blushing cheeks grew truly in a moment wan and white.

Now the birds are silent, feasting where the scarlet berries cluster;
Where the beech and oak are flaming, love-lorn cushats sadly call;
Dreaming of the tropic splendours, swallows on the house-tops muster,
And within the ancient orchard, red-cheeked apple earthward fall.

Now your eyes have lost their radiance, and your voice has lost its sweetness,
Now we've lads and lasses round us, blithe and bonny, good and dear;
Spring and summer have departed with amazing speed and fleetness,
Now, dear wife, it is the autumn of our lives, and of the year.

In the spring I wooed and won you, in the spring our troths were plighted,
When our hearts were brave and buoyant, and our love untried and new;
Now in autumn through all sorrows, joys, and hopes fulfilled and blighted,
Hand in hand we stand together bound by love still fresh and true.

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## STOCK EXCHANGE GAMBLING.

The extent to which speculation on the Stock Exchange is carried on by members of what may, without any disrespect, be termed the middle and upper middle classes, is probably greater than the general body of the public appreciates, notwithstanding the alarming and steadily increasing number of business failures that owe their origin to this form of gambling. One of her Majesty's most eminent judges remarked, in the course of the hearing of a recent case, that in his earlier years he had come to the conclusion that intemperance was the greatest cause of the crime committed in this country; but recent experience had led him to doubt whether the facilities offered by certain persons for illegitimate speculation on the part of persons without means was not the cause of almost as many offences against the law of the land.

These are remarkable words, and give rise to reflections the reverse of pleasant. We have been accustomed to consider that the progress of education and the influences exerted by the Christian denominational activity of the present day have raised the moral tone of the people as a whole, and that the inner workings of business and commerce generally were being gradually, but surely, conducted with an increasing regard to the common principles of morality and justice. How far this idea is erroneous may to some extent be gathered from the tone of the judicial utterance referred to, whilst the bankruptcy records give an even more striking testimony in support of the opinion so expressed.

An examination of the records of such failures usually shows that speculation on the Stock Exchange has been commenced in the hope that impending insolvency might perchance by a lucky stroke be averted. Capital may have been reduced by continuous losses, and when this has disappeared creditors may reasonably expect that their debtor's position should be laid before them. That such a view does not commend itself to the unfortunate trader is but too evident in many instances; and the tempting advertisements issued by outside brokers offering what seems to be an easy and sure way of retrieving his fortunes, a reckless and ignorant course of dealing in stocks and shares is commenced.

But it is not alone in the commercial community that the evil obtains. The gambling spirit permeates alike high and low, and there are many instances of persons once holding independent positions now reduced to comparative poverty as a result of ill-advised attempts to add to their gains by Stock Exchange speculation; whilst, if the evidence of well-informed persons may be trusted, the peculiarly pernicious 'cover system' has laid hold on many younger members of the community to an extent that would hardly be credited.

With facts such as these before us, it has become a growing question whether the time has not approached when the State might well attempt to deal, in some degree at least, with this admittedly pressing difficulty. In Germany some attempt has been recently made to suppress dealings in 'futures' on the Exchange; and, although sufficient time has not elapsed to enable any opinion to be formed as to the efficacy of its working, German action in the matter serves to show that legislation intended to check Stock Exchange gambling is at least something more than an idea; and if it should induce attention to the problem here it will have served an additionally useful purpose.

The question whether interference is permissible in Stock Exchange dealings as conducted at present is an extremely complicated one; and without some little knowledge of the principles on which transactions are carried on under present rules it would be impossible to express an opinion which would carry any appreciable weight.

The London Stock Exchange consists of about

three thousand members, divided into what are known as 'brokers' and 'jobbers.' The last named act as principals, actually dealing in —or, in plainer terms, buying and selling—the different stocks on the market; whilst the brokers merely act as agents, buying from or selling to the jobbers or purchasers, *on behalf of clients*. The broker's remuneration is his commission, and the jobber's the difference he may get between his buying and selling prices. A member of the public desiring to buy or sell any stocks or shares can only do so through a broker, who in turn deals with the jobber. So far, therefore, the buying or selling of stocks does not essentially differ from ordinary commercial commission transactions in other branches of commerce; but the arrangement by which all money transactions are deferred to what is known in Stock Exchange parlance as 'settlement day' gives the speculator without capital his opportunity. 'Settlement day' occurs twice a month, and is the day set apart by the committee of the Stock Exchange when buyers and sellers pay or draw, as the case may be, for all stock bought and sold since the previous settlement day. It is this system of 'deferred payment,' as it may be called, that enables the speculator to deal in shares although he may not possess any appreciable capital; and the bulk of the bargains struck are entered into by those who have no intention of paying for the stock bought, hoping that before settlement day they may be able to resell it at a higher figure, and receive only the difference. If therefore the stock does not rise before the first day of the settlement, the speculative operator must keep his bargain open or put up with a more or less heavy loss; and in order to do this the broker's assistance is invoked to lend the necessary amount of purchase-money, for a charge known as 'contango,' until the stock is sold. Such is the position which gives the speculator his opportunity. He may purchase without capital, and, if good luck follow him, he may make profit; but if his prognostications turn out wrong he has the melancholy satisfaction of paying to his broker the loss or difference on his transactions. The temptation thus afforded to outsiders to indulge in dealings for which no capital is required is often irresistible, and unfortunately is yielded to in innumerable instances as a last resort by people in difficulties in monetary matters.

But the 'cover system' is an even more pernicious attraction, and is usually carried on by what are known as 'Outside Brokers.' The Stock Exchange, as is well known, does not allow advertising by its members; and, as a consequence, there has sprung up a body of brokers who deal independently of the Stock Exchange, depending for their *clientèle* upon speciously-worded advertisements addressed to the public by means of the daily papers and innumerable circulars. It is these gentry more particularly who attract the 'little' speculator, and that principally by means of the 'cover system' duly expounded in glowing terms. The advertisement usually states that a certain amount of cover, usually one per cent., will 'command' so much stock. Take an example for instance. Ten pounds is forwarded as cover to buy £1000 worth of some particular stock. If the stock rises in price, instructions are given to the broker to sell, and the fortunate speculator will in due course receive the difference; but should the stock fall to £990, the broker, without instructions and to safeguard himself, sells the stock and absorbs the cover to make up the loss.

It is obvious that the system, while opening out possibilities of unlimited profit, offers an additional inducement by the fact that in no event can anything more than the amount of cover deposited be lost, and in this respect cover transactions do not essentially differ from ordinary deposits made with a bookmaker by a person backing a horse. So long as the broker is honest, the operator may depend on receiving anything that may be due to him. We have said nothing about the army of dishonest outside brokers running what are known as 'bucket shops' for the purpose of fleecing their victims, and without any pretence of fairly executing their patrons' wishes; their method is outside the scope of the present article.

Such, briefly, is the routine of ordinary outside speculation. Of the many complicated terms and calculations incidental to Stock Exchange dealings we have not spoken, as not being necessary to an intelligent appreciation of the points at issue. With the knowledge that increasing numbers are continually risking their own and other peoples' capital in the manner referred to, the question arises as to what extent, if any, steps might be taken to restrain, if not to suppress, the system of Stock Exchange speculation on the part of irresponsible dealers so extensively entered into.

Several judicial utterances have seemed to express the opinion of the Bench at least, legislation having been more than once spoken of as being the only remedy. To some extent the law of the land already puts its hand on speculative transactions similar to those under notice: the Gaming Act of 1892 providing that 'all contracts by way of gaming or wagering shall be null and void.' The modern construction of this law has been that if, when shares are purchased, there is a bona-fide intention to take them and to pay the price, then the contract is good; but if the purchase is a mere cover under which the party speculates in the rise and fall of prices, then the contract is of a wagering nature and is bad. It must be noticed, however, that when it is said that a gaming contract is *illegal* by statute it is not meant that an offence is committed in making the contract, but that in case of dispute the Courts will not enforce the contract. This much has been made clear in various actions where an endeavour has been made by brokers to recover differences due at settlement day on speculative transactions, the Courts holding that the speculator could not be bound to his contract.

This then shows that a speculator might conceivably, in times of good fortune, draw differences in his favour, repudiating afterwards transactions involving him in loss; and in such cases the broker would have no remedy. But such instances are seldom known, and, as a rule, the novice, with his inexperience of the influence

always at work affecting prices, comes out of the deal with a balance on the wrong side, which he pays in the hope that eventually the tide will turn.

Were the law so extended as to make it *an offence* to enter into any transactions for the purchase or sale of shares except such as were actually taken up (or paid for) or delivered, then at one stroke the system of speculation as it at present exists would be demolished. And however improbable it may appear that such a course should be taken, it is less of a dream than may at first sight appear. That such a step would meet with the bitterest opposition from those interested is certain; but an impartial pronouncement on the equity of such a proposal is not to be expected from such quarters. Already, as has been stated, at least one continental power has boldly attacked this social cancer.

But failing this drastic enactment, it might well be possible to at least prohibit the insertion in the daily papers of advertisements soliciting 'cover.' These, at least, are so transparent an invitation to enter into a huge gamble that it is difficult to see why, even under the present law, no restriction is placed upon them; and if the remedy is to commence by being partial only, no better commencement could be made than by making it a criminal offence to either advertise or enter into 'cover' speculations. Certain it is that the evil is an alarming and a growing one, and the Government that first distinguishes itself by a successful attempt to restrict the gambling tendency rampant in every grade of society, so far as the Stock Exchange is concerned, will have earned and will receive the thanks of succeeding grateful generations.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER VI.—THE WEDDING.

A MONTH had elapsed since Marie proposed to Olivia, and I am now brought to the morning of the wedding-day. From this statement two things will be apparent—firstly, that I had given my consent to the marriage, and secondly that the King was not desirous of postponing his happiness any longer than was absolutely necessary. What you, my dear Forsyth, will say to yourself when you hear my news I can only conjecture. Doubtless you will think me foolish, more probably you will deem me mad; but I assure you no man could be saner. I gave my dearly loved sister to be the wife of the King of the Médangs with my eyes open, firmly convinced in my own mind that my action would promote the happiness of both parties. Of course I am bound to admit to you that I would rather it had been otherwise—that is to say, I would sooner have seen her united to a man of her own station in England; but since Fate had willed that she should become the bride of the sovereign of this Eastern state, and her whole happiness was wrapped up in so doing, I was prepared to withdraw my objections and assist as far as possible in bringing about what they both so much desired. And as if to be still further contradictory, I have no hesitation at all in saying that I loved the man as I shall probably never love another. Even had it not been for his extraordinary power of interesting others in himself, his kingly nature, his absolute sincerity, his pluck, and his thoughtfulness for those about him could not have failed to attract one towards him. In my time I have, as you are well aware, met men of all ranks, but never another like Marie I. of the Médangs. Nature had fitted him to be what he was—a King and a Leader of Men.

Having thus explained my motives, though I fear you will scarcely consider them sufficient to justify my act, I am brought to the description of the wedding itself. For two days prior to the happy event the loyal inhabitants of the capital had been keeping holiday. No work save that of decorating the city was done, and from morning till night the streets resounded with the tapping of hammers, the noise of musical instruments, and continual merriment. The people of the Médangs are a mirth-loving race, and they were now being given an opportunity of giving full vent to their feelings. At the Citadel we were kept in an even greater state of excitement. One after another the Princes of the tributary states arrived, and it was necessary that each should be welcomed with a salvo of artillery according to his rank. The King had next to receive them in audience, after which apartments in the Palace had to be assigned to them and camping-ground allotted to their followers. The rabble and confusion that this occasioned may be better imagined than described. In my life I had never seen anything like it before, and I trust I may never do so again. All the nations of the East seemed to be represented, including Hindoos, Burmese, Malays, Siamese, Chinese, and others whose identity I could not ascertain.

As soon as I was dressed on the wedding-day I left my bedroom and went to the sitting-room adjoining it, where Olivia and I had made a compact the previous evening that we would meet. The King I had not seen since the morning of the day before; but I had heard that he also was busily engaged with his preparations.

When I had been alone in the room for something like half an hour, standing at the window watching the groups of strangers clustered in the courtyard below the Palace steps, and thinking how unlike it all was to the wedding I had been used to picture for my sister, I heard a light footstep cross the corridor, and next moment the door opened and Olivia entered the room. She looked pale and I guessed that her night had been a sleepless one, as indeed I afterwards discovered it had. I kissed her on the forehead and then led her to a chair.

'Have you realised that to-day is your wedding-day?' I said, as I took my place beside her. 'Are you sure, my sister, that you do not in any way regret the step you are taking?'

'I shall never regret it as long as I live,' she answered firmly. 'I shall always look back on to-day as the happiest day of my life.'

'God grant it may be,' I said; and while I

spoke, as if in ratification of my words, the cannon of the Citadel thundered forth a royal salute.

Rising, I led her to the window, and showed her the heterogeneous collection encamped in the courtyard below. She regarded them with visible interest, and as she did so I watched her face and noted the expressions that flashed across it. Suddenly I saw her eyes light up and a flush of colour overspread her cheeks; and, wondering what might have occasioned it, I followed the direction of her eyes. In the courtyard the large assembly was bowing like one man to the earth, and in the lane which they had formed to allow him to pass was the King. He had been to service in the Cathedral and was now returning to the Palace accompanied by his chaplain, an ascetic young French priest, whose devotion to the King was proverbial.

There was something about the King's appearance that morning that I seemed never to have noticed before, a nobility that was as indescribable as it was grand. That he looked happy there could be no doubt whatever; on the other hand I could not but think he appeared to have grown somewhat thinner in the last week; his eyes were large and dark, but they seemed to have sunk farther into his head than of old and to have lost something of their fire. He carried himself, however, with all his usual manliness and that strange air of self-reliance which had so much impressed me on the first occasion that I had seen him. When he saw Olivia standing at the window he hastened up the steps, and in less time than it takes to tell had knocked, and entered the room where we stood. Approaching his future wife, he took her hand and bending over it kissed it reverently. Then immediately he turned to me and bade me good morning, at the same time warmly shaking me by the hand. The cannon meanwhile continued their salute from the battlements above, and every moment more and more people were entering the Citadel from the town below.

Thinking he might like a few minutes alone with Olivia, and disregarding our English habit of keeping the bride and bridegroom apart until they meet in the church, I made an excuse, and left them together while I went for a walk upon the roof. It was a perfect morning, and I stood for some minutes beside the coping of the wall, looking down upon the plains below and drinking in the loveliness of the scene spread out before me. All the time my brain was hard at work. It would be idle to say that my thoughts were entirely pleasant ones. I pictured Olivia as I remembered her when my father and mother were alive. I even found myself recalling the games we played together. From that I passed on to her first real admirer, poor James Dacing, who, as you know, met his fate at Tel-el-Kebir with such conspicuous heroism. From him I reviewed the numberless other admirers she has had since then, from Belmain, Melbenham, George Dixforth, down to Belgrave, whose fate it was to indirectly bring about the marriage I am now attempting to describe to you.

The ceremony had been fixed for eleven o'clock in the Cathedral in the Citadel, and long before that hour the square before the Palace steps was packed to its utmost holding capacity. From the bottom of the steps to the Cathedral doors, a distance of upwards of a hundred yards, the path was kept by soldiery. This was carpeted with a thick red native cloth for the better protection of the various dresses of those taking part in the pageant.

Almost exactly on the stroke of the hour appointed, three of the King's trumpeters appeared upon the great steps and blew six blasts upon their instruments. Almost simultaneously three chamberlains appeared from the Palace, carrying wands of office in their hands, and, escorted by the trumpeters, who in their turn were supported by half a dozen royal standard bearers in uniform, they made their way down the steps towards the Cathedral, followed by the officers of the retinues of the visiting Princes according to their respective ranks; after which, behind still more trumpeters, walked the Princes themselves, succeeded by the King's Ministers and the chief officials of his kingdom. The officers of His Majesty's household came after the officials, and then, preceded by more trumpeters, the Sovereign himself, dressed in the uniform of his own Guards, and riding upon a noble milk-white charger, magnificently caparisoned, which was led up in order that he might mount at the steps. On either side walked with drawn swords two of his generals, one of whom was Gaspard Roche, while behind marched a guard of honour of his chief and favourite regiment. At a short distance came a litter borne by six servants, escorted by footmen in the King's livery. This contained the Princess Natalie. As it moved away two chamberlains approached the spot where I was standing with Olivia, waiting for our turn to come, and informed us that the litter which was to convey the bride-elect was at the foot of the steps, with the horse upon which I was to ride. I accordingly gave my sister my arm and led her down to the place where her conveyance waited for her. It was a truly wonderful affair—as I learned afterwards upwards of two hundred years old, and had been used in the marriage ceremonies of the kings of the Médangs for longer than the oldest inhabitant of the country could remember. In appearance it somewhat resembled a large reclining-chair, save that the arms were sloped outwards in a fashion not unlike the splash-boards of a dogcart; the back curled into a gracious fold. The whole concern was covered with the finest gold-leaf inlaid with lapis lazuli and mother-of-pearl, and studded with innumerable precious stones. Beside it stood twelve stalwart natives dressed in state liveries. Olivia having taken her seat, they lifted the poles upon their shoulders as if they had been feathers, and set off. At the same instant the horse I had ridden on the evening of our arrival was brought up for me. I mounted and took my place by the side of the litter, and in this fashion we approached the lofty pile where the marriage ceremony was to be performed.

The enthusiasm of the crowd by this time

was extraordinary; and when we reached the great doors of the sanctuary, where the Chamberlains of the King stood with bared heads waiting to receive the bride, it became almost beyond control. At the best of times I am not a great exponent, as you know, of the art of horsemanship, and on this occasion, so encumbered was I by my uniform and the trappings of my steed, that the King had helped my sister to alight long before I had reached the ground. Then, Olivia leaning on my arm, we entered the building, and in a few moments the ceremony had commenced.

Of the service itself I can tell you but little. Looking back on it now it seems to me to cover a vague uncertain period in which I was conscious only of a vast concourse of people surrounding me, a wealth of gorgeous vestments in front, and with it an all-prevading knowledge that when I left the building my sister, my companion for so many years, would be the property of another.

At last, however, it was over, and we passed out of the building to be greeted by the cheers of the excited populace in the square, the blaring of trumpets, and the crashing of the cannon from the battlements. On the return journey a slight change was made in the arrangement of the procession. The monarch rode beside the litter, while a troop of young girls danced before them and strewed flowers in their path. Arriving at the steps again, the Princes of the tributary states, the great officers of the kingdom, and the members of the household ranged themselves in a semicircle before the Palace doors. His Majesty helped his bride to alight, and then, when I had joined them, led the way to the open space at the top. Here we paused, and the King turned and faced his people. What he saw in their faces must have pleased him, for his countenance lit up, and he showed them the happiest face a man could wear. Then, turning to his chamberlain, he took from a cushion a thin circlet of gold which he held aloft in order that all assembled in the courtyard might see it. Having done this, he placed it upon Olivia's head and thereby crowned her as his Queen. As he did so the trumpeters blew as if they would have burst their cheeks, the troops presented arms, and another royal salute was fired from the battlements. It was a glorious scene; and when His Majesty embraced his Queen such a shout went up as could never before have been heard by the grim old walls. It brought before me the reality of the change in Olivia's life more than anything that had so far taken place.

When the coronation ceremony was finished, the King left the steps, and, leading his Queen by the hand, proceeded—the Princes making way for him to pass—to the Great Hall of State, where, according to ancient custom, the people had the right of presenting in person their gifts to the Queen and of making obeisance before her. By the time this ceremony was accomplished we were all worn out, though Olivia tried hard not to show it. At last, however, the tail end of the long procession came in sight, and in less than a quarter of an hour it had disappeared through the exit door again. We were free once more, free to be natural, and free to congratulate each other on the happy event in which we had just taken part.

It had been previously arranged that the honeymoon should be spent at one of the King's residences situated in the jungle about twenty miles from the capital. The royal bride and bridegroom were to ride thither, and about two hours after the ceremony just described, when Olivia had rested herself and felt equal to the exertion, it was announced that the horses were at the door and that it was time to be off. All the baggage had been sent on the day previous, and now nothing remained but for us to wish the happy couple God speed. To this end it was my intention to ride with them as far as the outskirts of the town, and then to return to the Citadel, if possible by another route.

The parting between the King and his sister was affecting in the extreme, and I must confess myself that I was not a little cast down at the thought of bidding Olivia good-bye, even for so short a time. But once we had mounted our horses at the foot of the steps, and had ridden out through the Citadel gates among the crowds of citizens assembled to greet us, our feelings underwent a complete change. It would have been impossible for the most misanthropic of men to have been miserable there, for from the Citadel gates down the steep path and throughout the city the route was lined with thousands of happy faces. No escort accompanied us, the Sovereign feeling sufficiently convinced of the loyalty of his people to venture among them without one. Before us went a company of native musicians and dancing-girls, while, behind, the populace closed in upon us in one compact mass. According to the Médang custom, the people were dressed in their brightest colours, with garlands of flowers upon their heads, while the houses were decorated with the green leaves of the palm, the latter being supposed to typify youth, beauty, and perpetual health.

When we reached the centre of the town the crush was found to be so great that it was with the utmost difficulty we could make our way through it. In vain the most influential of the citizens endeavoured to force a path for us, the crowd was so tightly packed that it was impossible for those in the middle of the street to move, being penned in by the press from the side lanes and alleys. Still the King smiled and bowed in answer to the greetings of his people; but I noticed that he once or twice looked anxiously at the ever-increasing crowd. As we waited I glanced about me, my horse standing steady as a rock in spite of the crowd surging round his flanks. Close beside me were two little girls decorated from head to foot with flowers; behind them, two old men with venerable gray beards. Then my eyes fell upon an individual to the left of them again. He was tall and spare, and though dressed in the Médang fashion was evidently not an inhabitant of the country, but—so it seemed to me—a European. What it was about him that made me look longer at him than at any other I am sure I cannot say, I only know that I *did* watch him and, as it turned out, it was well that my attention was so constant, for suddenly I saw his arm go up. In the palm of his hand was

balanced a long knife, the blade of which glistened in the sunlight. For a moment I was so fascinated by what I saw that I remained where I was as if rooted to the spot, unable to move hand or foot, or even to cry out. But as I saw the hand go back, and my eyes lost the glitter of the sun upon the blade, my senses returned to me, and I dashed my spurs into my horse's sides with all the strength of my heels. With a bound that nearly unseated me, he sprang forward a couple of paces, knocking over an old man and woman in so doing. This prompt action on his part brought me between the King's person and that of the man with the knife. As I stopped I threw up my arm, and almost at the same instant felt a sudden stab as if it had been pierced by a red-hot knitting-needle. It was the knife, which had pierced the flesh a little above the elbow. To pluck it out was the work of an instant, but I could not do so before the King and the crowd had become aware of what had happened.

'Seize the man,' shouted the King in a voice that rang like a trumpet-call above the clamour of the crowd. 'On no account let him escape.'

Then, bringing his horse up alongside of mine, he leaned towards me and said anxiously:

'Instow, you are wounded. For Heaven's sake, get off your horse and have it at once attended to.'

'It is only a scratch,' I answered as coolly as I could. 'Thanks to my coat sleeve, its force was broken. But come, now is our opportunity. Let us push forward.'

The King bent from his saddle and said something in a low voice to one of his servants, who made his way out of the rabble and disappeared in the direction of the Citadel as fast as he could go.

By this time the mob had seized the assassin, and but for the exertions of the police, who had come up, and of the principal inhabitants, would have torn him in pieces. Seeing that our presence only added to the excitement, we touched our horses with the spur and made our way down a side street in the direction of the river.

Having left the city behind us, we entered a patch of jungle where the King signed to us to pull up. We accordingly did so, and immediately he jumped from his horse and approached me.

'Instow,' he said, looking up at me, 'you have saved my life, and God knows how sincerely I thank you for it. Now let me look at your arm. I must know the exact extent of the harm done to you.'

'It is nothing, I assure your Majesty,' I answered. 'As I told you in the city, owing to the thickness of my coat I have scarcely received a scratch.'

He was not satisfied, however, with this assurance, but made me dismount and remove my coat. When I had done so a nastier stab than I imagined was revealed. The man must have put out all his strength to have inflicted such a wound. Olivia uttered a little cry as she saw it, but soon recovered her nerve sufficiently to assist the King in binding it up. This done, His Majesty proposed returning with me to the city, but I would not hear of such a thing. I told him I felt quite comfortable and was fully equal to the exertion of riding home alone. At last, but very unwillingly, he consented to this arrangement, and I accordingly mounted and bade them good-bye. Fearing he might repent, I lost no time in making off, and only stopped upon the crest of a hill to wave them a final *adieu*.

(*To be continued.*)

## THE SOUDAN.

By John Geddie.

Nearly twelve years ago, on the 26th of January 1885, General Gordon fell on the steps of the Governor's Palace at Khartoum, transfixed by a Mahdist spear. That memorable day did not witness the crisis of the struggle between barbarism and civilisation on the Upper Nile. The crisis was past before ever Gordon started on his ill-fated mission. Egyptian authority in the Eastern Soudan had fallen already. The work he was sent to perform was salvage, not restoration. The death of the hero was like the vanishing of the last gleam that had lighted up a scene of ruin and confusion. From Wady Halfa to Wadelai, a curtain of darkness dropped down upon what men had come to regard as a highway of commerce and theatre of the triumphs of discovery and progress. The fabric of Egyptian dominion in Central Africa, of which Mehemet Ali had laid the foundation, and on which, it was fondly believed, Ismail Khedive had placed the copestone, crumbled into nothingness. At Sennaar and at Kassala, for a few weeks or months, the Egyptian flag still floated. In the Equatorial Province, so rumour ran, Emin Bey continued to keep precarious footing. But elsewhere, beyond the range of the guns of the new frontier at the Great Cataract and the patrolling ground of the forts on the Red Sea littoral, the land was the Mahdi's.

From that day to this, the Soudan has been, for the world without, a region of silence and of mystery. Other tracts in the interior of the Dark Continent that, up till the fall of Khartoum, had been blank spaces on the map, have in the meantime been explored, and exploited, and squabbled over, and parcelled out among the Colonising Powers. This ancient territory of Nubia and the White Nile, which was known to Herodotus, has become again a sealed book. Campaigns are being fought around 'King Solomon's Mines,' and railway lines built to the Great Lakes. All Africa is in process of being transformed and appropriated by Europe, save alone this old patrimony of the Pharaohs, concerning whose strange fortunes under the rule of the Mahdi and his Khalifa we have had to be satisfied with vague reports wafted from the desert, or infrequent and fragmentary information brought by fugitives and traders who have run the gauntlet of the Dervish guardians of the frontier.

A condition of affairs so unexampled and unnatural could not last. Egypt has never

formally abandoned her claim to her lost possessions. Other Powers—France on the west, Italy on the east, and Britain on the south—have been stretching hands in the direction of the Soudan. Civilised authority, temporarily put to rout, is preparing for its second innings against the forces of reaction and fanaticism. The signal given to the Egyptian troops to reoccupy Dongola is also the signal that the struggle for the recovery of the Upper Nile is about to be resumed in earnest. It has been plainly declared by the statesmen who guide the policy of England and of Egypt that the present Nile Expedition is but the first step of a series, which will be continued until the Mahdist power is expelled from Khartoum. There is to be no haste. Progress with the work of reconquest will be regulated not merely by the success obtained, but by the capacity of the purse of Egypt to bear the strain. The curtain dropped twelve years ago will rise slowly. But it will rise steadily. The expedition has orders to go no farther than Dongola at present. But it will go to stay.

Something of the flavour of romance thus belongs to the new Nile Expedition. It will have to grope upwards in the dark, discovering or rediscovering lost ground as it advances. The resistance to be met with, the difficulties to be overcome, can only be surmised; at no point can they be accurately gauged beforehand. Once, every step of the way to Khartoum, and even to El Obeid and El Fasher and Regaaf, was as familiar almost as the way to Assouan. But fire and flood have passed over it; and we go to see how far the great Nile inundation of savagery and fanaticism has subsided. To certain timid minds this element of uncertainty and adventure has great terrors. The unknown is always the imposing. But neither from the narratives of Father Ohrwalder and Slatin Pasha, nor from other indications that have reached us from the interior of the nature and the strength of the Mahdist empire, do we gather that it is unassailable. On the contrary, as will be seen, there is reason to believe that the power of the Khalifa Abdullah rests more upon terrorism than on the faith and affection of the hosts who obey him. The ground below him is riddled with discontent, with the intrigues and jealousies of rival chiefs and tribes, and with feuds between the stationary inhabitants of the towns and villages along the river bank and the wandering sons of the desert. Even the men who, in this country, are most keenly opposed to the policy of the Dongola campaign acknowledge that the Mahdist rule is one of the most cruel and oppressive despotisms of modern times. The foundations of Soudanese society and authority have been broken up. Trade has been utterly destroyed. Poverty, as well as violence and treachery, is everywhere. These are elements of weakness even in the heart of Africa. The Soudanese have found that if Ismail Pasha scourged them with whips, Abdullah the Khalifa has scourged them with scorpions. The early glow of enthusiasm for the Jehad—the 'Holy War' against the Turk and the Infidel—has gone long ago, with the plunder that fed it; and it is most doubtful whether the promises of the Mahdi's successor can fan it again into flame, now that the tribes have been plundered in turn by their new rulers and prophets. There is ground for hoping that they have got tired of turmoil and isolation and distress; and that secretly, if not openly, they are eager to get rid of their tyrants.

The war will, however, be waged on the assumption that the great body of the people of the Soudan still stand by the usurping power. The mistake is not going to be made of underestimating the enemy, or of attempting too much. Certainly the Soudanese have not as yet given any clear sign that the return of Khedivial authority, supported and protected by British bayonets, is desired at Berber and Omdurman. In their official language at least, the Dervishes are as bitterly and relentlessly opposed to the political supremacy of Cairo and to the spiritual supremacy of the Caliph as ever. And their acts have been of a piece with their words. Periodical raids have been made by the desert bands on the country lying around Suakim and Tokar, and on the villages of Upper Egypt. Trade and intercourse have been strictly interdicted. The frontier to which Egyptian authority withdrew after the fall of Khartoum has been found to be difficult and well-nigh impossible to defend. We have sought to hold posts open to surprise and attack from more quarters than one, and away from a sufficient base of supply, while the Dervish bands have had the valley of Dongola—the granary of Nubia—to gather their forces to a head or to fall back upon with their plunder. Their presence in such close vicinity to Egypt, their command of the Nile, and their successful defiance of the Egyptian arms have made them a terror in the eyes of the fellahin and a cause of profound disquiet and insecurity at Cairo. It has raised exaggerated ideas of their power and prowess; whether they be the true and favoured followers of the Prophet or not, they are—or they have been deemed to be—invincible, and this is sufficient of itself to capture the unstable fancy and the secret support of the Egyptians. There is every reason to believe that their mischievous activity on the frontier was on the point of taking bolder developments. The news of the defeat of the Italians at Adowa spread with lightning speed over the Soudan. The Khalifa responded to it by giving directions to begin new operations against Kassala and against Wady Halfa. It has been thought necessary to take action in the offensive against the Dervishes, as the best means of defending from their assaults what remains of Egyptian territory and prestige on the Nile; the surest and most direct road to peace was through war. The Mahdist power must be humbled and crippled as a step towards destroying it, and the work must begin at once if Italy, our ally and coadjutor in the work of introducing commerce and civilisation into the Eastern Soudan, was to be relieved from dire straits.

These are the facts and strong reasons that have been offered in justification of the despatch of the Anglo-Egyptian expedition. The most prompt and effectual, and in the end the most

economical plan of settling the Soudan question might have been to aim directly at the heart of the Mahdist power. But the state of the Egyptian finances, and foreign complications at Cairo, do not admit of undertaking a scheme of reconquest which would have Omdurman or even Berber as its objective. A more cautious opening of the game must be chosen, and there is a peculiar appropriateness in the first move for the recapture of the site of Khartoum being made to Dongola—the birthplace of the Mahdi, Mahomet Achmet—the spot from whence ruin and misery spread over the length and breadth of the Soudan.

Without entering minutely into the history of the rise of Mahdism and the fall of Egyptian rule in the Soudan, it may be said that they can be traced to two prime causes—to the corruption and weakness of Pasha authority and to the slave-trade. On slavery and slaving the trade and society of Nubia and the White Nile were largely founded. Baker, Gordon, and the other European officers of the Khedive had attacked honestly and vigorously the traffic in human flesh which was one of the oldest of the institutions of the Nile Valley; if they had not destroyed it they had crippled it and made it full of risk and difficulty. It was very different with the host of Turkish Pashas and the bulk of the other native military and civil authorities sent from Cairo. Openly they assailed and discountenanced the slavers; secretly they winked at and shared in the profits of their enterprises, and thwarted in every way the efforts of men like Gordon and Gessi. At the same time they used the brief time of their sojourn in the Soudan to plunder and oppress the inhabitants of the country they were sent to protect. No wonder that the latter hated with a perfect hatred the name of the Turk, and that they came to include in their curse against their hard taskmasters even the Europeans who sought to do their duty, but in a fashion which the Soudanese could not comprehend. The hypocrisy and greed of the Egyptian rule were only too long and too well known in these remote provinces; the Arabi rebellion revealed its weakness and rottenness. The slave-traders were irritated and filled with the desire to revenge the attacks made upon them; and in spite of their losses and defeats they were far indeed from being powerless. One of the great centres of their operations was Dongola, and the Dongolawi traders travelled or had their influence and intelligence throughout the whole region of the Nile and the adjacent desert. In this vast territory there was, along with other dangerous passions, a great reservoir of latent fanaticism. It needed only a spark to explode this powder magazine, and the hand of Mahomet Achmet, the Dongolawi, applied it.

One finds it hard to say how far the Mahdi had faith in his own divine mission to destroy the Turk and the unbeliever, and to conquer the world. Doubtless he was a fanatic by temperament and training, and in the end came to believe what he taught to his followers; but like his successor, he was a master in dissimulation, and stuck at no deceit or enormity in order to gain his ends. He was a man of singularly attractive appearance and insinuating address. From the boldness and astuteness of the steps by which he rose to a power that extended from the Red Sea to the centre of the continent, and from the source of the Nile to the borders of Egypt, he must have had a genius for government and conquest as well as for stirring the fierce passions of his co-religionists. But he profited more from the blunders of his adversaries than from his own gifts. He began as an ascetic, preaching a doctrine of religious reform and imposing a strict moral code to which he and his chief adherents were afterwards far from conforming. The Egyptian authorities either despised the movement, or sent against it weak forces which were speedily mastered. Mahdism rapidly gathered head and spread, and Kordofan, one of the oldest and richest of the provinces of the Soudan, became the centre of its activities. By-and-by El Obeid fell after gallant resistance; Slatin, in spite of a score of victories over the Arab armies, could barely hold his own in Darfur; Lupton and Emin were sorely pressed in the Bahr-el-Ghazel and Equatorial Provinces, and Osman Digna and his Emirs began to inflict defeats on the Anglo-Egyptian forces in the Red Sea littoral. Then, in the first days of November 1883, came the overwhelming disaster of the annihilation of Hicks Pasha's army. Although it had started from Khartoum 12,000 strong, to crush the Mahdi and recapture El Obeid, its fate was never in doubt. The troops were dispirited and disaffected; the European and Egyptian officers were at cross purposes; the shadow of defeat hung over them, and flocks of jackals and vultures attended the doomed host on its march into the desert from whence hardly a soul escaped to tell the tale.

The victory was accepted throughout the Soudan as a sign that Mahomet Achmet was indeed chosen by Allah to wreak vengeance upon the invaders. Tribesmen and townsmen flocked to his standard. He was greeted with almost divine honours. The Prophet himself was, by the Mahdi's adulators, made of secondary account to him. More and more a scheme of empire, political as well as religious in its basis, took shape. Slatin surrendered; Lupton was captured. There remained, leaving Emin's province out of account, little more than Khartoum itself in Egyptian hands. There Gordon had returned in February 1884, as Governor-General of the Soudan and the forlorn hope of civilisation. His mission was, ostensibly at least, to withdraw the Egyptian garrisons and the European population to a place of safety. But the hope was not wanting that the magnetic influence of his presence and character might counteract that of the Mahdi, and win back the Soudanese to their allegiance.

If there ever was such a prospect, it was destroyed, as many believe, by Gordon's indiscretion in prematurely making known to the chiefs and officials on his way upstream the purposes of his mission. In the Soudan, more than elsewhere, they worship the rising sun. Thenceforward all who were not to go with him were, openly or secretly, against him; since, when he went, they would be left to the tender mercies of the new Lord of the Soudan. Still, for many months, the issue appeared to be doubtful. Gordon himself did wonders. The toils closed

in around him. Berber fell, and escape by the river was cut off. The Mahdi moved against him from El Obeid, and taking up ground at Omdurman, on the opposite side of the White Nile, pressed the siege closer and closer. Famine and treachery were within the walls; neither officers nor inhabitants could be trusted. But Gordon kept up a bold front to the last. There was sure word that a relief expedition, under General Wolseley, was on the march. It had come into conflict with the flower of the Mahdi's troops at Abu Klea and elsewhere, and had put them to the rout. Had even a handful of the British been able to reach Khartoum in time no one can say what might have happened; Mahomet Achmet, for his part, was ready to raise the siege. 'Every day, and many and many a time during the day,' says Father Ohrwalder, 'did Gordon look from the roof of his palace towards the north for the relief that never arrived. Every day he was doomed to disappointment.' He saw only the serried ranks of the besiegers drawing nearer from three sides, and only heard the beating of the Dervish *voggaras* that never ceased day and night.

The enemy, also, knew that there was no time to lose. The British Expedition was but a few marches off in the desert. Steamers were already on the river, hurrying forward with the news that succour was at hand. The Mahdi was 'convinced that if a single Englishman reached Khartoum his chance of success was gone.' Therefore he determined upon immediate assault. On the night of Sunday the 25th of January his hordes stole forward to a part of the defences that had, through treachery or neglect, been left unprotected. They rushed in, and the whole city became a scene of pillage and slaughter. Gordon alone encountered them on the stairs of the Serai, and tried to address them; but his head was soon on a Mahdi spear on its way to greet the conqueror. And two days later, in mockery, it almost seemed, of the fate of the brave defender of Khartoum, two steamers with the advance guard of the relief expedition on board appeared opposite the fallen city, only to find the Mahdi's flag hoisted on the walls, and to be greeted with a shower of bullets before turning back. They had come forty-eight hours too late!

Within a few months, Khartoum was a heap of bricks. Sennaar and Kassala, the last important positions held by the Egyptians, had fallen. Slatin, Lupton, and the few other Europeans who had been spared from massacre, were slaves in chains in the strange new Dervish capital—part court, part camp, part city of straw and mud huts—that rose at Omdurman. Within a few months of Gordon's murder, also, Mahomet Achmet, the Mahdi, had died, despite of his boast of immortality. After his crowning victory he had given himself up to voluptuous excesses. Rumour had it that he had been poisoned by a woman he had wronged; Ohrwalder believes that it was outraged Nature that took her revenge. He had ruled partly by playing off the rival chiefs and tribes against each other; and he had appointed three Khalifas, or successors, representing the strongest aspirants for power. On his death, all these jealousies and ambitions broke loose, and the fate of Mahdism again trembled in the balance.

The Khalifa Abdullah et-Taisha, of the Baggara tribe, quickly proved himself the ablest and most unscrupulous of the competitors. By force or guile he beat down all opposition. By all accounts he has nothing of Mahomet Achmet's charm of manner. But he is a man of iron will; cunning, resourceful, and with a large share of mother wit. He remorselessly crushed the family and adherents of the Mahdi—the Ashraf—but he did not fail to make use as a fetich of the name and influence of his predecessor, and he has worshipped regularly at his mausoleum. His triumph has been the triumph of the country people, or desert Arabs, over the town and valley folks. For the last ten years Omdurman and the Soudan have been ruled by the ignorant and insolent Baggara, formerly the most despised of the Arab tribes west of the Nile. At first the Khalifa's successes were almost uninterrupted. He stamped out counter-revolution at Darfur; he defeated the plots of the rival tribes of the Aulad Belad, and brought them, for the time at least, to be minions of his will; his armies sacked Gondar, the ancient capital of Abyssinia, and brought him the head of King Theodore. He formed plans for the conquest of Abyssinia, for the invasion of Egypt, for the subjection of the world; he made preparations for founding a hereditary empire in the Soudan, with his son Osman as his successor.

Latterly matters have not gone so well and smoothly with the Khalifa; his star seemed to have passed its zenith when his brave Emir, Wad el Nejŭumi fell, after suffering complete defeat at General Grenfell's hands at Toski, and after Osman Digna's disasters at Tokar and elsewhere in 1891. The Italians seized upon Kassala; the Mahdists were unable to occupy the Equatorial Province even after Emin's withdrawal. On that side of the Soudan and on the west, the British, the Belgians, and the French were showing signs of pushing in. Up till Baratieri's defeat, the tide seemed fairly on the turn; and with the advance of the Anglo-Egyptian expedition to Dongola, Abdullah's will is confronted with a danger greater than any that has previously menaced it.

What resources of men and of enthusiasm he will be able to bring into the field remains to be seen. That the tyrant will make a desperate fight before he lets himself be driven from power may be reckoned as certain. The reports that have come down the Nile represent him as summoning his hosts to his aid, and spreading false stories of victory, hiding defeats, and striving by every means in his power to stir up anew the fierce flame of fanaticism. He is even seeking to conciliate at the last hour the men he has consistently wronged and plundered. But the whole country is by all accounts a wreck. The population is but a fraction of what it was in Gordon's time. Trade and agriculture and all authority except that of the sword have been ruined by the incessant wars. The people, including even the Arab tribes, are, many think, more tired of their despot than ever they were of the 'Turk.' It is conceivable that another blow like that dealt at Ferkit may

bring the whole fabric of Mahdist rule crashing about the head of the Khalifa, and that the triumph of trade and civilisation in the Soudan is nearer than is generally believed. The next few months will show.

## ATTRAY'S WIFE.

### CHAPTER IV.

A MONTH passed, a busy month in the Marsh, for the very supplies of which people stood in most need for the proper celebration of Christmas were those upon which a tyrannical Government imposed the highest duties, and both preventive men and runners had a lively time of it. Our Lieutenant, however, had taken his precautions and made his plans sufficiently well to prevent any startling successes being scored against him, although during one foggy November afternoon some dozen pony-loads of tubs did get ashore at Romney Hoy, and so inland to Hawkhurst and Goudhurst.

His nights were rarely his own, but he managed to find time at least once every two days to run over to Green Place and enjoy a delicious hour's courtship. Parson Texter too was a frequent visitor, and seemed to be on excellent terms with both the ladies; and, to his credit be it said, played the part of a generous rival, and eulogised Eustace Hirst behind his back in a manner which would have brought the blushes to that young gentleman's cheeks.

The Lieutenant noted a very marked change in Mrs Mountjoy, and rightly attributed her constant depression of spirits and absence of mind to her approaching separation from her daughter.

'I have only her to live for, Mr Hirst,' she said. 'My life is over, and when she is gone nothing will remain to me but to go also.'

Eustace tried to console her by saying that their home should always be hers, but she shook her head sadly. 'No, on the day when you and she are made one,' she said, 'I leave you. I know who I am, and what name I bear, and it shall never be said that you shall feel the stigma of that name.'

After the new year, the news ran through the little community at Broadmarsh of the approaching marriage of the Lieutenant commanding the local preventive force with the beautiful Miss Mountjoy of Green Place. Congratulations poured in upon him, for, in spite of his position, Eustace Hirst was as popular amongst the people as amongst his own men; nobody seemed to be more sincere than the Reverend John Texter, and if he occasionally testified his satisfaction in somewhat unclerical fashion in the parlour of the 'Tartar Frigate,' nobody in this free-and-easy, unconventional little Broadmarsh would have thought any the worse of him.

Nay more, he requested as a particular favour the privilege of marrying the couple, and if the Lieutenant, with some lingering Clapham prejudices in favour of respectability in him, could have wished that a more representative type of parson should perform the service, his increased regard for one whom he had hitherto eyed with some suspicion, and for local feeling, induced him to smother his objections and accede to the request.

'And the Marsh shall never forget the wedding,' said the parson that evening over a steaming jorum at the 'Tartar Frigate.'

So the day was fixed, and Eustace Hirst was preparing himself for the great step he was about to take.

On the morning before that on which the wedding was to take place, Eleanor presented herself at the Martello, and asked Eustace to come over with her at once to Green Place.

'I hope there is nothing wrong, dear,' said the young man, for the girl's face was pale, and her manner was agitated.

'Mother is not very well, but perhaps your presence will do her good,' replied the girl.

They hastened to Green Place, and found Mrs Mountjoy seated at a writing table which was littered with papers and accounts. She was extremely pale, and there was a strange look about her eyes and mouth which Eustace had never noticed before, but she smiled when he entered, and thanked him in her old quiet way for his solicitude on her behalf.

'I have been putting my house in order, Eustace,' she said. 'And I want your very serious attention for a few minutes.

'Now, firstly, here is my will. By it I bequeath everything unconditionally to Eleanor'——

'But, Mrs Mountjoy,' began Eustace.

Mrs Mountjoy waved silence.

'Permit me to continue,' she said. 'Here is my will. I am rich—very rich, and perhaps my wealth has been made on the whole as honestly as has been that of many folk who hold smuggling in pious horror. I have no further use for it, for my sojourn on earth cannot be a long one, nor is it desirable that it should be.

'Secondly: There is yet time for you to repent and not take the step you are about to. Clearly understand what you are doing, that you are about to marry the daughter of a man who is accounted a murderer, although I believe he was acting in self-defence; and that this fact does not absolve you from your duty—namely, to arrest William Attray if you have the chance. I earnestly impress this upon you, because by his misdeeds he has made a hell upon earth the life of one of the best, truest, and noblest women who ever dwelt upon it.' Here she took the hand of Eleanor, who was sitting with her face pale as ashes, and her lips tightly compressed.

Mrs Mountjoy continued:

'To-morrow I shall leave you—no, don't interrupt me, I pray—to-morrow I shall leave you. I have friends elsewhere who are waiting for me. You will make this house your home, and there is sufficient money in a box which Eleanor will show you to enable you to live as befits your rank and position. I want the wedding to-morrow to be performed in good style. I would have all the men you can spare on escort duty, and I have arranged that they shall be suitably treated and rewarded. Lastly, here are five hundred sovereigns. I wish them to be given to Mr Texter, partly as a recompense for his disappointment and for the duty he will perform, and partly as a

solace for a duty it shall not be in his power to perform.'

Eustace would have spoken, but Mrs Mountjoy again waved silence, and, rising, shook his hand, and took leave of him.

At an early hour the next morning Broadmarsh was unusually animated. The news of the wedding had spread throughout the Marsh, and country folk, attired in their best—every man and woman of them a smuggler, directly or indirectly—came swarming into the little village. The 'Tartar Frigate' had not done such a roaring trade since the Fencibles encamped at Broadmarsh during the invasion scare of 'four.' Bunting had been requisitioned from far and wide, and active fellows in broad sailor breeches were swarming poles and scaling giddy heights, and apparently risking their necks in a score of ways, in the work of arranging the flags to the best advantage. A great Union Jack floated from the church tower, and the Rev. John Texter, attired in the most decent suit his oldest friend had ever seen him wear, was here, there, and everywhere, as radiant and joyous as if he were the bridegroom.

At a few minutes before eleven there was a steady tramp of feet through the village street, and a large body of preventive men, fully armed, headed by their officers in service kit, marched to the church, which was already full to overflowing. Meanwhile, the bells were swinging vigorously in the ancient tower; but their clangour was almost drowned by the roar of cheers which announced the arrival of the chief actors in the ceremony about to be performed.

To the surprise of the people who had been accustomed to associate 'The Place Lady,' as Mrs Mountjoy was called, with a stately, vigorous deportment, she appeared in a chair carried by two stalwart blue-jackets. Behind her came Eustace, smiling and triumphant, and looking every inch a sailor in his full uniform, and next to him Eleanor, very pale, and evidently much agitated. Behind them again was a group of naval and preventive officers.

They filed up the dim old church, took their places, and the service was commenced by Mr Texter in his most impressive and paternal style. When it came to the question:

'Eleanor Mountjoy, wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband?' her mother interposed, 'Eleanor Attray.'

Mr Texter bowed and made the correction, which was heard by the many officers close about, and caused a general exchange of looks.

The service ended, Eustace Hirst and Eleanor Attray were made man and wife, for better or for worse, and the party moved into the vestry to sign the register.

Mrs Attray, who had remained seated during the greater portion of the service, had to be supported into the vestry; her face had now a terrible hue, and beads of perspiration stood on her brow, whilst the tightly-clenched lips betrayed the controlling of some terrible emotion or of some almost unendurable pain.

The parson, who had regarded her with a strange anxiety more than once, whispered to her:

'Mrs Attray, you are ill—can I help you?'

'No, sir,' she replied, with a flash of her old vigour and dignity; 'I have strength enough to go through the little that is required of me.'

Eustace signed the book, and Eleanor followed. Then there was a pause.

'Mrs Attray, will you kindly sign, if you feel well enough?' said the parson, in his pleasantest voice, at the same time slipping behind her, and drawing from beneath his surplice something with a head which glittered.

Mrs Attray took the pen. For a few seconds it remained quivering between her fingers. Then, with an effort, she brought it down on the paper, and wrote in a large, firm hand:

'William Attray.'

Then she dashed the quill down, rose swiftly from the chair, and cried in a voice absolutely unlike what anybody who knew Mrs Mountjoy had ever heard before, and which rang through the church:

'Yes! I am William Attray of Alnmouth! Game to the end!'

The parson clapped his hand on Attray's shoulder, drew forth a constable's staff, and began:

'William Attray, in the name of'—— when the ex-smuggler sank back into the chair. The hue on his face was now ashen-gray; a sort of cloud passed upwards over it; there was a faint rattle in the throat, and the law could only possess itself of a dead man.

'Cheated! cheated, by heaven!' roared the parson. 'Poisoned himself!' and he rushed from the church.

Such was the romantic end of William Attray.

Forty years ago Broadmarsh people used to point out to the few strangers who penetrated to their corner of the island an aged couple, sunning themselves on a bench facing the sea, in front of the Green Place, and would say:

'See they two? They be Master Hirst and his lady—her father was Bill Attray what killed himself in church yonder. And God bless 'em! Twarn't their faults.'

## CURIOSITIES OF EARLY ART SALES.

THE days are still comparatively recent in which matters of art were considered of very slight importance, and the collector or virtuoso was regarded as an eccentric being possibly harmless but hardly worthy of serious attention. Thus Lord Macaulay views Horace Walpole's passion for curiosity hunting with something like derision when he writes of him as returning from the recreation of making laws and voting millions 'to more important pursuits—to researches after Queen Mary's comb, Wolsey's red hat, the pipe which Van Tromp smoked during his last sea-fight, and the spur which King William stuck into the flank of Sorrel.' Now however, when our point of view has somewhat changed, and when illustration of the social life of past times is welcome from whatever quarter it may chance to come, we regret

that the details of early art sales and of their frequenters are so meagre. The habit of making collections of pictures and other works of art dates practically from the reign of Charles I. The Earl of Arundel, called by Walpole 'The father of vertu in England,' rivalled the King in the extent of the treasures which he had gathered together during his travels on the Continent, among them being the busts and statues known as the 'Arundel Marbles.'

The Duke of Buckingham, again, bought of Rubens his collection of paintings and other works of art, which went to decorate York House in the Strand. The age which witnessed the beginnings of art collecting also saw the commencement of the art sales. The dispersal of the pictures of King Charles I. was spread over three or four years. When Parliament resolved to sell the Royal collection, agents from many foreign princes and amateurs from all parts of Europe were eager to participate in the biddings. The Spanish Ambassador is said to have bought so many paintings and other articles of value that eighteen mules were required to carry them from Corunna to Madrid. Another purchaser of fame was Cardinal Mazarin. Raphael's Seven Cartoons were, at the instance of Cromwell, purchased for the nation at a cost of £300. The Duke of Buckingham's collection was removed by his son to Antwerp during his banishment, and was sold there by auction. The contents of Sir Peter Lely's gallery were sold by auction, as we learn from Horace Walpole, the sale lasting forty days, and realising a very large sum. Catalogues now begin to lend their aid to the purchaser, an early example informing us of a sale to take place 'at the two white posts against the statue at Charing Cross,' referring most probably to the name of an inn in that neighbourhood. No person was to bid less than sixpence at a time. The vicinity of Covent Garden in London has ever been the chosen resort of auctioneers, and here at the close of the 17th century we find a certain Edward Millington established at the 'Vendu next Bedford Gate, Charles Street, Covent Garden.' In announcing the sale of the goods of General Doushfield, he added that his sales would be continued every Friday following, 'during the gentries' stay in town,' and held out as a further inducement 'a curious invention of lights whereby the pictures may be seen as well as by day'—the usual hour for auctions at this period being four o'clock.

Sale by inch of candle was formerly very common, and at one time was prescribed for the sale of goods imported by the East India Company. Whoever last bid before the light expired had the lot knocked down to him. Pepys mentions an instance of this custom in his diary for 1662: 'After dinner we met and sold the Weymouth successe and Fellowship hulkes, where pleasant to see how backward men are at first to bid, and yet when the candle is going out how they bawl and dispute afterwards who bid the most first. And here I observed one man cunninger than the rest, that was sure to bid the last man and to carry it, and in giving the reason he told me that just as the flame goes out the smoke descends, which is a thing I never observed before, and by that we do know the instant when to bid last.'

As recently as the year 1892, some land belonging to the parish charities was disposed of in this way at the village of Corby, near Kettering. In what were called dumb biddings, the price was put under a candlestick, and it was agreed that no bidding should avail if not equal to that. One of the most interesting of early sales was that of the collection of the great antiquary and amateur, the Earl of Oxford, who bequeathed his library and manuscripts, called the 'Harleian Miscellanies,' to the British Museum. The announcement brought together a large assemblage of persons of rank and fashion, among the buyers being George Vertue and Horace Walpole, the latter purchasing in addition to a picture by Holbein and many coins 'a Roman deep copper dish with a cupid painted on it,' for which he gave two guineas. George Vertue, the engraver and disciple of Sir Godfrey Kneller, was an indefatigable collector of notes on British Art, and these form the basis of Walpole's 'Anecdotes of Painting in England.' The sale was effected by Mr Christopher Cock at his house in the Piazza, Covent Garden (now the Tavistock Hotel), destined to be for long associated with the history of auctions. It formed part of the mansion once tenanted by Sir Peter Lely, and continued to be famous as Langford's salerooms, and then as those of George Robins. Here Hogarth exhibited his 'Marriage à la mode' to the public gratis. The sale of this great artist's pictures at his house, 'The Golden Head' in Leicester Fields, presented many peculiar features. One of the conditions was that on the last day of sale, a clock (striking every five minutes) should be placed in the room, and when five minutes after twelve had struck the first picture mentioned in the sale book was to be deemed sold, the second picture when the clock had struck the next five minutes, and so on till the whole nineteen pictures had been sold. Hogarth's celebrated 'March of the Guards to Finchley' was disposed of by means of a raffle. A large number of chances were subscribed for, those which remained over being given to the Foundling Hospital. One of these latter winning the prize, the picture was forthwith handed over to the Governor of that institution. It is interesting to note that the six paintings of the 'Marriage à la mode' were sold at this time for one hundred and twenty guineas, and half a century later realised one thousand. Dr Richard Mead was one of the most remarkable figures of this period, and his collection of books, coins, statuary, and drawings was the largest formed in his time. Pope was among his patients, and has commemorated his tastes in the lines:

> Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne alone,
> And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane.

This physician, who possessed a museum at the back of his house in Great Ormond Street, is said to have been professionally consulted by Watteau, who painted two pictures for him in memory of his visit. The sale of this collection was effected by Abraham Langford, who was

also something of a playwright. There is a long and grandiloquent epitaph on him in St Pancras churchyard. Some of the verses tell us how 'His Summer's Manhood' was 'open, fresh, and fair,'

> His virtues strict, his manners debonnaire,
> His autumn rich with wisdom's goodly fruit
> Which every variegated appetite might suit.

Close by in King Street were to be found the salerooms of Hutchins, and of Paterson, to whose son Dr Johnson stood as godfather and for whom he wrote letters of recommendation to Sir Joshua Reynolds. These two salerooms were constantly filled by eager purchasers of prints and pictures. Some of their frequenters we know, such as the bibliographer Isaac Gosset the younger, whose deformity subjected him to the coarse gibes of his opponent, Michel Lort. Besides Gough, the editor of Camden's *Britannia*, were to be seen Caleb Whitefoord, a wine-merchant of literary tastes, who is the hero of Wilkie's picture, 'The Letter of Introduction,' and many others whose names are now forgotten. The sale of the collection formed by the Chevalier D'Eon is chiefly interesting on account of the personal characteristics of this extraordinary individual, once the French Ambassador at the Court of St James's, who habitually disguised himself as a woman. The question of his sex often proved the subject of bets, and until his death was never set at rest. An auction of his effects took place at Chapman's Rooms in Cornhill, 'next Tom's Coffee-House.' Some years later a sale was announced at Christie's of 'furniture, swords, trinkets, jewels, and all the wearing apparel constituting the wardrobe of a Captain of Dragoons and a French Lady.' Works of art at this period would appear to have been rapidly rising in value, for Horace Walpole, writing to his friend Sir Horace Mann in 1770, tells us of the rage for English portraits: 'I have been collecting them,' he writes, 'for about thirty years, and originally never gave for a mezzotinto above one or two shillings. The lowest are now a crown, most from half-a-guinea to a guinea. Scarce heads in books not worth threepence will sell for five guineas. Two thousand pounds were given for a picture by Guido, and the price of old paintings had tripled or quadrupled in a single lifetime.'

We hear much at this time of the famous auctions of James Christie the elder, whose first sale took place in December 1766, at rooms in Pall Mall formerly occupied by the print warehouse of Richard Dalton. Here the Royal Academy of Arts held its exhibitions for several years. Mr Christie afterwards moved next door to Gainsborough, who lived in the west wing of Schomburg House in Pall Mall. His ingenuity in describing articles put up for sale is well illustrated by a story told of him in connection with the disposal of the effects of John Hunter the surgeon. When, in the sale, he came to a mask Hunter had used to keep his face from stings in his observations on bees, he was fairly posed; and after turning the lot round and round came out with 'a most curious and interesting article, a covering for the face used by the South Sea Islanders when travelling, to protect their faces from the snowstorms.' Passing mention may here be made of the abortive sale of M. Desenfans' collection of pictures, which were ultimately bequeathed by the owner, a French picture-dealer, to Sir Francis Bourgeois, and were in turn left by him to Dulwich College, together with a sum of money wherewith to erect a gallery. In 1794, the whole of Sir Joshua Reynolds' gallery of paintings was sold by order of his executors—one of whom was Edmund Burke—by Mr Christie 'at his rooms, late the Royal Academy, Pall Mall.' The French Revolution caused the dispersal of many fine collections, the principal one being that belonging to the Duke of Orleans. An exhibition of these paintings took place in Mr Bryan's room in Pall Mall and at the Lyceum in the Strand, and continued open for six months. Many of these pictures found their way to the galleries of Bridgewater and Stafford Houses, and the nation became ultimately possessed of several, including the Resurrection of Lazarus by Sebastiano del Piombo.

Two sales in the first half of the present century have interesting associations connected with them—namely, the Beckford collection at Fonthill in 1823 and the Strawberry Hill collection in 1842. With regard to the first of these, accommodation for purchasers was provided in a pavilion in the park, beds being charged three and sixpence single and five shillings double. A contemporary notice in the *Times* says: 'He is fortunate who finds a vacant chair within twenty miles of Fonthill. Not a farmhouse, however humble, not a cottage near Fonthill, but gives shelter to fashion, to beauty, and rank. Ostrich plumes, which, by their very waving, we can trace back to Piccadilly, are seen nodding at a casement window over a depopulated poultry yard.' This sale occupied forty-one days, and many curiosities were disposed of—such as a set of ebony chairs from Cardinal Wolsey's palace at Esher, and Tippo Sahib's jade hookah, set in jewels, taken as plunder from his palace at Seringapatam. The Strawberry Hill sale was conducted by George Robins of Bartholomew Lane, who is said to have been one of the most eloquent auctioneers who ever wielded an ivory hammer. His poetical and alluring advertisements were celebrated, and he announced on this occasion that the sale would be 'the most distinguished gem that has ever adorned the annals of auctions.' Owing, however, to the prevalent lack of interest in such matters, its success was not quite so great as was anticipated. A large shed had been provided for the purchasers, and many articles of great historical interest were disposed of—such as Anne Boleyn's clock, given her by Henry VIII., in silver gilt, and bought for Her Majesty the Queen; a silver bell made for Pope Clement VII., said to be the work of Benvenuto Cellini; and Cardinal Wolsey's red hat, purchased by Charles Kean for twenty-one pounds. Another curiosity was Dr Dee's speculum, a round piece of polished kennel-coal, called the Devil's Looking Glass, used for purposes of divination by that Elizabethan necromancer. In the year of the Fonthill sale, James Christie the younger removed to King Street, St James's

Square, where so many historical sales have been effected—the Stowe, the Bernal, the Hamilton Palace, and the Fountaine being a few of the most celebrated in recent years.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A MOST interesting ceremony, attended by the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs in their state robes, took place in the City of London a few weeks back, in the unveiling of a monument to John Heminge and Henry Condell. Although to many these are unfamiliar names, students of Shakespeare know them well as the friends and fellow-players of the immortal poet, to whom posterity owed the first collective edition of his works. Without the loving labours of these two friends of Shakespeare it is certain that a great number of his plays would have been destroyed; for as they knew them they were rough prompt-copies used in the theatre, which would most probably have disappeared as valueless things had they not been rescued for publication. It is supposed that about two hundred and fifty copies of the first folio Shakespeare were printed, for it is yet comparatively common; but fine, unmutilated copies are very rare indeed, and command a high price. It is interesting to note that the book was published at one pound per copy — equivalent to about four times that sum now. A hundred years ago a copy in good preservation could be bought without difficulty for twenty pounds. At the present time a collector would consider himself fortunate if he secured one for five hundred pounds. The monument to the compilers of this volume is in the Church of St Mary, Aldermanbury, where Heminge and Condell lived and were buried.

One of the few structures that add to the beauty of a landscape is a well-designed stone bridge. In some of our counties, notably in Derbyshire, these are common enough, and some of them afford splendid models for the architect. The modern bridge is too often a hideous mass of iron-work, and there are already some bridges of this description crossing the Thames in the neighbourhood of London which are a positive disgrace to the city. It has recently been determined to rebuild the bridge at Kew, and it is interesting to note that the two counties between which it forms a junction—Middlesex and Surrey—have been at variance with regard to the new structure, Middlesex being in favour of a stone bridge and Surrey preferring a cheaper structure of iron. However, the two counties very wisely determined to incur the expense of a special report on the relative merits of the two kinds of bridges; and as this report is strongly in favour of stone, we may hope that Kew will not be disfigured by a lattice-work girder bridge, the fate of so many other picturesque spots on the silvery Thames.

The Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, with its priceless contents, recently ran a narrow escape of being destroyed by fire. During a severe thunderstorm the building was struck by lightning, and the roof was fired; but luckily help was at hand, and by cutting away some of the burning woodwork the building was saved. The important point to be noted in this incipient conflagration is that the Museum was furnished with no fewer than four lightning conductors; but the lightning struck a gable which was unprotected, and the electricity seems to have travelled along a lead gutter and down a standpipe to the earth. The occurrence shows that a building only partially protected by metal points is in almost as sorry a condition as one that has none at all.

Electric railways are still in their infancy, and it is impossible to foresee what developments may accrue to them in the future. It is proved, however, that they are most certainly the best means which can be adopted for underground traction, on account of the absence of all smoke or other noxious vapours. But there are some who prophesy for the electric locomotive a wide application above ground, and who look forward to a speed of from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty miles an hour as no impossibility. This lightning speed is to be attained, so it is said, on a single line of rail designed by M. Lartigue. This line is supported some feet above the ground level; and the cars, in pairs, are hung astride of it like a couple of sacks balancing one another on a donkey's back. The cars are provided with wheels, and each carries beneath it two electric motors; there are also guide wheels on the lower parts of the car which act on guide rails, so as to keep the vehicle steady. It is claimed that this single rail line is much safer than the present system, and that it would be advantageous to erect such lines for passenger service only at the sides of our existing railways. Up and down lines between London and Brighton, the two connected at the ends and therefore in continuous circuit, could be built and equipped with rolling stock for about one million sterling. Such obstacles as tunnels, stations, &c., on the existing railway would be surmounted by the use of viaducts, or carrying the rail over hills on suitable supports. A short length of line on the Lartigue principle has been open for some time in Ireland, and is said to give satisfactory results.

The elaborate preparations which were made to observe the recent eclipse of the sun were of no avail, for nearly all along the line covered by the lunar shadow clouds prevented any observation being made. But the visitors who flocked to Norway as simple sightseers were not disappointed as were the astronomers, for the spectacle afforded by the advance of the lunar shadow over the earth was a most impressive one. The *Times* correspondent describes Vadsö as a situation from which this magnificent phenomenon could be admirably seen: 'As the shadow advanced across the fiord it enveloped the training squadron as it lay at anchor, the details of the ships' rigging disappeared from view, and their lights gleamed forth brilliantly. Still the shadow pressed on with its majestic speed of a mile in every couple of seconds. It moved as swiftly as a cannon-ball until it reached the observers at Vadsö, and then announced to them in the most impressive manner that the supreme moment of their visit had arrived, and that totality was complete. The darkness that then buried Vadsö

and its numerous observers lasted for a minute and forty seconds. The unwonted spectacle hushed every one to silence.'

According to an American paper, nearly all tobaccos are doctored in order to suit the taste of various consumers. Each manufacturer has his own secret methods handed down from father to son, which are regarded as perfectly legitimate and necessary in the preparation of the soothing weed. Saltpetre is added to the tobacco to make it burn well, liquorice, honey, and maple sugar to give sweetness to it for the especial benefit of chewers, and rum to make it keep well and preserve its properties. Nearly every plant which will afford a perfume is used more or less in the preparation of what are known as fancy tobaccos, but it is not true that opium or deleterious drugs are employed. Among the flavours used may be named coffee, tea, valerian, lemon, orange, geranium, sassafras, thyme, anise, mint, and cinnamon. Gum and glycerine are occasionally employed to bind the tobacco particles so that they shall not fall to dust. These things are made into a 'sauce,' into which the tobacco leaves are dipped, or with which they are sprinkled.

There seems to be a probability that cycles may become as popular on our rivers as they are on our roads. At Kingston-on-Thames, a machine of this kind has, this season, been attracting much attention, both on account of the high rate of speed which it attains and the ease with which it can be propelled, costing no more strain on the muscles, it is said, than an ordinary bicycle. It is propelled by three men, who manipulate it with the greatest ease; it makes no appreciable 'wash,' and seems to be perfectly safe in use.

Those who live in large cities and manufacturing towns are periodically reminded by the state of the atmosphere that the smoke sent forth from their tall chimneys is a noxious thing. The smoke-abatement question has been before the public for many years; and, although little appears to have been done, a committee of experts have been patiently at work, and have now issued a most satisfactory report. The committee was formed as the result of a meeting held at Manchester in November 1889, and they have busied themselves in examining the claims of various smoke-preventing appliances which have been brought forward, confining their attention solely to what may be called manufacturing smoke. Briefly summarising this important report, we may say that it is conclusively proved that the discharge of black smoke into the air is both unnecessary and wasteful. With proper apparatus, which must be suited to the particular conditions of working, smoke can be absolutely prevented. The committee carefully avoid the recommendation of any particular apparatus, leaving those interested to study the report carefully and draw their own conclusions. This report does not touch the question of smoke from domestic chimneys, but to a great degree this problem is being solved by the adoption of gas cookers in lieu of open fireplaces.

Every now and then some fearful catastrophe at sea calls forth numberless letters and suggestions as to better methods of signalling, sounding, &c.; and the recent loss of the *Drummond Castle* off Ushant has brought forth the usual discussion on the old subject. We venture to add a suggestion of our own which would possibly lead to much saving of life were it adopted. Let it be made obligatory on the part of captains of all vessels, without distinction, to get their boats ready for immediate use on the occurrence of foggy weather. Let them act as if a collision had occurred, instead of waiting to get their boats out until the disaster has happened.

'The Explosion and Detection of Acetylene in Air' is the title of a paper recently read by Dr Frank Clowes before the Chemical Society; and as many persons are interested in this new illuminating gas, a short account of the results arrived at by this experimenter will not be out of place. A mixture of acetylene and air becomes explosive when as little as three per cent. of the gas is present, and the tendency to explode persists up to eighty-one per cent. This range is extraordinarily wide, and exceeds that of any combustible gas known. In order to test the amount of gas in air containing less than three per cent. of acetylene, the mixture was passed over a standard hydrogen flame, and the luminous 'cap' or halo which formed over the flame measured. In this way the amount of acetylene in air can be accurately gauged between 0·25 per cent. and 3·0 per cent., when, as already stated, the explosive point is reached. It is a fortunate circumstance, in view of the possibility of acetylene coming into common use, that it possesses a very strong and unmistakable odour, even when only a mere trace of it exists in the air. Hence it may be said of it, as was said long ago by a celebrated chemist of ammonia, that 'the best test for it is the nose.'

Mr C. W. Radcliffe Cooke, M.P., the well-known advocate for cider as a healthful national drink, has again contributed a long letter to the *Times* on his favourite subject, in which he extols the virtues of this old English beverage, which is becoming far more popular than it was a few years ago. Imitation so-called 'Champagne' and 'non-alcoholic' ciders he has caused to be analysed, one sample being reported upon as follows by the chemist who undertook the analysis: 'This sample does not contain a trace of apple juice, but is a water solution of sugar and citric acid, flavoured with apple essence.' It is not too much to assert that the sale of nasty compounds of this character have done much in the past to prejudice consumers against genuine cider, of which, probably, they do not know the taste. It is possible that cider would be consumed by many families instead of beer, especially in the hot weather, if it were as easy to procure as its great rival; but at present it is not really in the market. A doctor, in commenting upon Mr Cooke's letter, points out that genuine cider is most valuable to gouty subjects, but that it is a fundamental condition of success in its manufacture for medicinal purposes that only apples of a single sort should be used, and that fermentation should be complete. But English and foreign methods of cider making have already been discussed in *Chambers's Journal* for May of this year.

The tenth report of the Inspectors of the Sea Fisheries of England and Wales, which has been recently issued, contains a number of interesting facts concerning the harvest of the sea during the past year. Fishing round our coasts has undergone a great change in the substitution of the steam trawler for the picturesque fishing-smack; but the extent to which this change has been brought is not generally known. Hull has now no fewer than one hundred and ninety-five steam trawlers, Grimsby has one hundred and eighty-nine, and Shields seventy-one. The steam trawler fishes by wholesale methods, while the smack was a mere retailer; moreover, the new vessels can more easily reach the distant fishing-grounds, and more rapidly bring the perishable cargo home. At Hull, we read, 'there had been at times serious gluts in the market, and consequently serious falls in prices.' At another port 'large quantities of sprats were sold for manure.' Altogether, it is evident that there is no lack of fish round our coasts, and it is a strange anomaly that this form of food in most of our inland centres is actually dearer than mutton which comes from the antipodes. At Southampton several tons of mullet 'stunned by the cold' were taken out of the dock there, and in Clovelly Bay herrings were so plentiful that it did not pay the fishermen to catch them. The improved state of the water in the Thames is borne witness to by the fact that above Gravesend larger shrimps were caught and better catches made than usual.

Some important improvements are being carried out at Kew Gardens. First, the Temperate House, about six hundred feet in length, is being rapidly proceeded with, and will represent, probably, the largest structure of the kind yet built. It is intended for the reception of succulent plants from sub-tropical countries, which hitherto have been confined in tubs, but in the new house will be planted in beds. In another part of the gardens has been established a bamboo garden, in which specimens, mostly Japanese, Chinese, and Himalayan, may be seen growing as in nature. It may also be noted that two publications are in course of preparation by the official staff at Kew. One is a complete list of the plants in the gardens, which it is hoped will be the means of settling the nomenclature of different species, and the other is a guide to the economic plants.

The Locomotives on Highways Bill, 1896, has now become an Act of Parliament, and Her Majesty's lieges are at liberty to use, without any vexatious restrictions, vehicles propelled by mechanical agency. The passing of this act is due mainly to the exertions of Sir David Salomons, the president of the Self-propelled Traffic Association, who, with a number of other gentlemen as disinterested and unbiased by personal or pecuniary motives as himself, has worked very hard to get this important measure passed into law. Sir David has recently published a letter thanking those who have shared his public-spirited labours; and he takes the opportunity of appealing to everyone interested in the movement to do nothing to abuse the freedom now extended to them by this act. He says that at no period in the history of the English legislature has so liberal a measure been passed, and he appeals to those who will mostly benefit by it to avoid injury to the roads, to use every possible care not to frighten horses, to store no dangerous liquids (petroleums) carelessly, and to generally take care that in a year or two hence it shall not become necessary to pass another act 'to control those who have shown their inability to control themselves.'

In May last, on the West Highland (North British) line, a passenger train ran off the rails with the exception of the engine, but was happily brought to a standstill, before much damage was done, by the prompt application of the Westinghouse brake. Lieutenant-Colonel York attributes this accident, in his report to the Board of Trade, to the expansion and consequent distortion of the line produced by the great heat prevalent on the day of the occurrence. The engine-driver asserts that he actually saw that the line in front was distorted, and he anticipated that the train would leave the rails, hence he applied the brake, and immediately afterwards the train left the metals. It is supposed that the engine kept its place owing to the flexibility imparted to it by the leading bogie. It has always been customary to leave a space between the ends of rails so as to allow for expansion; but it would seem, in view of this accident, that something more is needed. It should be stated, however, that the report from which our account of the accident is taken mentions that there were indications that the portion of line in question had not been maintained in a thoroughly first-class condition.

## 'OF AUTUMN.'

I.

A 'LITTLE love and laughter,' many tears:
That is our life. 'Tis like an autumn day;
A gleam of sunshine in the heaven appears,
A beam from those blue depths, that may not stay:
Then rain, unceasing; withered leaves in showers
Come rustling down: so with this life of ours.

II.

A smile to kindle love, a tender look
From lovelier depths than heaven's brightest blue;
One golden chapter in a dreary book,
And then life takes again its dull gray hue.
Yet if forgetfulness could make it bright,
Would we forego remembrance, if we might?

MAUD ARNOLD.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

*1st.* All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

*2d.* For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

*3d.* To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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# JUANITA.

By T. LANCEY.

## CHAPTER I.

Ned Erskine was a young Englishman of good family, who, like many others, found himself one day in a lively mining camp in the Rocky Mountains—those grim mountains of solitude—fascinating from a distance, dull and dreary on acquaintance, and through whose mazy valleys and silent cañons one could wander for hundreds of miles without meeting a soul, save, perchance, a roving band of scowling Indians.

Erskine was young, strong, and healthy. He had some money, wanted more, and was willing to work for it. He had but few relatives left, and no one to trouble himself about. He had joined two or three miners in working a claim of gold-bearing gravel, or placer, for this was during the second discovery of gold in the far West, after the Californian excitement had cooled.

This was the time when sensible human beings went crazy over gold, when they lay down and rolled in it (a fact); when, from pure braggadocio, they would light their pipes with bank-notes (a fact) in the presence of an admiring crowd of toadies. A grand time! and the crazy fools who shovelled out gold, literally at times by the shovelful (eight ounces being actually weighed from one shovel), thought these times would last for ever. To-morrow! who wanted any to-morrow?—to-day was enough for most of them—when a few hours' work meant a year's wealth! Glorious times! when the immigrant from afar dreamed of his speedy return to his lonely wife or waiting sweetheart with money enough for all future time, and, when ready to leave with his well-earned gold, his body would be found with a bullet in it and his riches gone. For there were plenty of human jackals prowling about, reporting to the more lordly lions of theft and murder, and, when the time served, the lions acted and the jackals had their share. For here were gathered together thousands of the scum and sweepings of humanity, and all the unbridled passions held carnival—where none was poor and all were rich—where meals were difficult because none cared to cook.

The gambling houses kept open doors night and day. The harvest was exceeding rich, and the table keepers knew it. The patient waiting game was theirs—others might toil and sweat in getting gold, but the table keeper neither toiled nor got excited. He knew that his percentage would ceaselessly roll in to his coffers. In this seething human swarm—all attracted by the one quest—did Erskine find himself. He and his partners had a roomy cabin on their claim some two miles below the camp; so they enjoyed comparative quietness, and were not annoyed by the daily crowd of idlers watching every shovel emptied, an inspection resented by all good miners.

One morning Ned was stooping down examining some new bed-rock he had just uncovered, his face glum, because nuggets were both small and scarce. Startled by a low cry of distress, together with a rattling fall of loose stones and earth from above, he looked up, and saw, some twenty feet above him, a girl lying on the cañon slope. From a glimpse of bright colour he supposed she was an Indian; then he caught sight of a pale face that could not belong to the copper-hued redskin. Quickly scrambling up the hillside, he found a young girl with an ankle twisted so badly that she moaned with pain. Lifting her light figure in his arms, he carefully carried her to the stream-

side, where he seated her on a low flat boulder, and, picking up his gold pan, poured water over the injured ankle until the buckskin moccasin was soaked; then, gently laying the foot in the running water, he turned to look at and speak to his patient. He had acted mechanically in his ministrations, as men in the mountains do when they render help to one in distress; they give the assistance freely, and afterwards ask the inevitable questions.

Erskine was puzzled: he gazed at the fairest face he had ever seen, an oval face of pale olive tint, with dark lustrous eyes, capable of passion, whether love or hatred; a tall, supple figure, the graceful outlines well displayed by the light antelope-skin jacket, the shortened sleeves showing rounded arms and delicate small hands. A short skirt of heavy store cloth, a soft felt hat with gay ribbon round it, and a golden-coloured kerchief tied loosely round the neck completed the costume. To this may be added a belt of cartridges round the waist, and a light rifle of small calibre beside her on the ground. Ned absorbed all these details in one quick glance, and as he gazed he wondered who this fair apparition was—certainly not Indian, as certainly not white. Such a dainty creature as the one before him he had never seen in the hill country, or anywhere else for that matter. These thoughts passed through his mind in a moment, and then he inquired, with a smile:

'Do you feel any better?'

The girl looked up at him, and, with a slight blush, said:

'Oh yes. I cannot say how grateful I am to you; the pain has already ceased. It was stupid of me to slip on the slide rock;' adding proudly, 'I never did such a thing before,' as though slipping on treacherous slide rock was to be ashamed of. She spoke in a low, clear tone, but a faint touch in her accent told him she spoke another language than English. She had seen some black-tail deer grazing in a hollow lying back from the cañon slope, and was on her way to stalk them when she missed her footing on the loose slide rock. Presently she declared her foot to be all right again, and, springing up, attempted to walk, but would at once have fallen had not Erskine caught her round the waist and supported her. The girl, glancing hastily at him, said: 'Let me sit down again, please;' then adding, 'oh, what shall I do?' Tears stood in her dark eyes, and she seemed much distressed at her helplessness.

Ned, however, came to her relief by saying at once: 'Don't worry yourself; I'll help you through this,' and then he asked where she lived and with whom.

She told him her father, who was a French-Canadian trapper and hunter, had his camp some three miles down the stream, that he usually passed through that district every two years or so, and that she was in the habit of accompanying him on his summer trips, when they fished and shot together, more for amusement than profit, adding that her father would be uneasy if she were not back at the camp that afternoon. 'Besides,' she said, with a quick glance round her, and then at Ned, 'you know, you understand, I—well, I *must* get back somehow.'

Ned fully grasped the fact that this charming specimen of the trapper feminine could not remain where she was, so he told her to comfort herself, as he would take her back himself on mule back. He was rewarded with a bright smile and a grateful look from the dark eyes. Telling the girl he would return in a few minutes, Ned slipped off the hobbles from his mule grazing near by, and telling his partners what had occurred, quickly strapped some blankets on the animal's back, securing them with a wide horse-hair cinch, then fastening a leathern strap loop-fashion to the cinch, for the injured foot, he led the mule to where the girl was sitting. Lifting her on to the improvised side-saddle, he carefully placed the injured foot in the loop, and telling her to steady herself by holding on to the mule's mane, he led the animal down the cañon trail. During all this time the girl had not spoken. When he deftly placed her on the mule, she had quickly blushed a crimson glow, as quickly fading; but as he walked in front she looked him over from head to foot. Ned's erect sinewy figure seemed to fascinate her, for her eyes never wandered from it for an instant. The trail widening, Erskine fell back to walk beside her, and, after asking if she felt comfortable, said: 'You have not told me your name yet,' at the same time giving her his own. She said her name was Juanita, the name of her mother, who came from sunny Mexico. Her father was Dave Le Gros, 'better known, I believe,' she added, smiling, 'as French Dave.' Ned in surprise cried: 'French Dave! I know your father very well. I hunted with him two years ago on the Rosebud Range, but I did not know before that he had a daughter—and such a daughter!' he added softly; but the girl's quick ears caught the expression, judging by the keen glance she gave her companion.

The name Juanita, or, still better, Nita, sounded very soft to Ned, who was rapidly losing his head, if not his heart, to this half-caste beauty beside him. He knew her father to be of French extraction, with a strong dash of Indian blood in him. Her mother being Mexican made the girl's nationality rather a problem. But what did it matter thought Ned; she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, and he blessed the lucky accident that had given him this unlooked-for break in the dull monotony of mountain life. The journey was a slow one. Mules may be steady and sure, but they are not fast, and unless urged they simply crawl. Perhaps Ned neglected forcing the pace lest the injured foot should be shaken, or possibly he wished to prolong this *tête-a-tête* so novel and pleasant to him. It was certainly not the glorious view before them that caused the snail-like pace, for neither Ned nor Nita gave a look at it even; nor did the mule, who resented this unusual trip, as it interfered with his enjoyment of a bit of choice bunch grass he had lately discovered. And yet the scene was worth looking at.

Before them lay the silent cañon, its sides towering upwards some thousand feet. To right and left lesser ravines led back to timbered

gloom ; scattered patches of bright, mossy green, watered by the spray of falling springs above, were touched with brilliant colour by wild flowers of many hues in Nature's wondrous harmony. Thickets of wild roses, a mass of bloom, lay below them, the warm air scented with their perfume.

Nita told her escort about herself and her life. How she had been at a convent school, and passed her winters with relatives in Canada, going with her father in his summer trips, for she loved the free life, and was as much at home in the hills and forests as her father, having learned her wood-craft from him. She told of her successes and failures with big game, and gleefully narrated her first encounter with a grizzly, when she had ignominiously to climb the nearest tree and was kept prisoner until her father came to her relief. As Ned listened to the low, soft voice, with the faint foreign intonation, he wished this afternoon might never end ; and once, when the mule slightly stumbled on a rough bit of the trail, he caught her hand to steady her, and noticed what a small, well-shaped little hand she had, even though it was sunburned to a russet brown in colour. The girl was pondering some matters in her mind also. It must be remembered that even in the lone west, in those days as now, there was the stern, inexorable law of race. The whites looked on the half-caste as not being a fellow-creature, but as an inferior being, well enough to employ, but impossible to associate with on equal terms ; and poor Nita knew this. She had gone through the same experiences of being snubbed and socially cut by other girls and their mothers as the young woman of to-day goes through when she rashly tries to soar to inaccessible social heights. She had felt this keenly at the time ; her convent education had been the same as that of her self-styled superiors ; her native tact and shrewd good sense had made her, both in manners and conversation, fully their equal ; but the fatal bar of race was against her. This was the first time she had ever been alone with a real white man, and she felt glad to meet one, to hear him talk, and to look at him ; and then, had he not done her a great service ? and the girl's impulsive southern heart went out in gratitude to him. These southern natures have a way of going to extremes as a rule. It is all undying love or eternal hatred ; you take your choice if you have the power.

A sudden turn in the trail disclosed old Dave's camp. A roomy tent and an Indian teepee or lodge of poles meeting overhead, wrapped with overlapping canvas—for Dave had a liking for Indian ways—stood on a grassy flat near the stream-side. Packhorses grazing close by, some fresh skins pegged out to dry in the sun, and a heap of dead ashes were all that met the eye. Nita, with a quick glance at the camp, said : 'My father has not returned yet—there is no fire.' Ned stopped the mule at the tent, and fastening back the canvas, lifted the girl and carried her inside, where he placed her gently on a pile of buffalo robes and soft skins lying in a corner. As he knelt to arrange a comfortable lounge for her, their faces came perilously near each other, the dark eyes looked out at him, a faint smile on the parted lips, when impulsively and without thought he kissed her hastily, as though ashamed of what he did. The girl said nothing—her face paled, and she gave him a long searching look that puzzled him ; and then, without a word, he went outside, and in the distance saw her father returning to the camp.

Juanita Le Gros was of a type infinitely superior to the ordinary half-caste, and although she had inherited both Indian and Mexican blood from her parents, she showed none of that carelessness in dress or manners so common at the time. On the contrary, she was scrupulously neat and sweet in all her personal belongings. Her outdoor life with her father had developed her supple figure to its highest pitch. In climbing mountains after game, in shooting, fishing, and riding, she was quite at home. Fearless, active, and strong, she was a valuable ally to her father. Her tent, supported by a strong ash pole, made in joints secured by iron rings, for convenience of transport, was of stout waterproof canvas ; from the pole hung leathern sacks and bags containing her wardrobe. Brushes, combs, and articles dear to the feminine mind reposed in nets of deer sinew, while a large metal basin was mounted on a stand of pine sticks, deftly manufactured by her father. Give a Canadian woodsman an axe and an auger, and he can make you anything from a house to its furniture. At one side was a thick layer of pine tips, on which was placed a goodly depth of blankets, buffalo hides, and bearskins, forming a luxurious and scented couch. The floor was strewed with fragrant tips of the sugar-pine ; a large bunch of wild roses and mountain lilies was pinned to the canvas. The general appearance of cleanly neatness was entirely in keeping with that of its mistress. Nita had received a good convent education, had read of many things she did not fully understand, and later on, when she had the opportunity, plied Ned freely with questions as to that great outer world of which she yet knew nothing—for this girl was aspiring in her desire for a change of surroundings. The summer trips were well enough, but the long, dreary winters in some dull settlement were wearisome. Not but that she had suitors in plenty, but no one had yet touched her heart, and the lustrous eyes looked calmly and serenely on the aspirants to her hand, and the red lips smiled coldly, and said 'No.' She would tell herself that the right man would come some day, and if he never came she would remain always with her father, and grow old and ugly—this last with a faint shiver, for Nita knew she was beautiful ; the little mirror hanging on the tent pole told her that. When, therefore, this fair-bearded stranger who had so kindly helped her in her troubles appeared, her instinct told her—trust a woman to find that out—that the right man had come at last, and that he was to be hers and she was to surrender herself to his rule. Why do these unfailing intuitions come to us suddenly and without warning, and we never misconstrue them ? We accept without questioning, we simply know but cannot explain. This was why she let Ned kiss her, feeling as though it were natural he should—

would she not be his altogether soon? and as he kissed her, her heart rose up to him in a wave of maiden tenderness and love. Much allowance must be made for Juanita. The girl was instinctively modest and reserved even; but she was also a girl of passionate impulse when her heart was stirred be it remembered. To a girl of her nature—unfettered by conventional customs or rules, because wholly ignorant of them, pining for companionship, for a friend in her loneliness, nursing her ideal in her heart for years—love was of quick growth when her ideal lover presented himself. Deep down in her heart she knew that this man was to be her future husband; her woman's unerring instinct (a man is dull in such cases) told her so, and while the kiss startled her by its suddenness, it did not surprise her. She simply accepted it as the first homage from her lover; she saw no wrong in doing so—would she not be his altogether soon? and in all this, as it rapidly passed through her mind, there was no atom even of impropriety of thought. Had Erskine trifled with her passion for him, she was quite capable of killing him in anger and then herself in despair. Erskine was naturally unaware of this undercurrent. He simply saw a lovely face dangerously near his own, and so he kissed it, not suspecting that the owner was risking her soul on the act; nor did he dream that his trifling gallantry would yet draw him helplessly into the domestic net. He had not thought over the matter much, like most men in the hills; he did not worry himself about the future—what was the good? To-day was enough; besides, when a treacherous bullet, a saloon brawl, a blow from a grizzly's paw, or a 'wash' out from a sudden flood might wipe out to-morrow for ever, it was a needless waste of time.

He felt irresistibly drawn to this girl, and he simply could not help it.

Dave Le Gros was a specimen type of his class. Trapper and hunter from boyhood, he had passed his life in the mountains and forests of the West, from chilly Canada to the Rio Grande border, knowing every pass and secret trail in the mountains. A man of iron constitution, the raven hair now silvered, but the dark eyes still keen and piercing; a reserved and taciturn man, wending his way through forest and desert waste with the unerring certainty of the Indian. Of resolute will, undaunted courage, and skilled in resource, he had the reputation of being peaceful when unmolested, but a relentless foe when wronged. His wife, a fair young senorita from Mexico, had been killed by hostile Cheyennes in his absence from camp one day, leaving the baby Juanita on his hands; and the trapper had sworn over his dead wife's body never to let a Cheyenne pass him by. Report said he had kept his oath unbroken, and that the Cheyenne Indians dreaded hearing of this implacable enemy being near them.

Erskine and he knew each other, having hunted together some two years previously. The former in a few words told the old man of his daughter's accident, and then retraced his way back up the cañon; and as he slowly rode along his thoughts were of Nita. He felt instinctively that this girl was far beyond her class, and that he was treading on dangerous ground. The sweet pale face was in his mind constantly, and all he could decide on was that he must call round next day, if only to inquire how the ankle was progressing; besides, he wished to have a talk with her father. Poor Ned!

## THE FARMER'S LIFE.

'Who'd be a farmer?' From every quarter of the country comes the cry of despair—from wheat counties and sheep counties; from where mile upon mile of level wheat-fields lie yellow and waving under the spacious sky, and from where the wiry long-tailed sheep roam in their thousands over the silent Welsh hills; from Devonshire coombes where red cattle graze the well-watered 'Garden of England;' from the hop-yards and orchards of the West Midlands—rises the universal tale of woe. Bad harvests; ruinous prices; the foreigner with his wheat and his wool, and, above all, his frozen carcasses by the shipload of ten and twenty thousand, all combining to hold the English farmer's head under water till his struggles cease.

I am not going to propound a remedy for the agricultural disease. Still less am I about to blame any one, not even Government or the farmer himself. I have no theories to offer for either cause or cure. I do not believe in poultry-farming as a straw for the drowning agriculturist to clutch at, nor in bee-keeping, nor even in the suppression of the butcher and other 'middlemen' who are in some quarters regarded as standing between the farmer and prosperity.

But, oh, the pity of it! The sorrow of heart at the thought of the ancient and honourable calling of husbandry having, as a money-making profession, seen its best days! Sad, oh sad, that we cannot, wandering in the country, view with unalloyed pleasure the snug homesteads, red-walled and tile-roofed, with flanking barns and rick-yards, nestling among orchard, meadow, and cornfield; that our thoughts run on to the too probable debit balance shown against the farmer in the bank-ledgers at the county town; to the sons one and all leaving the old roof to seek a livelihood in trades or professions already overstocked. 'Anything but farming, my boy, anything but that,' the old man will say; 'a farmer's name spells ruin, whatever it is.'

Oh, the pity of it! For what life is like the farmer's? A life where the comparatively sordid end of money-making is so lost sight of—to the onlooker at least—in the beauty and simplicity of the means. There are men of fortune who play at farming for amusement, as men play at golf and cricket; but no one plays at banking or shopkeeping, or—often—at lawyering. In few other occupations is the money-getting so pleasantly in the background as here. The sowing, tilling, and garnering of crops, the breeding, rearing, and perfecting of animals, are instincts with Englishmen. There is a pleasure in the sight of the waving corn, the heavy swathes of grass falling at each stroke of the swinging scythe; in a pasture full of sweet-breathed cows or a flock of ewes with

their growing lambs—which is totally unconnected with the questions of money and net profit.

There are many outsiders for whom the ways of farmers, the country, and country people are full of interest. Some of us unhappily live in towns—large towns; but we have memories of a country childhood perhaps, and love to revive them ourselves or impart them to our children, whose earliest knowledge is, alas, of brick walls and paved streets.

The old farmer who made a modest fortune in the palmy days of thirty or forty years ago, and whose sons are out in the world and doing well, still stays on in the farm, grumbling ever, but loth to leave, and at heart not ill satisfied if each succeeding year brings a small deficit only or none at all. On a farm so many of the necessities—some of the luxuries even, of life are obtainable without any immediate or visible outlay of coin. House-rent to begin with is included in the lease. All vegetables, milk, butter, and eggs are there for the taking—heavy items these in a town household. Of poultry and bacon too the farmer is his own purveyor; he knows the value of well-hung mutton, and kills a sheep now and then in the winter, the bailiff or shepherd being always glad to take a joint for a Sunday's dinner. Of firewood he has an ample supply for his own use, besides some for sale; the trimmings of orchards and hedges furnish this. Moreover, the farm on which my thoughts are running lies within an easy journey of coal-pits. The team can leave at three o'clock on a winter morning and be at home again a few hours after nightfall. Some farmers' wives both bake and brew at home still; but in these days of cheap and good baker's bread, of Bass and Guinness, both customs are dying steadily. But the cider-press is still at work, and supplies both house and men. In the cool dusk of the cider-house the old horse plods sleepily round and round, and the thick sweet juice oozes out from the pulpy fruit as the heavy wheel rolls on.

So the old man still clings to his life's home and work; and, thanks to the experience of fifty years and more and to life-long habits of temperance and activity, he can afford to do so. He can no longer 'get over the ground' as he used to do; the rise of his fields from the brook and the slope of the lane from the house make themselves felt, and his stout ash-plant is constantly in his hand. But he sits his mare as firmly as ever, and draws on himself the reproof of his wife for hard and—to her mind—reckless riding.

In the gray dawn of a February morning he may be heard at his bedroom window in consultation with the bailiff as to the day's work. For unless the weather be thoroughly settled this cannot be arranged over-night. Does the frost hold? Then let the teams go on with manure-carting. Is it still mild and open? Then they can 'get to plough.' Very soon the old gentleman is down and about amongst the work himself. None know better than he the relative value of the master's eye and hand; and though his hands are active at anything that is going on, altering here and adjusting there, and he has as much faith in example as in precept, he prefers to be everywhere by turns and nowhere long.

We may be sure he does not go very far afield without casting a glance into the 'nag' stables where two sleek, well-groomed mares are getting their breakfast. He administers an oft-repeated caution to the groom to be more sparing with the corn, for with light loads and little work he finds his 'cattle' apt to pull rather hard on the rein if the feeding is too high. His next work is to turn a tap and fill a trough or gutter with water for the poultry. A wheel turned by the brook gives a constant supply to house and yards; but he complains that not a man on the place can be trusted to keep the drinking-troughs constantly full, and this knowledge induces him to make the round of the folds a dozen times in the day.

A visit to the chaff-house which adjoins the cart-horse stables shows him that a day's chaff-cutting is needed. A slow and toilsome job this on a farm where the only 'power' is equine. There almost daily a pair of horses must tread their monotonous round to work the sunk machinery in the yard which communicates with the cutter in the shed. But here, where an engine is an item of the dead stock, enough chaff can be cut on a winter's day to last horses, cattle, and sheep nearly a fortnight; and corn-grinding is accomplished with equal celerity.

The sight of the postman in the lane is a reminder that breakfast will be waiting. This is a late meal here, for the master finds his appetite failing, and would fain sharpen it if he can by an hour or two's occupation and morning air. So it is often nearly nine before he sits down in the sunny breakfast-room to the tableful of cold ham, boiled eggs, and broiled kidneys, which are present in quantities that the townsman finds alarmingly profuse till his wants are brought into proportion with the supply by copious doses of fresh country air.

Later on our friend goes farther afield. Down in 'Long Orchard' a man is at work binding the cuttings of the apple-trees into fagots. This is piece-work, but it is just as well to give an eye to the job now and then, if only to see how near it is to completion; for when it is finished another must be found for the labourer. He can be told, too, to keep an eye on the hedges, especially where the rabbit-holes in the bank show signs of recent disturbance; for at a day's ferreting which some friends from the town took yesterday a ferret 'lay up,' and, darkness coming on, had to be abandoned. Sooner or later the creature will sleep off its surfeit of rabbit and will come out, creeping about the bank and hedge-bottom with apparent helplessness.

Farther on the teams are at plough, the stubble disappearing steadily before the advancing share, and giving place to the fresh and fragrant red soil which, seen at a distance, takes a rich purple tinge. The head carter drives a pair of powerful horses abreast; his second in command has another pair; while the bailiff holds the stilts behind three horses driven tandem, with a boy at the leader's head. The middle horse of the three is a dainty strawberry roan—a 'three-year old' getting his first

experience of the collar. With a steady companion behind and before, he may fret and fume himself into submission without much risk of harm. The next step will be in the shafts of a pair-horse wagon with a steady collar-mate abreast of him. The farmer rarely calls for the services of a professional horse-trainer, and probably did not even in his younger days, when he bred a good hack now and then and sold at remunerative prices.

Finally, the morning's round of inspection ends with a visit to the shepherd, who is just now in the midst of the lambing season, and, in his own eyes at least, the most important person on the farm. And he certainly is a man in whom much confidence is usually placed. A first-rate shepherd brooks no control but that of his master; the carter and the cowman may receive the assistance and own to some extent the authority of the bailiff; but among his flock the shepherd reigns supreme, grumbling even at much interference from his employer.

When the hedges are cut and laid in the spring, a rough stile, something like a small wattled hurdle, is made in the track of the farmer's daily round that he may avoid either a circuit to reach a gate or damage to the hedges by continually climbing them. Hedging and ditching, like a hundred other details of country work, is an art. This again is piece-work, and is paid for by the yard. If there are trees in the hedge which need trimming, or the lower boughs lopping, or if a tree has been felled and the stump left for the hedger to 'grub,' such items are extra.

The farmer grumbles a little over his wife's dinner-hour—two o'clock. The proper time, he says, is noon; a farmer should dine when his men dine. But 'my wife' will not hear of it, and perhaps the old gentleman himself grumbles more from habit than from any real desire for the noontide meal now. After dinner there is generally a long doze in the wide leather-covered armchair by the hearth, followed by a startled waking, an exclamation of surprise at the lateness of the hour, and a call for his mare that he may gallop round before 'knocking-off time.'

The hour of 'high tea' brings the newspaper to those districts which possess two posts in the day. This, and his men's 'time-book,' kept as methodically as a banker's ledger, will, alternating with an occasional uneasy nap, pass away the time till nine o'clock brings the two maids with the great Bible and Prayer-book. I wish that certain occupants of lecterns could hear and take pattern from the tones of the silver-headed man of three-score and ten as he reads the Evening Lesson and the Collect for the week, finishing with 'Lighten our darkness.' Then there is a sound of heavy bolts shooting home and chains rattling, and the house grows still. There are no men-servants in the house, partly because the farm is well supplied with cottages, and married men are steadier and less wishful to roam than their single brethren.

The old gentleman seldom stirs from home now at night. Time was when he made one of a circle of dashing farmers who, the day's work over, would drive off in gig or dogcart six, eight, or ten miles to each other's houses for a late dinner, followed by many a rubber of whist and perhaps an impromptu dance. With a little prompting he will recall tales of gay evenings, when fun fast and furious followed days of toil; of nights spent under a haycock to save the trouble of returning home and to insure being up with the lark in the morning. Like most farmers, who as a class love to work hard and play hard, he seems able to do with a minimum of rest. Even now he seldom retires before midnight, though he is often up at five.

Though he is out and about in all weathers, and scorns an overcoat when younger men are buttoned to the chin, he likes a warm room when once indoors, looking with suspicion on an open window and abominating a draught. On a warm May evening he still loves a fire, and will himself descend to the cellar and return with an armful of dry logs, which he piles on the fire with a liberal hand. There is something peculiarly grateful to old blood in the blaze and crackle of well-dried wood. But his wife often complains that she is stifled with the heat, and will leave the snug little sitting-room for one of the prim and silent parlours.

He drinks his own cider or perry from a silver tankard, which does not betray any slight muddiness in the liquor. On Sundays the apples and nuts are still laid out on a costly dessert service, though little is eaten; and then he opens a bottle of port or sherry and drinks a glass or two. Claret is rarely seen on his table. Port and sherry were the wines of his day, and his taste has not changed if the times have. But he understands the merits of a bottle of dry champagne, and has a case—or part of one—somewhere in his private cellar. A bottle is considered an appropriate accompaniment to a dish of lamb's tails; and when the lambs are docked of these needless ornaments in the spring a friend or two will come over to discuss the merits of the dish, washed down with Très-Sec.

If a neighbour drops in for an hour in the evening, the square-cut glass decanters are brought out, and our farmer, who rarely touches spirits when alone, clinks glasses with his friend. Though no smoker himself, he has a long clay pipe or two somewhere in a cupboard, which he hospitably produces. Sometimes, to his secret sorrow, the visitor prefers his own well-seasoned briar, which is endured with silent discomfort by the host. There is no pipe so clean and sweet in the smoking as a new clay, which leaves no foul stale odour behind it. Cigars are prohibited by the lady of the house.

Such a farmer has a sort of double personality. In the fields and yards among the men his appearance and words are often homely. In old and faded coat, battered hat, and unlaced boots, he suits his speech to his company. 'Thee' and 'thy' are frequently on his lips, and 'harry' takes the place of harrow. But this equality and fraternity of speech covers an absolute and rigid though kind and generous authority. No farmer in the county is more respected by his men; not one of them would dream of attempting the least familiarity.

Yet this same man, work once done, shows the real grain. Spruce and well-dressed—none neater—he can hold his own with ease among men of society and liberal education. He talks fluently and well, and considering his age and the comparative seclusion of his life, he is surprisingly up-to-date. He is the best of 'good company,' and women, young and old, find in him a never-failing store of that old-fashioned courtesy which is sometimes sought for in vain beneath seemingly faultless polish.

An important man this, I think, and one to whose well-being politicians would do well to devote some thought. There is a class above him — the 'gentleman-farmer' — who is more gentleman than farmer; whose bailiff lives in a good-sized farmhouse, and is the go-between 'twixt master and men. And there is a class below him—the working-farmer—with the birth and education and many of the sympathies of his own workpeople. But the man who thoroughly knows the men and their needs, has in his time worked at much of their work as hard as they themselves, yet is not of them — such a man is surely an all-important member of society; yet it is he who is being overwhelmed in the wave of agricultural distress.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

By Guy Boothby.

### CHAPTER VII.—MY SUSPICIONS ARE AROUSED.

On reaching the citadel, half-an-hour after I had bidden the king and Olivia good-bye, I discovered that the assassin had already been conveyed thither, and was about to be brought before the Governor. As soon therefore as I had seen the palace doctor and had had my wound attended to, I walked in the direction of the room where I was informed the inquiry was to take place. On reaching it I found that sentries were placed at the doors to exclude the public, who were still clamorous for the man's death; but my position in the palace was so well understood, and my person so well known, that I expected to have no difficulty in obtaining admission. To my surprise, however, the sentries, acting as they said on the Governor's orders, politely but firmly refused to permit me to pass. They had received instructions, so they informed me, that no one, not even the officials of the citadel, were to be allowed to enter. However, I had made up my mind to be present, so I bade a servant convey my name to the Governor and inform him of my wish.

Presently the man returned and bade me follow him. When I entered the room I discovered the General seated at a desk in the centre, with the prisoner, guarded by soldiers, standing before him. No one else was in the room.

On seeing me, Roche rose and came towards me. I noticed that his face was paler than usual, and that he wore an unaccustomed air of nervousness.

'I regret exceedingly that you should have been refused admittance, my lord,' he began as soon as I had closed the door behind me. 'Had I imagined for an instant that you desired to attend this preliminary inquiry, I should have made a point of adjourning it for your convenience.'

'I beg you will say no more about it,' I answered, not believing for an instant that he spoke the truth. 'Naturally I desired to be present. First, for the reason that I was the person who saw him throw the knife; and secondly, because I was lucky enough to be the one who prevented it from reaching the king.'

'In that case we had better get to business,' he said shortly.

'With all my heart,' I answered; and we accordingly sat down at the table, and the examination at once commenced.

On closer scrutiny the prisoner proved to be a sinister-looking fellow, lacking one eye, and having his face disfigured by a cut which extended almost from his left eyebrow to his chin. Despite his native dress, I felt even more convinced than before that he was not an Oriental as he pretended, but a European. I noticed, however, that Roche had not been struck by this fact, for he addressed him in the Médang dialect, which it appeared the man spoke only imperfectly.

'Try him in French,' I suggested, seeing how slow our progress was likely to be.

The Governor cast a quick glance at me, and as quickly withdrew his eyes again.

'It is not likely he would understand French,' he answered. 'The man is a native, my lord.'

'I fear I must differ from you on that point,' I said emphatically in German—which I knew he understood. 'The man is as much a European as either of us, and of that I am convinced.'

Then turning to the prisoner, I said in French, quite casually, so that if possible I might take him by surprise:

'Tell me, my man, what countryman you are?'

But to the General's satisfaction and my extreme discomfiture, the fellow only shook his head, signifying thereby that he did not understand. I thereupon tried him in German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and finally English, but to every question he replied with the same shake of the head and peculiar motion of the hands expressive of non-comprehension.

'I'm afraid that after all your lordship must rest content with my assurance,' said Roche with an ill-concealed sneer upon his face. 'The fellow is, as I say, a native, possibly not of the Médangs, but at least of one of the adjoining countries.'

In spite, however, of the rebuff I had received, I was more than ever convinced that he was wilfully deceiving me, but as I had no possible means of proving it, I forebore to say more, and the examination proceeded. But badly as I had succeeded in my cross-questioning, Roche now found himself faring even worse. The man absolutely refused either to give his name, to state his country, the date of his arrival in the Médangs, his reason for attempting to assassinate the king, or to state whether or not he had any accomplices. To every question put to him he stolidly replied in the native 'I do not know,' and no threat of punishment could extort another answer from him. At any other time Roche's discomfiture would have been amusing enough to watch, but under the present circumstances I must own I shared his anger.

'Since he refuses to tell you anything, what is to be done with him?' I asked after we had been upwards of an hour questioning him.

'I shall lock him up till he does tell,' replied the Governor bluntly. 'A little touch of the rattan would soon make him speak, but unfortunately His Majesty will not permit one to make use of it.'

'And when will you have him brought up again?' I asked.

'To-morrow morning, if that will be convenient to your lordship,' he replied. 'Shall we say eleven o'clock?'

'Eleven o'clock will suit me admirably,' I answered. 'Let us postpone it till then.'

The necessary orders were accordingly given, and the prisoner was marched away by his guards. I remained for a few moments in conversation with the Governor, and then also took my departure.

For some reason or another my suspicion that the prisoner, in spite of his dark skin, and ignorance of any other tongue save the Médang, was not the native he pretended to be haunted me for the remainder of the day. I could not drive it from my mind. And why Roche should have persisted in asserting that he was not a European also puzzled me more than I cared to own. And yet when I came to analyse the evidence and his behaviour I could not find sufficient in it to warrant me in accusing him of complicity with the prisoner.

On my return to the palace the Princess Natalie sent for me, and was quick to express her sorrow at what had occurred. In spite of the doctor's assurance that my hurt was not dangerous, it was some time before I could convince her that I was not mortally wounded.

'I cannot understand it at all,' she said for about the twentieth time. 'Marie is so beloved by his people that I am convinced not one of them would dream of raising his hand against him. The man *must* surely be a new arrival in the Médangs.'

'That is my own opinion,' I replied; 'but General Roche, who after all has had more experience of them, seems to think otherwise.'

'General Roche invariably thinks differently from any one else,' she answered. 'Sometimes I lose patience with him. Do you know in what part of the citadel this wretched man is confined?'

'Near the gate,' I replied. 'He is to be examined again to-morrow morning.'

'You will be present then, will you not? I shall feel safer if I know that you are to be there.'

As she spoke she laid her little white hand upon my arm, and looked up at me with her poor blind eyes in a manner that would have melted my heart had I been the most obdurate of men. There was magnetism in her touch, for it thrilled me through and through as I had never been thrilled before.

'I promise you I will be there,' I said. 'I hope that then we shall be able to discover who the wretch is, and for what purpose he attempted your brother's life.'

'I thank you,' she said simply, and then bade me good-bye.

After dinner that evening I went for my usual stroll round the battlements. Since darkness had fallen, a greater feeling of loneliness had come over me than I had yet experienced. I missed Olivia, and I also missed the king. They were only to be absent three days, but even that short time seemed an eternity to look forward to. Of late a great restlessness had been my portion; a desire to see something more of the East had taken possession of me. I had always entertained a passion for travel; and now that Olivia's future was provided for, and a fitting opportunity presented itself, I resolved to gratify it. All being well when they returned, I would set off again in my yacht and allow the young couple time to get over the first blush of their affection and to settle down soberly to their married life before I returned to them.

By the time I had arrived at this conclusion, I had traversed the entire circle of the walls and was back again at the steps beside the gate. It was a lovely night, and as I was not sleepy enough to think of retiring to rest, I sat myself down on the coping and watched the glimmering of the lights upon the plain below. Suddenly my ear caught the sound of voices. Something about them riveted my attention at once. As there was no one on that side of the Gate Tower but myself, it was evident that they must proceed from the cell below where I sat, the grated window of which overlooked the path leading from the city. Instantly I remembered that this was the room in which the man who had attempted the king's life was confined. No sooner did I recollect this than I leaned as far over as I dared and listened. The talkers, whoever they were, were standing at the window, so that I could hear them plainly. One voice was deep and resonant—that belonged to General Roche. The other was more nasal, and was evidently that of the prisoner, who had declared his inability to understand French.

General Roche, or the man I supposed to be he, muttered something, but what it was I could not catch. His companion answered him, and what he said brought me up, as the sailors say, *all standing* with surprise. It was but a short sentence, consisting, in fact, of only three words, and yet no quarto volume could have been fraught with more significance to me.

'*Mais s'il découvrait . . .?*' asked the other. Once more I could not catch his companion's reply.

In that case my suspicions were correct after all, and the man not only understood French but spoke it. But why was Roche with him, and what could it be that the other feared that a third person might discover? Disregarding the old saying that listeners seldom hear good of themselves, I leaned still farther over the wall in an attempt to catch more of their conversation, but to my disappointment they had evidently moved from the window, for though their voices were still audible to me it was impossible to distinguish what they said.

Puzzling over what I had heard, I went down the steps to the palace and sought my own apartments. All night long my suspicions kept me company, and when I rose in the morning I was still endeavouring to arrive at a proper understanding of the situation.

While I was dressing, the king's physician was announced. He had come to dress my wound, and during the time that he was so occupied I inquired after the prisoner. To my dismay, I was informed that *he had escaped* during the night.

'Escaped?' I cried.

'Escaped, my lord,' replied the doctor.

'But how on earth could he have managed it?' I inquired, scarcely crediting that what he said could be true. 'There must have been gross carelessness somewhere.'

'No one understands it any more than you do, my lord,' the doctor answered. 'The General is furious, and says he will have the sentries' lives for their negligence. But the men both swear that the prisoner did not pass them.'

'Have they examined the window?'

'That I cannot say. Probably they have by this time if they had not done so then.'

'His Majesty will be very angry when he hears it,' I continued. 'I should not like to be in the culprits' shoes.'

'He could not be more angry than the General,' replied the medico. 'I can assure you it is not safe to go near him to-day.'

Not knowing that the doctor might not be one of Roche's tools, and would carry on to him all I said, I forebore to say anything further on the subject, and accordingly when he had finished his work he left me.

I now found myself confronted with a nice little problem that only seemed to grow more and more insoluble the longer I dwelt upon it. First I had to discover what connection existed between General Roche and the prisoner. Next I had to find out why the former had tried so hard to keep me out of the court-room; also why he had endeavoured to make me believe the man a native, why he had visited him in his cell the previous evening; and last but not least, what it was they both feared some third person might discover. That there was some unpleasant mystery lurking behind it all, and that Roche had connived at the man's escape, I felt as certain as that I had heard them talking on the previous evening. But the reason of it all, as I have said, was a great deal more difficult to see.

After breakfast I was informed that the Governor of the citadel desired permission to speak with me. Upon my consenting to see him, he was ushered into the room forthwith. Pretending that I did not see his outstretched hand, I begged him to be seated, and then inquired in what manner I could be of service to him.

'I fear you will be as angry as myself at my news,' he began abruptly. 'I have come to tell you that our examination this morning must be postponed.'

'Indeed!' I replied with simulated surprise; 'and pray for what reason? Is the prisoner not well?'

'The prisoner has escaped,' he answered, looking me full in the face.

'Escaped?' I cried, as if thunderstruck by his news. 'You don't mean to tell me that you have allowed that to happen?'

As I put this apparently innocent question I watched his face narrowly; but he was too clever for me. It expressed nothing but what he wished it to do.

'I have not allowed it,' he answered hotly, after a momentary pause. 'But the sentries who *did* allow it shall feel the weight of my wrath, or my name is not Gaspard Roche.'

'But if he has escaped, how do you think he managed it?' I inquired. 'How could he have got out of his cell?'

'Through the window,' he answered. 'The bars have been tampered with. When the jailer entered the cell this morning they were found lying upon the floor just as the prisoner had left them.'

'But how came he to have the necessary tools about him?' I asked. 'That is a point to be considered. For surely you searched him before you locked him up?'

'The sergeant of the guard did so in my presence,' he replied sulkily. 'I cannot imagine how he obtained possession of them.'

'Some one must have visited him during the evening,' I answered, 'and have given them to him. He could not have got them in any other way. Is there no one whom you suspect?'

Once more I watched his face, and this time I could not help fancying he did not seem quite as comfortable as he had been before. However, he recovered himself almost instantly, and faced me as resolutely as ever.

'If I find that *some one*, it will be the worse for him,' he rejoined. 'He shall take his place in the cell, that I'll warrant. No man fools Gaspard Roche with impunity.'

'In that case I may trust you to find him,' I said. 'As you are doubtless aware, His Majesty will be very much annoyed at finding him gone.'

'He could not be more annoyed than I am,' the General replied. 'But I'll have the fellow back yet, or I'll know the reason why. He cannot have got very far in the time.

'Perhaps he is still in the citadel,' I said.

'I have had every hole and corner searched,' he answered. 'There is not a hole in which a cat could hide that I have not overhauled. But I'll have him yet.'

'I trust you may,' I replied. 'In the meantime we must await that result with what patience we can assume, I suppose.'

'You shall not wait long,' he answered as he rose to his feet. 'My reputation is at stake, and I'll not rest till I have placed him under lock and key again.'

With that assurance he bade me good-day and left the room. As soon as he had gone I sat down in my chair for a good think. But overhaul every point of the evidence as I might, there was not a single ray of light to be discovered. I could not make head or tail of it at all, so I put it by and determined to wait patiently until the king should return.

When he did, and as soon as I had been requested to state my opinion, I asked his pardon for what I was about to say, and then laid the whole case before him. I described the difficulty I had found in gaining admittance to the court-room, referred to my belief that the man was a European and not a native as Roche insisted, told him how Roche

had impressed upon me that he knew no French, and wound up with the sentence I had overheard while sitting on the battlements.

The king looked grave when I began, but when I finished he was graver still.

'My dear Instow,' he said, 'this is really very serious. I am more than sorry that you should have got this notion into your head. You must excuse me if I say that I think your dislike to Roche has made you find a reason other than he intended on every action he has taken in this case. In the first place, my instructions to him, sent by the messenger from the spot where the attack occurred, were to the effect that he was to hold the man a prisoner until I returned. On no account was he to let him be seen or spoken to by any one other than himself from that moment. That, you may depend upon it, was why you were denied admittance, though I must confess I did not think of you when I gave the order. As to whether he was one of my own subjects or not, I cannot see that it matters, since he attempted my life. That would be sufficient were he French, Italian, Spanish, English, or Médang. As to the conversation you overheard, and the three words you mention, if I may be candid with you, I must say I scarcely see the point of your argument. Roche, of his own accord, informed me that he visited the prisoner in his cell before retiring to rest, in order to convince himself that he was safe. It appears you did not question him on that point. It is just possible that while there he himself may have used the expression which you attribute to my would-be assassin. But even if the other had used it, as you suggest, I cannot see that it affects the case in any way. No, no, I feel that you are my friend to the death, and I also know that you are not a man who would say an unjust thing about his bitterest foe. All the same, I cannot believe that Roche had anything in common with the prisoner, and with due respect to you, dear Instow, it will take a great deal to convince me that he in any way connived at his escape.'

'In that case I am sorry I troubled your Majesty with my ideas,' I said, a little nettled that he should have taken them so lightly. 'I only told you my suspicions because you asked me, and I considered it my duty to do so. Let us say no more about it.'

He saw that I was foolish enough to feel hurt, and immediately crossed the room to where I sat and placed his hand upon my shoulder.

'You must not be vexed with me,' he said. 'I know that you meant your warning in a kindly spirit. But you would not altogether believe in me if I did not endeavour to be just between man and man. Roche has been a good and faithful servant to me for many years, and I should be worse than base if I were to doubt him in the smallest measure until I have absolute proof before me that he is playing me false. Come, let us put it by and endeavour to think of something else. I don't imagine we shall have much more trouble of a similar kind.'

At that moment, as if to distract our attention into another channel, Olivia entered the room, and in watching her delight in her husband, and his pride in her, I completely forgot Roche and my seemingly ungenerous suspicions.

That night after dinner I broke the news of my intended departure to my friends. It came upon them as a shock, and I was flattered to see that the prospect evidently did not please them.

'But why must you go, Instow?' asked my sister. 'We hoped and expected that you would remain with us for a long time to come. You are your own master, and I cannot see that there is any need for such haste.'

'You know how much it pleases us to have you,' said the king, who was leaning upon the back of her chair.

The Princess Natalie said nothing, but it somehow drove my heart a few beats faster to notice that her head was bent as if to hide the blush that rose upon her cheek.

'I think I *must* go,' I replied. 'I shall be away at most but a year. Then, if you will have me, I will gladly come back to you.'

'A year!' said Olivia. 'That is a *very* long time.'

'It will soon pass,' I answered. 'Sooner than you think.'

'Well,' said the king, seeing that I was determined to go, 'on the understanding that you are to come back to us in a year, we will give you leave of absence.'

'I give you my promise,' I replied. 'If I am able to move, I will be here in a year's time from now.'

That night when we had separated to go to our rooms Olivia knocked at the door of my sitting-room. After I had admitted her I saw that she had been crying. Upon my taxing her with it she stated that it was on account of my having decided to leave her.

'We have never been separated like this before,' she said, 'and I shall be so lonely without you.'

'But, my darling,' I answered, touched beyond measure at this candid expression of her love for me, 'you will have your husband and all your thousand and one new amusements and duties to interest you. You are happy, are you not, dear?'

'To say that I am happy does not express my state at all,' she answered, this time without hesitation. 'I would not change places with any woman in the whole wide world. I love my husband more than words can tell. And I have the best of all possible reasons for knowing that he loves me.'

'I don't think there can be much doubt about that,' I answered. 'One has only to see you together to understand that.'

Upon that introduction she dried her tears and favoured me with an exhaustive resumé of the king's principal aims and objects in life. It seemed strange to me to hear Olivia of all other women in the world talk in such a fashion; but Love had transformed her, and she was no longer the same Olivia as of old. However, I was well pleased that she should have so thoroughly entered into her husband's thoughts and life, and I forbore to express myself in any way in a doubting vein. So I waited until she

had seated her king upon the throne of All Asia, from the Arabian Gulf to Behring Straits, and then suggested that it was time she bade me good-night. As I spoke, it must have struck her for the first time that her tongue had been running riot with her, for she looked up a little shamefacedly, and then said with unusual meekness:

'You think I imagine that Marie is capable of accomplishing anything.'

'Certainly I do,' I answered as I kissed her forehead; 'and if you wish to please me, you will always do so. Your husband is a wonderful man, and I pay you the compliment, my sister, of saying that I believe he could not have secured a better wife.'

'I am glad to hear you say that,' she replied. 'I want to be a help to him in his life's work. Good-night.'

'Good-night, dear,' I said. 'And may God bless you and give you every happiness in your life with the man you have chosen.'

She gave me a little smile and then vanished from the room.

The following day was devoted to my preparations for departure, and to saying farewell to the friends I had made during my stay in the country. In the evening a valedictory banquet was given in the palace in my honour, at which His Majesty was gracious enough to propose my health and to wish me a pleasant and prosperous journey. Next morning early I bade my sister and her husband good-bye, boarded the yacht, and in a few minutes from the time the screw had begun to revolve, had turned the first bend in the river, and was out of sight of the capital of the Médangs. For a year I was destined not to see it again, and then I was to visit it at the most momentous crisis in its whole history.

## WINDFALLS AND UNCLAIMED MONEY.

'That there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them,' as Izaak Walton observes to Scholar, deters no one in the pursuit of fortune. But the sudden possession of unexpected fortune has proved to many people as great a trial as its sudden loss. Only, like Sam Weller, most folks wish that somebody would just try and ruin them in that way. A sudden access of fortune or misfortune tests a man's stability of character and greatness of mind. Sir Walter Scott noted in his *Journal* after his failure: 'If I have a very strong passion in the world it is *pride*, and that never hinged upon world's gear, which was always, with me, light come, light go.' That same strong passion made him sit down at his desk when well-nigh three-score to redeem an overwhelming burden of debt. His efforts were so far successful, but mind and body gave way under the strain. Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens), one of the most successful authors of modern times, likewise, through unsuccessful business speculations, at sixty years of age started lately on a lecturing tour round the world to retrieve his fortunes. Had John Ruskin earned the fortune of £157,000 left him in hard cash by his father, it is possible he might have disposed of it in a different way. The year 1877 was his last appearance as a rich man, after allowing himself about £3000 for a holiday at Venice; he meant at that time to invest a sum in the Funds sufficient to bring him in one pound a day. But his publisher, Mr Allen, has come between him and poverty, and a re-issue of his works at popular prices has meant a handsome annual income to the author of *Modern Painters*. His first fortune went in this way: One-third of it was invested in mortgages, whereby he lost £20,000; he handed over a sum of £17,000 to poor relatives; another sum of £17,000 was freely lent to a cousin, to whom he forgave the debt. His gifts to Sheffield and Oxford absorbed £14,000, and as he lived considerably above his income at £5500 for many years, his capital soon ran low. So that to get rid of a fortune is easy enough; the 'Jubilee Plunger' managed to go through a quarter of a million in two years. George Peabody, who gave away more than one and a half millions during his lifetime, half a million of which was for industrial homes in London, said this giving was really a victory over a naturally parsimonious disposition. But he did not become suddenly rich; his wealth was gradually acquired, the result of ability and energy coupled with great opportunities which he was able to utilise. Cornelius Vanderbilt, the American millionaire, boasted in his eightieth year that he had made £200,000 for every year of his life. 'Secret? There is no secret in it,' he said, when once asked the question as to how he managed this. 'All that you have to do is to attend to your business, and go ahead.'

Thomas Brassey, the well-known civil engineer, father of the present Lord Brassey, who laid out at least seventy-eight millions of other people's money in his various contracts, and probably deserved the two and a half millions which fell to his share, was a philosopher in regard to money. When a French viaduct gave way, landing him in a loss of at least £30,000, his one thought was how quickly he could get it built up again. His own loss never engaged his attention. To his friend Bartlett, at the time of a panic, when it was believed he had lost a million of money, he said, 'Never mind, we must be content with a little less; that is all.'

The class, however, which is sometimes envied are those who become suddenly rich by what are known as windfalls or unexpected fortunes. Some have their heads turned, and if lacking in self-control their good-fortune may ruin them; others, who have been of a miserly turn before, become greater skinflints than ever. It takes prudence and a well-ordered mind to keep the balance level. We propose giving one or two examples of sudden fortunes ere we touch upon unclaimed money.

Mr Alexander Bean, who had been a railway guard for thirty years on the Buchan branch of the Great North of Scotland Railway between Peterhead, Fraserburgh, and Aberdeen, on the death of a brother in China, at the end of 1894, along with his sister, fell heir to a fortune of between £100,000 and £150,000.

His ultimately prosperous brother had been trained to the law in Aberdeen, went to London at the close of his apprenticeship, received an

appointment in the Eastern Bengal Company, and then settled in China as manager of a tea estate. Next, he started in business in Chin-Kiang as commission agent, and, his business increasing, he extended his connection to Shanghai. His tea operations were extensive, and latterly he owned a fleet of half-a-dozen steamboats, besides landed and personal property. When in this country on a visit he told his brother that he was worth a million of money. The war in the East damaged his fortunes somewhat, but not so seriously as to prevent his brother and sister participating to the extent we have mentioned. Mr Alexander Bean, who succeeded to his brother's wealth, was fifty-five years of age when this good fortune, which he was not to enjoy for long, came to him. Thereafter he retired, and lived quietly for about a year in Aberdeen, when he died of an attack of cancer. Up till the time of his death, it is believed, Bean had not actually handled much of the money, as the capital of it had not been paid over to him. His interest in it passed to his sister.

A canal boatman named Turner, employed on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, received notice lately through a firm of solicitors in Manchester that, owing to the death of an uncle, a successful gold-miner in Australia, he had fallen heir to a fortune of £150,000. The boatman resided at a township near Accrington called Clayton-le-Moors, and up till the date of this good news had had a very hard life. A young lance-corporal of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, named Taylor, about eighteen or nineteen years of age, while stationed at Aldershot heard that owing to the death of a relative he had fallen heir to a fortune of £10,000. William Bartley, a workman, and a workman's wife named Wilson, had recently the good news that an uncle in Australia had left £260,000, to be divided amongst the eleven children of his brother, of whom they were two. Six thousand pounds had been willed to his sister, and the remainder to his brother; but, as the brother was dead, the money descended to the children. A sum of £23,000 to each was no small fortune, if well guided. Mrs Brackenbury, of Horncastle, a poor woman of ninety-five, came lately into a fortune of between £40,000 and £50,000, left by a nephew who died intestate at Grimsby. In a recently excavated field at Elmer's End, near Beckenham, some lads discovered old bank-notes to the amount of £5000. The village schoolmaster sent them to a local bank.

A missing will sometimes causes a mis-direction of a testator's goods and gear. The housekeeper to a farmer in Aberdeenshire had a gratifying surprise in this way. A farmer in the parish of Forgue, in the Huntly district of Aberdeenshire, died a bachelor; and as he apparently left no will, and had no near relatives, his property fell to the Crown as *ultimus hæres*. His faithful housekeeper, who had done all that lay in her power to smooth his path in life, and attended his death-bed, naturally thought she might be remembered in his will. But, after the farmer's death and funeral, the usual search was made, but no document could be found which threw any light on the farmer's intentions. After a thorough search, the matter was given up. The Crown representative stepped in and managed the farm until the lease expired, when the furniture and all the farm effects were brought to the hammer, save a few old books which were set aside as worthless. The battered volumes were taken by the housekeeper to her next place, where she remained a year. She had never looked at the books, and when she left her situation, before taking a holiday in Glasgow, she placed the box containing the books in a cellar connected with the cottage where she purposed to settle down after her return from the south. Some months later she returned, and a neighbour hinted the propriety of looking at the box of books, as she was afraid the mice were having a fine time of it amongst them. The books were removed, and put on the top of the housekeeper's wardrobe. One day, on looking over them, in a thumbed and well-used Bible, pasted between the leaves she found a dirty scrap of paper on which the farmer had written his will, leaving everything to her. Confirmation was afterwards granted in her favour, and no doubt the £2000 which the Crown authorities had to hand over would keep her free of care for the remainder of her lifetime. In some of the details, such as the way in which the will was found, this story resembles 'Michael Darcy's Heiress,' which appeared in *Chambers's Journal* for July.

Another story of a strangely-recovered will comes from Ireland. An old lady named Mayne died at Blackrock, near Dublin, in 1893. She had so lived that all her relatives believed her to be poor, and she died without leaving any scrap of a will, apparently. Letters of administration were granted to her nephew, the Rev. W. G. Mayne, of Uttoxeter, and his sister. The English relations removed any articles of furniture which they thought of value, but left as lumber a number of old books, which were given as useless to a servant of the deceased named Hodgins. The lumber lay in a back-yard for about a year, when, in August 1894, Hodgins discovered a well-illustrated Bible amongst the other books, dated 1817. She thought the Bible worthy of preservation, and removed it into the house. When her daughter was turning over the leaves of the Bible on Sabbath night, she found what appeared to be the binding or cover of an account book tied with strings. On unfastening the covers, inside were found two documents tied in cloth. One of these was a will dated thirty years previously, leaving £16,000 to various Protestant missionary societies, the secretaries of which were not long in claiming the windfalls which had come to them in this curious way.

Quite as curious a place of hiding for valuable papers and scrip was an old sofa. A local painter at Heywood paid twenty-six shillings the other day for the sofa of a deceased resident, and found such papers inside when overhauling it.

Most people are interested in unclaimed funds, so that the excellent little book on *Unclaimed Money*, by Mr Sidney H. Preston (London, E. W. Allen), should have a wide circulation. It gives a clue to persons in search of unclaimed money, and for heirs-at-law and next-of-kin it may also be useful. The complaint is frequently made, and not without due foundation,

that the unclaimed funds in our banks, dormant funds in Chancery, army and navy prize-money, and unclaimed dividends are not advertised through the best channels, if advertised at all, so as to have the best possible chance of reaching those who are interested. To advertise such in connection with some banks, we presume, would be like the beginning of strife or the letting out of waters; nobody could calculate where it would end, in trouble and annoyance. It appears that out of 250,000 Government stockholders ten years ago unclaimed funds were credited to 10,900 accounts. On January 3 of this year the dividends 'due and not demanded' amounted to £283,545, 15s. 2d. The unclaimed stock and dividends in the hands of the Bank of England and National Debt Commissioners have grown from £43,000 in 1729 to over £5,000,000 at the present time. It is not often that a survivor forgets an investment; but the case is mentioned of an old lady, who died at Marseilles at the age of ninety-eight, who was continually borrowing from her relatives in the most impecunious way. It was afterwards found that she had £56,000 in the funds and £20,000 of accumulated dividends. Even in the Post Office Savings Bank nine years ago there were 13,670 dormant accounts, representing a total of £493,162. Some years ago the value of unclaimed dividends arising from estates in bankruptcy amounted to about five millions sterling; a writer in the *Times* in 1879 estimated the amount of unclaimed dividends and surpluses undivided by trustees in bankruptcy at between seven and eight millions sterling.

The amount of unclaimed funds in Chancery does not seem to be known. The Solicitor-General stated in the House of Commons in 1893 that the total was over a million; but a later parliamentary paper showed dormant funds of more than double that amount which had been claimed and appropriated. The list of dormant funds which are undealt with, and published triennially in the *London Gazette*, fills one hundred and eighty-seven pages of that journal.

Official lists of Indian, Colonial, and foreign intestates are published in the various Government gazettes; but these, as may be supposed, have but a limited circulation. The India Office publishes information as to the estates of soldiers dying in India. This is certainly worth doing, and the case is mentioned of a certain F. J. Fernandez, who died intestate at Bombay in 1892, and left £4236, 3s. 10d. It appears that Chelsea Hospital has benefited to the extent of £1,890,451, 6s. 6d. from unclaimed prize-money between 1809 and 1876, and the balance of unclaimed prize-money in the hands of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital in March 1895 was £76,858, 4s. 11d. The unclaimed naval prize-money in March of the present year amounted to £260,000. 'There are funds in hand,' says Mr Preston, 'arising from booty captured at Pegu and in China, Indian prize-money, captures for breach of blockade on the Canton River, grants for special service at the China station, bounty for the destruction of pirates, and grants for stores captured at Kertch and Yenikale.' The soldiers' unclaimed balances, six months after the publication of the lists, are handed over to the Patriotic Fund Commissioners for distribution among the soldiers' kin. The amount due in 1895 to next-of-kin of deceased seamen was £22,914, 11s.

The balance in the hands of the Treasury for intestate estates in 1894 was £122,417. During 1894, according to a parliamentary return for Scotland, there fell to the Crown as *ultimus hæres* estates amounting to £17,589, 5s. 5d. The amount which so lapsed last year was £12,309, 9s. 3d., while the balances in the hands of the Queen's Remembrancer amounted to £43,236, 10s. Grants were made to claimants last year for slightly over £8000.

The 'Agony' columns of the press are a common medium for advertisements of missing heirs, legatees, &c. The Treasury Solicitor has from time to time advertised for next-of-kin in many cases in which estates fell to the Crown. The directors of the Scottish Widows' Fund intimated recently that £15,000 of unclaimed funds were standing to the credit of persons who were once members, but had ceased to be so by lapse of policies. The West New Jersey Society has advertised more than once for representatives of holders of stock upon which no payments have been made.

All this is interesting, and it would be more so if the reader could establish a valid title to some of these unclaimed funds. But it is well to remember that the only royal road to fortune for most people is to do well the duty that lies to their hand, whether fortune smiles or frowns.

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## AN UNEXPECTED REVENGE.

By Philip Strange.

H.M.S. *Ravager* had met with an accident. Steaming up Channel during the night, she had collided with a barque out from——; and, though no one could quite tell how the mishap occurred, it was perfectly clear that the barque had gone down, and that the ram of the warship was in a damaged condition. H.M.S. *Ravager* was accordingly put into dry-dock for repairs.

As very often happens at this place where the vessel was docked, convicts were at work upon the quays. They were a mixed lot; but, being good-conduct men, they all enjoyed a greater freedom of action in the discharge of their duties than is ordinarily extended to the enforced working-guests of the nation. Yet, notwithstanding this unspoken testimony to their comparative worth, the commander of the *Ravager* was less disposed than usual to place trust in them. He was in a ferocious humour, for that little affair with the barque was not unlikely to interfere with his expected promotion. There would be an inquiry, of course; and what Christian ever could tell what confounded foolishness and injustice the 'finding' might yield? He cursed the barque, and the ill-luck, and the navigating lieutenant whom at the time he had left on the bridge, each with impartial fury; and put a double guard of marines ashore with fixed bayonets and ball

cartridge, and an emphatic instruction to 'play the very devil with those gaol-birds if they tried on any of their cursed nonsense.'

The extra precaution was scarcely necessary. To do justice to these unwilling residents within the shadow of the broad arrow, they had no evil designs upon Her Majesty's warship. Their hostility to an unappreciative country did not rise to quite so great a height as that. All the same, the commander might very easily have justified his course of action (had such been necessary) by the fact that many of the convicts were working only a few yards from the dock side and somewhat removed from the warders' immediate watchfulness; though it would have been possible to show on the other hand that, being men whose term of servitude was almost completed, these prisoners were perfectly reliable, inasmuch as they could not afford to commit any indiscretions calculated to jeopardise their expected early release on ticket-of-leave.

These considerations did not in any way concern the commander of H.M.S. *Ravager*, however. He was merely resolved to blow the convicts to the mischief, individually or collectively, if they tried on any tricks with his ship; and in the choicest of quarter-deck English gave orders accordingly.

One of the prisoners was working quite near to the dock side, and almost in the track of one of the sentries from the *Ravager*. Though rather a refined person in appearance, the degradation of his position by no means overwhelmed him with melancholy or distress. It may have been the consciousness of innocence that enabled him to whistle softly an air which had served the street organs some seven years before, and enabled him to view with unconcern the close proximity of his fellow-man. Perhaps he reflected that those aboard the *Ravager* were harder-worked prisoners than himself, and that he could afford *them* a trifle of pity.

He did not disdain, moreover, to take advantage of the situation in which he found himself; nor was his sensitiveness hurt by the silence of Tommy Atkins when he endeavoured to engage that worthy in conversation. He was not discouraged by Tommy's dignity, and did not hesitate to try again when guard was changed late in the afternoon and Private Robert Smith commenced his monotonous sentry-go.

As it happened, Private Smith was intensely interested and excited by the presence of the convicts. He had good reason to be so, for he remembered, with a vividness and horror that set him shuddering, how near he had been some eight years before to just such a degradation as these men were enduring. He was a different personage altogether now—different even in name—to the slip of a youth who had thought it a distinction to be the boon companion of so clever and so dashing a man as Louis Vaudois. The service had made a man of him, had effected a complete change in his personal appearance; while the narrow escape from conviction for forgery during the period of Vaudois' influence had so frightened him from wild ways that there was now no steadier member of Her Majesty's red marines than Private Smith, sometime Roger Vanbrugh. But in one respect he did not alter. He remained staunch to a savage hatred against the man who had certainly brought ruin into his life, and by scoundrelly insinuating manners and methods had almost sent him into surroundings like unto those upon which he had gazed with such fascination ever since the *Ravager* had been floated into dock. It is true the charge against him at the Old Bailey had not been sustained, through a defending counsel's clever manipulation of evidence imperfectly presented by the prosecution; but he hated Louis Vaudois no less passionately on that account: for he had but to recall those terrible hours spent before his judges—the miserable twistings, tellings, and haltings of the evidence, and, above all, the justness of the charge, to fill his heart with such fierce enmity as even now set his pulses leaping and boiling with the wildest desire for revenge.

A thrill of excitement went shivering down his spine, and for an instant travelled icily through his veins as he found himself ashore and pacing so closely to the convict who had made vain overtures to Private Atkins, and who was now softly humming a once favourite music-hall ditty.

The man's back was turned towards Private Smith. To all appearance, he was wholly engrossed by his work. And the soldier, though fascinated for a time, was gradually becoming accustomed to the other's presence when, as he passed the man for the twentieth time, a few words falling from the convict in a whispered undertone caused his heart to give one great startled bound and set all his nerves in a more painful quiver than ever.

'Say, old chap?'——

But Private Smith passed on mechanically, after faltering a moment under the shock. Every sense was on the alert with excitement as he turned and came back towards the convict, his heart beating so fast that he felt near to suffocation. He was waiting with every sense in his body listening for the man to speak again.

'A bit of tobacco, old chap, will you?'

Again Private Smith passed on. This commonplace request almost caused him to burst out into a loud hysterical laugh. It was so foolish to get into a state of such serious excitement over the presence of a ruffian whose only desire was 'a bit of tobacco.' And he continued upon his march with a steadier and more confident tread.

But when, after again pacing forward, he once more came back towards his sentry-box, his mood was changed. A cloud was upon his face, and his brows were knit in a vain endeavour to recall some memory from the locked-up places within his mind. A repetition of the request had fallen upon his ears; but the ring of the man's voice was louder than it had been, and stirred Private Smith strangely. He stood in his box gazing upon the stooping convict and striving to remember where he had heard such a voice before. But he ransacked his mind in vain; at last dismissing his effort to remember with a rueful reflection that perchance the fellow was some old college chum who had fallen upon evil days, or may be some old comrade-in-arms

who had come to grief. He inclined most to the latter impression; and, himself knowing well the luxury of tobacco and the wretchedness of a solitary man without it, his sympathies went keenly out to the 'poor devil' who, but for the interposition of a merciful Providence, might easily have been a felon-comrade with himself. Though well knowing also that he was running considerable risk by giving the precious weed to the convict, he resolved to give just a little for the old-acquaintance' sake which the man's voice vaguely suggested.

It happened that he had in his pocket a cake of tobacco purchased for a trifle when the *Ravager* was on the West Indian station. This he cut into two pieces; observing as he did so that the convict was watching him furtively. When he resumed his limited parade he held one of these pieces in his left hand; and swerving so as to pass nearer to the man, he loosened his hold of it and it fell at the convict's feet.

The man clutched at it with almost savage swiftness; and Private Smith kept upon his way, congratulating himself on having done a kindly thing and on escaping detection.

But the sight of the tobacco and the odour of it excited within the convict a furious covetousness. He had seen Private Smith return the second piece to his pocket, and he desired it with all the greed that was in his nature. That second piece he would have.

Private Smith was expecting a muttered word of thanks; but that was not what came when he once more strode past the recipient of his precious gift. The convict shifted his position, ever so slightly, yet sufficient to enable him to glance over his shoulder with an ugly scowl at the approaching soldier.

'That other piece,' he demanded fiercely, 'or I'll split on you, by Heaven!'

Private Smith saw his face clearly for the first time; and at the sight his heart stood still for an instant and then commenced beating at a madly furious and painful speed. A flash of intensest hatred ran through his blood, for there was no longer any mystery about the man's identity; and as he moved out of hearing of that now well-remembered voice, he cursed himself with the most savage fury for the folly which had once more placed him in the power of Louis Vaudois.

His first belief was that, having recognised him, Louis Vaudois had done this thing with the mere desire to bring misfortune down upon him. When, however, he presently recalled how altered in personal appearance he had become since that day when last he had seen Louis Vaudois, this fear cleared away, leaving only black hate within his soul. So, he decided, the giving of the second piece of tobacco would satisfy his once friend and enemy. He had nothing to fear or to lose beyond that! But he was reluctant to do this; it maddened him to think that Vaudois, under even such conditions, was able to overreach and compel him to an act he would of his own will leave undone.

And yet there was apparently no other course before him than to accede to the ruffian's demands. He had arrived at this conclusion, and with a savage reluctance was preparing to submit to the inevitable when a thought flashed through his mind and set his pulses leaping with a sudden hope of retaliation. Would Louis Vaudois be fool enough to fall into the trap? That was the only question!

Swiftly he made his preparations; and then strode firmly—yet with pulses beating with an excitement stronger than before—once again towards the convict. As he advanced, Vaudois' face was turned towards him with a ferociously threatening expression.

'Box—great-coat—get the lot—smart!' Private Smith jerked out hoarsely as he passed.

He marched to the end of his parade, and there stood with his body only half-turned towards the sentry-box. But out of the tail of his eye he saw Vaudois creep stealthily in the other direction. Almost shivering in his excitement and eagerness, he watched his enemy slip into the box and, emerging therefrom a moment later, with a swift movement make for the place where he had been working.

Now was the time for Private Smith to act. Turning to resume his march, he made pretence of observing Vaudois' doings for the first time, and with a roar of rage called upon the convict to halt. He covered the man with his rifle.

'Halt, there!' he shouted. 'Hands up, or I'll fire!'

And Vaudois, speechless with amazement and white with apprehension, obeyed.

The commotion that ensued was astonishing. A warder came rushing forward, and a number of blue-jackets and marines hurried from the *Ravager*. In an instant the warder had Vaudois handcuffed, and then demanded an explanation.

Private Smith lowered his rifle and went forward to where the others were standing.

'Well, what's the matter?' demanded the warder sharply.

'I saw that fellow coming out of my box, that's all,' Private Smith answered. 'My great-coat is there.'

'And in the pockets?'——

'Two pieces of tobacco and a half-crown.'

Vaudois, after darting a glance of fierce rage upon the soldier, with imprecations upon his tongue, was taken struggling to the guard-room, and being searched, the articles named were, surely enough, discovered upon his person. As Private Smith had hoped, the temptation to take the silver piece had been irresistible.

'The soldier fellow gave them to me,' he cried sullenly.

But Private Smith only smiled. 'Now, *why* should I give a convict half-a-crown?' he demanded with quiet protest.

That was sufficient. The soldier turned to depart; and as he did so, he bent upon the convict a sly glance and gave a dry little chuckle just after the manner of Vaudois' own chuckling laughter—which he had imitated a thousand times in the days long past.

Vaudois started and stared. 'By Heaven, you are'——

But a door closed between them, and the soldier heard no more.

Vaudois was punished. He was drafted to the heavy-labour gangs; and the much-desired ticket-of-leave had to be worked for over again.

And I fear Private Smith felt more delight at having overreached his old enemy than compunction for the rather tricky way in which he had managed it!

## THE MANUFACTURE OF TINPLATES.

It is not generally known that the base of tinplates is now entirely composed of steel. Twenty-five years ago the best quality of plates was made from charcoal iron, but since then Siemens and Bessemer steels have been introduced.

On visiting some time ago a large tinplate factory in the vicinity of Swansea, the first thing that claimed our attention was a number of railway trucks loaded with steel bars, which were from twelve to fifteen feet long, seven inches wide, and three quarters of an inch thick. When the trucks were unloaded, the bars were taken into the mills, where they were cut into proper lengths of about fifteen inches each, as a rule, correspondent with the length of the tinplates wanted. After being cut, the pieces were put into a furnace, and afterwards passed sideways through two sets of rollers. This last process having been repeated, the length of the piece had changed from twelve or fifteen inches to four feet. It is now thrown to a 'doubler,' who doubles and returns it into the furnace. This is done with all the pieces. When taken out of the furnace for the second time, the piece is as before passed through the rollers until it is again about four feet long. The process of doubling is repeated, and the piece now includes four sheets. This is again put into the furnace, and also passed between the rollers. When doubled, it comprises eight sheets, and the process is carried on until we have thirty-two sheets, the thickness of which is reduced to about a quarter of an inch or less. A good workman will regulate perfectly the temperature of his furnace, and this is of the greatest importance. Too much heat will make the sheets stick so that they cannot be separated. Too little heat, with no flame, admits too much oxygen, when the plates scale or rust.

On the second day, when the piece is cold, it is cut into proper lengths by a 'shearer.' Lengths and sizes differ. What is known as Common No. 1 and Cross No. 1 are about fourteen inches by ten, but differ in thickness. After being cut into the proper size, the pieces are opened by lads and young girls. On being opened or separated from each other, they are sent to the 'black pickler.' This workman puts the sheets sent to him into a bath of vitriol and water, which removes any impurities on their surface, before being plunged into a second bath of clean cold water.

The plates are next 'annealed,' that is, placed under large iron covers, or 'annealing pots,' which are allowed to stand in the annealing furnace for twenty-four hours. When the plates have become sufficiently cool, they are sent to the cold rollers. The plates are passed between rollers several times, and the pressure is such that the sheets subsequently appear with a perfect gloss.

The plates, which are still called 'black plate,' are again taken to the annealing furnace and thence to the 'white pickler.' They have now a bright colour, but it is still only polished steel. The next is a most delicate process, because if there is the least particle of dirt on the surface of the sheet, the tin will not adhere to it. The white pickler afterwards passes on the plates to be scoured—a business performed by girls, and a most unpleasant occupation. Each girl has a scouring board, water, and sand, and each sheet as it is scoured is deposited in a trough of clean cold water, and left there until taken to the tin-house to be coated with tin.

The coating or tinning process is also a most delicate task. The old method was to dip each sheet into a bath of palm-oil, as the tin would not otherwise adhere to the iron or steel. Competition has become so keen, however, that a cheaper method has been adopted. But this has almost ruined the trade, the substitute for palm-oil being spirit of salt. The base of our tinplates is as good as ever; but the coating is inferior—the plates rust before they are used.

Finally the tinman immerses the plates in molten tin, which adheres to them. Being now coated, they are put on one side to cool, and in the course of a few hours are removed by young women to the dusting table, where they are cleaned with bran and dusted with cloths. They are then taken to the assorting room, where they are separated into different classes, packed into boxes, and made ready for export.

The export of tinplates from the United Kingdom has averaged over four millions sterling in value for each of the past three years. In a recent report on the American tinplate industry, our consul in Chicago notes that this manufacture has long passed the experimental stage. The American industry comprises one hundred and thirty-seven mills, and gives employment to thirty thousand men. Seventeen of these works were in Pennsylvania, employing five hundred and fifty-seven persons in 1895. If the Steel Trust Companies should advance prices, it is expected by many that this will tell upon the American tinplate makers, and allow British plates to come in again in large quantities, as was the case some years ago.

## TO THE LAPWING.

Wild bird, whose airy wheel and querulous cry
Haunts every step through vernal field or lane
Or wind-swept moorland, like a spirit in pain!
What time I watch, circling outspread on high,
Your jagged wings, or when you hurtle by,
Angrily near, I see in you again
The vulture poised, I hear the kite complain.
Where Ganges rolls through lone immensity,
Once have I viewed you near; a sight so rare
It seemed a dream. Princesses in disguise
Ne'er trod the dewy grass with daintier air;
Nor golden anthers in the lily rise
More delicate than the tufted crown you wear,
Lit by the level glow of morning skies.

Adriel Vere.

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## THE GERMAN ARMY.


By Rev. E. J. Hardy, M.A., Chaplain to H.M. Forces; Author of *How to be Happy though Married.*


Not long ago a German army officer was talking to me about the large amount of work he and his brother officers had to do. When I showed astonishment, and said that English officers did not do so much, at least in time of peace, my German friend explained to me the difference in these words: 'We work for our lives.' He meant that they could not afford to play at soldiering. If they were not serious and did not prepare themselves and their men for anything that might happen, the French, Russians, or some other neighbouring nation would come upon them and cut their throats. It is this feeling that gives to the German army the air of intense earnestness which strikes a stranger. Each man seems to feel that the freedom and continued prosperity of the Fatherland depends to a considerable extent upon himself. Every one in Germany is proud of the army and respects soldiers. The people groan under the burden of taxes which they have to pay for its support; but they feel quite sure that the money is carefully spent, and not a penny wasted. They know that the French army, which is very little larger, costs nearly double as much. It is because of this wise expenditure that the Germans have money for every necessity in connection with their army. Splendid barracks have lately been built, and are now being built; well-appointed rifle ranges belong to every garrison; so do grounds for manœuvring; and as for the number and goodness of the horses employed, one wonders how any country can afford them. Germans think, or pretend to think, that we have no regular army in England. They speak with admiration of our navy, our marines, and our volunteers; but they ignore our army. After listening once to some German officers who were discussing the soldiers of different Powers, I timidly hinted that we in England had a little army, and said that I would like to know what they thought of it. 'We think,' answered one of them, 'that your army has no organisation and no discipline, and that the soldiers are too softly treated. Even our men,' he continued, 'have not enough discipline. I mean by discipline that which when one regiment is annihilated by the new weapons of destruction will cause another and another to immediately take its place as if nothing had happened.'

As regards organisation, the Germans have one great advantage over us. They know exactly what they want their army to do—to fight the French or the Russians, while we require an army that will go anywhere and do anything. Because our army ought to be organised for everything, it is always in danger of being organised for nothing. In Germany everything that may happen in war seems to have been thought of and provided for. Every lady who has learned anything about ambulance work is registered and knows where to go with the defending army if her country were invaded. Every horse fit for service is also known and registered. The only danger of such a highly organised machine is that if one screw fell out the whole thing might fall to pieces, but no doubt even for this provision has been made!

If discipline is not as good in our army as in the German, this is not the fault of our officers. They are greatly hampered because public opinion in England not seldom condones and even encourages military insubordination. Almost any Tommy Atkins when sentenced to a military prison, however deservedly, can, if he choose to pose as a martyr, get a certain class of newspapers and members of parliament to take up his case and make it very unpleasant for those who brought him to justice. One of our soldiers wishing to desert finds plenty of civilians who will aid and abet him: in Germany every man's hand would be against him. They would say, 'We have done our soldiering, and you must do yours.' On the other side it may be urged that the moral persua-

sion sort of discipline now in vogue in the English army is a higher kind and more suited to the times than the iron rule that prevails in the German. I have known officers of that country who spoke with surprise and admiration at the way our officers join with their men in games and thereby gain a personal influence over them. 'We would like to do so,' they say, 'but we could not without relaxing discipline.'

Because of late years great attention has been given to providing our soldiers with good and well-cooked food, recreation rooms, and everything that tends to make them comfortable, German officers think that we are coddling them, and that they will not be able to endure the hardships of a campaign. But an ounce of fact is worth a pound of theory, and it is a fact that those whose normal lives are spent in comfort are better able in exceptional circumstances to rough it than are those who are not. And the Germans themselves have come to see that it is a mistake to treat soldiers like convicts. Until lately the officers and non-commissioned officers used to strike the men, but the present Emperor has put a stop to this and all other kinds of ill-treatment.

Still there are no 'soft billets' in the German army. I once asked the colonel of a regiment how many of his men were in hospital and punishment cells. He replied grimly, 'We give them no time to be sick or to get into trouble.' As I stayed on in that garrison town, I found that the soldiers had indeed very little time upon their hands, scarcely more indeed than sufficed for a walk with their lady admirers on Sunday afternoons. Under my window at five o'clock in the morning I used to hear the drums only, or the fifes and drums, or the singing (German soldiers nearly always sing when marching), or the band, as corps after corps tramped past to the exercise ground, where they would march and double about until they returned at dinner-time, very tired and black with dust. After dinner there is more drill and more classes of instruction until evening, when rifles and other things have to be cleaned for the same work next day. Indeed it would be impossible for the soldiers to be as good as they are in two years, which is now the time they are with the colours, if they did not work very hard. And the perpetual strain of teaching and being taught upon the officers is so great that I am told a considerable number of them break down from nervous complaints.

We all know that the Emperor as head of the army does not himself rest, and it requires but little acquaintance with the officers under him to discover that he does not allow them to rest either. During our last visit to Berlin we saw two reviews and sham fights before the Emperor. At the conclusion of one of them, all the generals who had been engaged came each with his staff to the Emperor. Then the Kaiser called upon an experienced cavalry general to criticise the operations of the day. This was a rather nervous thing to do before so many experts; but the general did his best, and the Emperor criticised his criticism. He admitted that the general was right on this point and on that, but he was wrong here, and here, and that indeed the greater part of what he had said was bosh.

'And the worst of it is,' said my informant, who was one of the commanding officers addressed, 'when the Kaiser differs from any of us, we have to admit even to ourselves that he is right and we are wrong.' 'But,' I remarked, 'he has had no war experience, and cannot know as much as some of the older generals who have been on active service.' 'Yes, he does,' replied my friend, 'for he is a born soldier, and has most wonderful powers of observation.'

Though I was not myself near enough to hear the Emperor's remarks, I may say that I saw them uttered, because they were delivered with so much energy. He rose in his saddle, gesticulated with his hands, and showed in every way that he was deeply in earnest. 'What did all this demonstration mean?' I asked the friend just quoted. 'It meant,' he replied, 'the death-warrant of the military careers of some whom he addressed. He ordered one regiment that did not do as he thought it ought, to parade before him at six o'clock this evening. [This was said to me an hour or two after the review.] He will then change into another uniform, and dine with another regiment at eight o'clock. Oh, the man never rests and never allows us to rest.'

The Emperor says that his army is the best in the world, and that it must also be the smartest, and so of late years great attention has been given to the fitting of the men's clothes, and everything else that may add to their appearance without detracting from their usefulness. At the review there was a cavalry regiment dressed in scarlet, another in white, one or two in blue, one in green, and so on until the varieties of possible plumage were exhausted. The infantry wore white summer trousers, and as the perfectly straight line they formed when marching looked like a wall, we compared them in our minds to a whitewashed wall.

Talking of marching, we may mention that the views of German military authorities upon this subject are very practical. The first thing they think a soldier ought to be efficient in is marching, and the second shooting. Marching comes first, because a man must get to the place of battle before he can shoot. Anything, even a chafed toe, which prevents him from marching is, as far as his country is concerned, as bad as his death. The soldier is taught how to take care of his feet upon the march, and failure to do so is considered a serious military crime. For all this work a German soldier is paid only about fivepence a day of our money, and out of this twopence are stopped for his dinner. Our soldiers would scorn such remuneration; but it is large compared to the halfpenny a day of a French or an Italian soldier; and in Germany, as in other countries where conscription is the law, private soldiers get far more respect and consideration than they do in England. Imagine a German soldier refused admission to the first place at an entertainment, or into a fashionable hotel because he was in uniform! If such a thing did occur, he would be almost allowed to run his bayonet through the insulter of 'the cloth.' In a

German hotel every private soldier is welcome, because, as all classes have to serve in the ranks, they may be entertaining, if not an angel unawares, at least a very rich man.

Once when we were at a *table d'hôte* dinner in the most fashionable hotel of a fashionable German spa, two privates came in, sat down at a little round table, and ordered a bottle of champagne, another of Rhine wine, then ice, strawberries and sugar, and made them all up into a mixture. The waiters were as subservient to them as English waiters would have been rude had two English soldiers tried to enter such a place and give such an order. It should be said, however, that the two German soldiers were what with us would be called 'gentlemen privates.' They were 'student soldiers,' who, in consideration of having a literary qualification, and of volunteering to serve before their time for soldiering comes, are let off with one year's service.

These one-year men cost the country very little, and raise the moral and intellectual standard of those who serve with them in the ranks. They buy their own uniform, live in their own lodgings, and pay less well-to-do soldiers to clean their horses and accoutrements.

Another capital institution that does much for the efficiency of the German army is lager beer. The fact that the soldiers are content with this light harmless beverage, and do not take anything more intoxicating, is in every way a great advantage.

It goes without saying that great care is taken in the selection and training of commissioned and non-commissioned officers. We have not space to describe the lengthy process which a young man has to go through in order to become an officer; but we were glad to learn that competitive examination is not part of it. After passing certain moral, mental, medical, and military qualifying tests, there is a social one. The name of a young man desirous of entering any particular regiment is proposed to the officers just as in a club. One black ball would cause rejection, only the officer giving it must, if required, state his reasons in writing. The sons of officers are generally preferred. Nor are officers allowed to marry whom or when they like. The lady must be of the proper social status; and if the man be under the rank of a captain, there must be on one side or another private means to the extent of at least one hundred pounds a year.

The non-commissioned officers are remarkably good, as might be expected from the care that is taken in their selection. After doing with credit the ordinary two years in the ranks, the man who wishes for promotion re-engages. If made sergeant, he undertakes to serve twelve years, receives a lump sum of about fifty pounds, one mark a day pay, and he is sure of a good government situation on the completion of his contract.

We do not say that the following little conversation did actually take place, but we quote it because it shows the way German soldiers are instructed in their duties, and taught to respect themselves. A captain, in order to test the knowledge of a soldier, asked him:

'What is it that the soldier enjoys in time of peace?'

'Sauerkraut, sausage, and'—— replied the soldier, touching his cap.

'Yes, that's so; but what else does he enjoy in time of peace?'

'Beer, Schweitzer cheese, and more beer, and'——

'Blockhead! Don't you know that, besides all these delicacies, in times of peace the soldier enjoys the goodwill of his superior officer, and the respect of persons in civil life?'

With the different classes of reserves, the war strength of Germany is now over four millions. And this man-killing machine is as efficient as it is large. Let us hope that the complete organisation and great size of this and some other armies may prevent war by making each nation afraid of beginning it.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER VIII.—I RETURN TO THE MÉDANGS.

It was a hot night in Simla, a year all but a month after I had said 'good-bye' to the Médangs. Even in the viceregal residence, situated as it is at such a height above sea-level, it was sufficiently stifling to be almost unbearable. What, therefore, it must have been on the plains, where many men were compelled by their duties to dwell, goodness alone knows.

Dinner was over, and His Excellency the Viceroy and myself were reclining in long chairs in the veranda, smoking our cheroots and watching the glorious Indian stars paling before the rising moon. It was too hot even for conversation, and our talk, which had begun so well, had dwindled down bit by bit, until, like an up-country river in summer time, it had been gradually absorbed by the general dryness, and had ceased to exist at all. I remember we had lit our cheroots with imperial federation, had smoked them half through on the question of colonial assistance in the case of international war, and were about to discuss the advisability of establishing sundry new naval depôts at the fag-ends of the earth, when a servant approached our chairs with a telegram upon a salver.

Never doubting that the message was for His Excellency, I took small notice, continued to smoke my cheroot, and watched the moon rising higher and higher above the shoulder of the hill. To my surprise, however, the man came up beside me and handed me the missive.

'A telegram for me?' I said, 'and at this time of night. Who on earth can it be from?'

'From Markburn, I expect,' said His Excellency, referring to a visit I proposed paying the following day. 'He probably desires to put you off according to his invariable custom.'

'If you'll excuse me, I'll take it to the light,' I said. 'If it *is* from Markburn, and he wants me to postpone my visit, I shall be annoyed.'

'You will not be the first, my dear Instow,' said the Governor. 'Markburn can't help it, I'm certain, for as surely as he invites a man to a week's *shikar*, to dine with him at his club, or to stay with him in his bungalow, so surely must he put him off at the last minute. I was

warned against him by my predecessor, who had had experience of his ways and wanted to do me a kind action.'

Upon this I left him and made my way into the house. Once in the light, I broke the envelope and withdrew the contents. To my consternation, for this is the only word which conveys my meaning clearly, I discovered that it was from Marie. It had been despatched from Hong-kong, and ran as follows: '*Come instantly. Serious trouble. Call upon Verman, Singapore.—Marie.*'

I stood for a moment where I was, turning the thin slip of paper over and over in my hand. That the call was imperative admitted of no doubt; but the question that alarmed me most was: What had happened to occasion it? I thought of a hundred different things, but of course could not arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. One thing, however, was very certain; at any cost I must start for the Médangs without an instant's delay. Fortunately I had had the foresight to leave my yacht in Calcutta in case it might be wanted, and now if I sent a telegram on ahead to advise the skipper, she could be got ready to sail by the time I reached her.

I returned to the veranda with every pulse in my body throbbing like a piston rod. In the year that had passed I had been permitted sufficient leisure to analyse my own feelings and to discover exactly what I thought of His Majesty of the Médangs. Looking back upon my stay with him, I found that I was able to regard him in a more searching light, to discriminate more clearly between his actions, and to understand his motives with a greater degree of certainty. The fascination he had at first exercised over me was still as strong as ever, and now that he was in trouble my first impulse was to fly to his assistance as quickly as circumstances would permit.

Either His Excellency must have gathered by intuition that there was something wrong, or he must have seen from my face as I left the house that I had received unwelcome intelligence; at any rate he did not venture any jest regarding Markburn.

'I trust you have not received bad news?' he said, after I had seated myself again, and was nervously folding and unfolding the telegram I held in my hand.

'Unfortunately I have,' I answered, and as I spoke I handed him the paper. 'Look at it for yourself, and see if you can tell me what it means.'

His Excellency had already heard the story of my connection with the King of the Médangs, so that there was no need for me to enlighten him further on the subject. He lit a match, read the telegram, and then handed it back to me; after which he remained silent for upwards of a minute.

'This is, I suppose, the old trouble over the disputed boundary again,' he said. 'I have heard rumours for some time past that the French were only waiting for a convenient opportunity to take action. Now I suppose they have found it. The king must be careful, or there is no saying what may not be the result. As for ourselves, the question is, what do you intend to do?'

'I must leave at once for Calcutta,' I answered, 'pick up my yacht there, and then set sail for the Médangs, calling at Singapore on the way to interview this man Verman.'

'Have you ever met him before?'

'Never. But I have heard of him from the king, who, I believe, places the utmost confidence in him.'

'Under such circumstances it would be absurd to say I am sorry you must go. But we will live in hopes that the trouble, whatever it is, will soon be satisfactorily settled, and that we shall then have the pleasure of seeing you with us once more. In the meantime, since you have no time to lose, I will endeavour to expedite your departure as far as possible.'

'I am sincerely obliged to you,' I answered, and then His Excellency left me to go into the house.

A week later India lay behind me, and I was on board my yacht, speeding across the Bay of Bengal as fast as steam and wind could take me. My impatience can be better imagined than described. Having no companion with whom to while away the hours, I was thrown almost entirely upon my own resources. By day and night I tramped the deck, wondering what was happening in the Médangs, and studying the patent log with an impatience that would have been almost ludicrous had the events which caused it not been of such grave importance. At last, however, we approached Singapore, and then I knew that in less than twenty-four hours, all being well, I should have seen Verman, and have had my mind set at rest as to the reason of the mysterious telegram I had received.

As soon as we were at anchor in the harbour I went below to prepare for going ashore. I had just finished my toilet, and was about to leave my cabin for the deck, when the chief steward knocked at the door and informed me that a gentleman named Verman had come aboard and desired to speak with me. Bidding him show him to the smoking-room, I remained to close my porthole against the coal-dust, for the barges were already alongside, and then went up to the deck.

On entering the room just referred to, I found myself confronted by a tall, gray-haired military-looking man of about sixty years of age.

'Mr Verman, I believe,' I said, holding out my hand, which he took and shook with extreme cordiality.

'That is my name, my lord,' he answered. 'I am acting under the instruction of His Majesty the King of the Médangs, who sent me to meet your yacht on arrival here in order that I might inform you as to the state of affairs in His Majesty's kingdom. I presume from your presence here that you have yourself received a communication from the king.'

'I received a cablegram from him while in Simla,' I replied. 'It was to the effect that serious trouble was brewing, and it also asked that I should return with all speed to his country. You may imagine how anxious I am to hear particulars.'

'With your permission, then, I will as briefly as possible narrate what has happened.'

'I should be glad if you would do so,' I replied. 'At present I am all at sea.'

'Well, my lord,' he began, as he lit the cigar I handed him, 'the situation is as follows. You will doubtless remember that upwards of two years ago serious trouble occurred between France and the Médangs owing to a disputed boundary line. His Majesty claims the tract of country in question as his property, while the French assert that it is theirs. On the occasion in question, by dint of the most careful diplomacy, the difficulty was smoothed over for the time being, but even His Majesty himself saw that the calm was only transitory and that before very long the same difficulty must inevitably crop up again. Six months ago, owing to the behaviour of a number of French traders who were detected smuggling dutiable articles across the borders in defiance of the regulations, the guards along the frontier were doubled, and on one occasion a fracas took place between the troops of the two countries. France, acting up to her old tactics, claimed compensation, and was not only met with a blank refusal, but by a statement that any further encroachment on the land in question would be considered in the light of an act of hostility, and would be treated as such. She began encroaching immediately, and as a result war was at once declared.'

'Do you mean to say that the two countries are now at war?'

'That is what has happened. Though so far no battles of any size have been fought, there is no saying when the two armies will not be at each others' throats. It is a serious position, my lord; for His Majesty, able though he is, must see that he cannot hope for a moment to contend against so formidable a power as France.'

'This is very terrible news you give me,' I said, quite aghast at what I heard. 'I had no idea it would prove to be so bad. And what has the king desired you to do for me?'

'I am to convey you with all possible speed to the capital, my lord,' he said. 'His Majesty seems to set great store by your advice, and I was sent here to meet you and bring you on as quickly as we could go.'

'But why *bring* me on?' I asked. 'Surely we shall find no difficulty in reaching the city.'

'There is great difficulty, my lord,' he answered. 'The Médang River has been blocked this month past by French ironclads, and it would be impossible to enter it. If we desire to reach the king, we must land at a point that I have arranged some two hundred miles or so to the northward. There horses will be in readiness to take us on. Otherwise I don't see how it is to be managed at all.'

'You say you have arranged that horses shall meet us at this place?'

'If all has gone well, they will have been waiting there this week past,' he replied. 'Instructions were given to that effect before I left.'

'Then you will come on with me?'

'That is my intention, if your lordship will allow me to accompany you.'

'I shall be only too glad,' I answered. 'And now what other news have you for me? How is my sister?'

'Her Majesty was enjoying the best of health when I left the capital,' he answered. 'You have doubtless heard that Their Majesties have an heir to the throne?'

'You don't say so,' I replied. 'This is the first I have heard about it. When was the child born?'

'A month ago,' said Verman. 'His Majesty's delight cannot be overestimated. The event has been the occasion of great public rejoicing.'

'And the king's health, how is that?'

Verman shook his head.

'I fear I cannot give you a good report,' he said; 'His Majesty has aged terribly since your lordship left. It is feared that all this anxiety and trouble will have a bad effect upon him.'

For upwards of five minutes I continued to ask questions and receive answers. Then I suggested that my companion should go ashore and have his baggage conveyed on board, by which time we should have finished coaling and be ready to continue our journey.

A week later we had passed the Médang River, and were approaching the point where Verman had arranged that we should land in search of the horses which were to convey us to our destination. It was towards evening when we sighted the bay of which he had told us. The sun was scarcely a hand's-breadth above the horizon, and the water was as smooth as glass. Little by little the coast-line rose into view and still we continued to steam on. When we were scarcely a mile from the shore, Wells rang the telegraph from the bridge and the vessel was brought to a standstill. Such luggage as we had decided to take with us was already on deck, and nothing remained but to await the lowering of the boat that was to take us ashore and then be off. I had already arranged that the yacht should return to Singapore, and wait there until I should communicate with her skipper again.

Almost exactly as the lower rim of the sun touched the sea-line we took our places in the boat and set off for the shore. It was with a curious feeling that I sat in the stern and looked back at the vessel we were leaving. With her I seemed to be cutting the last link that connected me with my old life, and to be embarking upon a new one, the end of which I could not see or even guess at.

On reaching the beach we landed, and, taking with us two of the ship's crew to carry our baggage, made our way through the jungle which fringed the shore towards a curiously shaped hill which could be seen rising above the tree-tops half a mile or so away inland. Once we passed the remains of a native village, which had been so long abandoned that thick creepers twined across from hut to hut, but otherwise the forest might never have known a human foot, so silent and solitary was it.

When, however, we reached the foot of the hill above referred to, a different scene met our eyes. Situated at the base of a high cliff, which rose sheer as a wall to a height of upwards of two hundred feet, was a hut, and at

the door of it a man, who on closer inspection proved to be a Malay, and a stalwart specimen at that. Recognising my companion, he sprang to his feet and saluted us respectfully.

Verman then questioned him as to the length of time he had been waiting for us, and learned that he had been there nearly a fortnight. The horses were stabled in a hut near by, and were quite ready for the ride to the capital.

Accordingly that night as soon as the moon rose into view above the tree-tops, the animals were led out, and we mounted. They were a fine pair of beasts from the king's own stables, and evidently in the very best of fettle. Twenty miles from our starting-point we found another relay awaiting us, and in the same way at equal distances we exchanged our jaded beasts for fresh ones.

When the moon had disappeared from view again we rested until daylight, then resumed our ride until it was time to stop for the mid-day meal. The sun was sinking behind the hills as we neared our destination, and it was in a glow of rosy light that, on emerging from the forest, we saw once more before us the citadel seated on its throne of rock. What my feelings were at that moment I cannot hope to make you understand, but I know that when I saw those stern gray walls appear before me and thought of what they contained, it was as much as I could do to look at them unmoved.

## COFFEE-PLANTING IN BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA.

By H. D. Herd.

Although by the latest arrangement between the British South Africa Company and the Foreign Office with regard to these territories in 1894 the area over which the British protectorate immediately extends has been considerably lessened, there still remains under the direct administration of Her Majesty's Commissioner a country equal in extent to the area of Great Britain.

This country extends from Lake Nyasa on the north to a point on the Shiré River near its confluence with the Zambesi on the south; but the district to which our attention is more particularly directed is that tableland lying between the Shiré on the west and the borders of the protectorate on the east, and perhaps best known as the Shiré Highlands.

Here is the latest home of coffee; and seeing that the country has now passed through its little fever of wars with the Arab slave-traders on its borders, and peace seems to have come to stay, we think that the present position of its staple industry and its future prospects merit a wider publicity in the interests of those to whose enterprise and hardihood the country owes what prosperity it has.

The history of coffee in Nyasaland dates back only to the year 1878, when three small coffee plants from the Edinburgh Botanical Gardens were taken out by Mr Duncan, then gardener to the Church of Scotland Mission at Blantyre, and planted in the mission garden there. This was done at the energetic representations of Mr John Buchanan. In the year 1880 the sole survivor of the three plants brought out by Mr Duncan bore a crop of about one thousand beans. From the distribution of the seed, three years later, may be dated the beginning of coffee-planting on an extensive scale; but in 1881 the first serious attempt to put coffee on the home market, and to gauge its value as a commercial product in competition with other coffees, was made by the late Mr John Buchanan, of the firm of Buchanan Brothers, whose name is so honourably connected not only with the commercial but the political development of the Shiré Highlands.

A sample of the first crop was sent home for valuation, and was quoted in the London market at eighty-five shillings per hundredweight.

From this time onward the unsettled state of the country made the future of coffee very uncertain, till in 1889 the declaration of a protectorate restored confidence and gave a great impetus to the industry. Messrs Buchanan Brothers opened up large plantations at Zomba, Michiru, and elsewhere, while the African Lakes Company's coffee at Mandala continued to do well. Mr Brown, of Ceylon experience, settled in the Mlanje district, which had been strongly represented by the late Rev. Robert Cleland as exceptionally well suited for coffee; and Mr Duncan, having now left the mission, opened up a plantation near Blantyre.

From this point, so rapid has been the progress made, that the late Mr John Buchanan wrote in *The Central African Planter* for October 1895 that no less than one hundred plantations had been opened up under the respective interests in the country, and that these plantations represented an area of six thousand acres under cultivation. The local revenue rose from nothing to £20,000 per annum in five years.

The services of Mr Buchanan were recognised by the Government, and he received a C.M.G. in 1890. Much to the regret of every one, he died on his way home for a holiday on 9th March of this year.

Mr E. C. A. Sharrer is now the largest owner of estates in the protectorate, amounting to about three hundred and sixty-five thousand acres, of which only about nine hundred acres are under coffee. It has been suggested that planters should also turn their attention to cotton-growing. Tobacco and tea have both been introduced.

So extraordinary has the development been during the last few years, that since 1889 the quantity of coffee exported has increased in an almost geometrical progression. The exact figures have been:

| | Tons parchment. |
|---|---|
| 1889 | 5 |
| 1890 | — |
| 1891 | 10 |
| 1892 | — |
| 1893 | 42½ |
| 1894 | 74 |
| 1895 | 146 |
| 1896 | (estimated) 350 |

The year 1897 is looked forward to as likely to prove a record year, chiefly because a very

large number of plantations come into bearing for the first time in that year; some planters being so sanguine as to put the yield at twelve hundred tons 'parchment'—as the raw coffee is called before the membrane covering the seeds is removed.

The varying degrees of success attained have been due to many different causes, arising mostly from inexperience in trying to reconcile the approved methods of coffee cultivation in Ceylon and India with the conditions of the new country; and partly also from local difficulties, as for instance the labour question, which were unforeseen, and could only be resolved as they presented themselves.

In the early days there was an abundance of local Yao labour, but the supply was irregular and unreliable. Constitutionally indolent, the natives in the immediate neighbourhood of the plantations were soon satiated with calico and other barter goods; and in the wet season, just when labour in the plantations was most needed, there was none to be had, as the villagers had betaken themselves to the hoeing of their own gardens. The necessity for a reliable labour supply being evident, an attempt was made to bring down Atonga labour from the west of Lake Nyasa, which was entirely successful, the newcomers readily engaging to work on the plantations for several months at a time, and this at the most important period of the year, the wet season.

A further step in advance was made by inducing the Angoni, an offshoot of the Zulus, and long the scourge and terror of the Shiré Highlands, to accept work in the dry season on the plantations; and now, instead of coming down in their thousands to devastate the country, they lay aside the shield and spear, and handle the hoe with equal skill. Only last year another large field of labour supply was opened by the subjugation of some disaffected chiefs on the north-eastern slopes of Mlanje. The Walolo, occupying a vast tract of hilly country to the east of Lake Shirwa, had for some little time been venturing down in small companies to work for the Europeans, but by the timely action of Sir Harry Johnston, Her Majesty's Commissioner, against these chiefs, the whole Walolo country has now become accessible to European influence. It is evident that there is every prospect of an abundant labour supply, and in this respect the outlook is very bright.

The chief drawbacks to coffee-planting have hitherto been the labour question mentioned above, and the inadequate and expensive means of transport. The Shiré is navigable for the present flotilla of steamers plying upon it as far as Chiromo, three days distant overland from the coffee district. For a very few weeks during the rainy season it is possible to reach Katunga, a point about twenty-eight miles from Blantyre. From the plantations to either of these points the coffee crop is carried in bags on the shoulders of coolies. The risk, inconvenience, and expense attached to this mode of transport have been greatly felt, but even this difficulty is about to be met by the construction of a narrow gauge railway line which will run from Chiromo to Blantyre, passing through or near many of the largest plantations.

It is hoped that, acting in conjunction with the Portuguese government, the promoters of this scheme may be able very shortly to extend the line all the way to the coast at Chinde.

The reckless mode of agriculture followed by the natives, by which they clear large tracts of forest land on which to make their gardens, is becoming so serious a question that the expediency of legislation in the matter has been considered. It is well known that deforestation is followed by a decreased rainfall, which reacts not only on the coffee crops, but on the health of the European. And where such wholesale clearing has taken place, land which might otherwise have been good for coffee is rendered temporarily useless for want of shade.

Efforts are being made to lessen the various circumstances disadvantageous to coffee by better systems of irrigation, planting of shade trees, and manuring. As showing the enterprise which is so prominent a characteristic of those Central Africa pioneers, it might be stated that during the past year a 'Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture' has been formed, which promises to do much good in securing authoritative and unanimous action on the part of the planters in questions affecting their interests. But perhaps, above all, the *Central African Planter*, started last year and so ably conducted by Mr R. S. Hynde, F.R.S.G.S., in the planting interests, is an unequivocal sign of a very bright and prosperous future for coffee in Nyasaland.

By the foresight and discretion of Her Majesty's Commissioner, who has given the industry much encouragement and consideration, the danger of introducing the leaf disease so common in Ceylon and India has been averted. No seed is allowed to be introduced into the country, even though sterilised, and although some inconvenience has undoubtedly thereby arisen, the risk justified the stringent measure.

The eyes of Ceylon planters have been for some time turned to Nyasaland, and in 1895 was formed the 'Nyasaland Coffee Company Ltd.,' with a capital of three hundred thousand rupees. The quality of the coffee has been highly spoken of by the London coffee brokers, and it holds its own with the best Ceylon and Mocha coffees.

The late Mr John Buchanan estimated that to bring a plantation of say two hundred acres into bearing in the third year would require an expenditure of two thousand to two thousand five hundred pounds (sterling). And he cautioned planters against allowing the trees to bear too heavily in the maiden crop, as there is a danger of the plant being thereby weakened.

Other estimates put the expenditure at *not more than* ten pounds per acre, or a little over three pounds per acre per annum for three years, and thereafter a large profit. The price of Nyasaland coffee as quoted in the London market for late years has averaged one hundred shillings per hundredweight, but it has reached as high as one hundred and twelve shillings.

Under varying conditions the average yield per acre is somewhat uncertain, but competent judges put it at from three to four hundredweight per acre. Some maiden crops have

yielded eight hundredweights—but not without injury to the plants.

Taking four hundredweight as the average, on a plantation of two hundred acres this is equal to forty tons, with a selling price in London of four thousand pounds. From this, of course, must be deducted freights, which will not be less than eleven pounds per ton from the plantation to the market.

In the report on the protectorate by Commissioner Sir Harry Johnston, issued in August last, there is a valuable appendix devoted to the coffee industry, with a map of the southern Shiré Highlands devoted to coffee-planting. We learn from it that a survey for the proposed railway connecting Blantyre with Chiromo has been made, that the native population in the Lower Shiré district since the suppression of the slave-trade has increased from 1000 in 1891 to 14,385 in 1896, and that if malarial fever could in some way be eliminated, British Central Africa would be an earthly paradise. The chief bane of British Central Africa according to the Commissioner is that 'accursed spirit whisky.' The exports have doubled during 1895–96, and not a little of this increase is due to ivory and coffee. Sir Harry Johnston entertains great hopes of the development of the negro of Central Africa. At Zomba there is one European head-printer; all the other printers are natives, who have been either locally trained at the missions or by the head-printer. The Commissioner has also an encouraging report regarding mission work in British Central Africa, and special mention is made of the work of Dr Laws and others at Bandawe, concluding 'that it has only to tell the plain truth and nothing but the truth to secure sympathy and support.'

Three species of liliaceous plants, of easy propagation, promise to yield fibre worth nearly £40 a ton. India-rubber is another product which it is hoped may be largely developed, as the demand for it at present almost exceeds the supply. We are told that 'given abundance of cheap native labour, and the financial security of the protectorate is established. The European comes here with his capital, which he is ready to employ to almost an unlimited extent if he can get in return black men who will, for a wage, work with their hands, as he cannot do himself in a tropical sun. It only needs a sufficiency of native labour to make this country relatively healthy and amazingly rich. The cultivation of coffee would be a hundred times more extensive than it is if there were an adequate labour supply.' For unskilled labour three shillings a month, with or without food, is paid, and proportionately less for women and children. Skilled native labourers—carpenters, masons, brick-makers, &c.—receive wages of from four shillings a month to £40 a year. There seems to be every reason to believe, in accordance with the opinion of the oldest and most experienced planters, that the prospects of success in this industry are very hopeful. Considerable areas of land suitable for coffee are yet to be had, the price varying from five shillings to twenty shillings per acre, and no doubt as the country is better known, and more capital is introduced, the difficulties which have kept back and hampered its development will rapidly disappear, and British Central Africa will yet become, if not the most extensive, perhaps the most successful coffee-growing country in the world.

## JUANITA.

### CHAPTER II.

Some days after this Ned was carefully scraping some new bed-rock, and picking out the dull yellow nuggets wedged tightly into every crack and crevice, these precious morsels which gladden the miner's eyes and cheer the fainting heart. He was working at the bottom of a large pit, some twenty feet in depth, where the gravel had been moved towards the stream-side, forming a bank, and thus forcing the water away from the workings. The chain pump was rattling and groaning according to its custom, but steadily keeping the drainage clear. On the side next the hill a sudden slide of gravel caused Ned to look up; his keen eyes saw something odd on the newly-bared face of rock, and hastily scrambling up, he examined it carefully; then calling on his nearest partner, he cried: 'Come up here and look at this.'

In front of them was a large roughly-squared stone bedded into the solid rock, and nearly flush with the surface of the latter. Examination showed that this was the work of human hands. The stone was smaller than the square hole in which it lay, and the spaces between were filled with tightly-packed sand and gravel by the action of the stream in past ages, when it flowed over and past this spot—for it must have been centuries before, as the stone lay fifteen feet below the surface or present bed of the stream; and these fifteen feet were composed of boulders and rounded stones so firmly packed together that it was slow work sinking through them.

Amazement kept the party silent for some moments. Who could have done this work? Clearly not Indians—whose knowledge of stone-hewing was limited to flint arrow-heads and soapstone pipes. What mysterious race had been there before them? And if that race were gold-seekers, how came it that gold was yet to be found close by? A grizzled miner solved the last query.

'Wall, boys, I reckon the gold we're gettin' came after these fellers left; when they made this cache (hiding-place), if it is a cache,' he added, 'they guessed they was purty high and dry. That thar' hole was made when the crick was runnin' on bed-rock, you bet.'

This was the only reasonable explanation at the moment. Erskine, however, cut the discussion short by saying:

'It seems to me we had better find out what this amounts to first, and we can argue it out afterwards.'

Picks, bars, and wedges were brought into play, and slowly they loosened the mysterious stone. It was no easy task, as the narrow spaces barely admitted the point of a bar being inserted. The brittle edges would at times break off, giving the worker a nasty fall and so causing low and deep profanity, when suddenly the big stone slid from its place, toppled over,

and rolled into the pit below; a small dark tunnel cut back into the mountain-side was exposed to view, barely large enough for a man to crawl through. A rush of cool sweet air came from the tunnel mouth, and Ned, turning to his comrades, said: 'No foul air here. Get candles, and let us explore the place.' Candles were quickly brought, each man taking one and a few matches. Erskine, lighting his, crawled in, leading the way, followed by the others. The passage was a short one, leading sharply upwards, where it ended in a natural cave in the limestone large enough for twenty men to stand upright in, the dim candlelight failing to pierce the gloomy darkness overhead. Great stalactites hung from the walls, the floor was hard and white as marble, the place empty. A dead silence, the silence of bitter disappointment, overwhelmed the party. 'Guess the hull thing's a blasted fraud,' came dismally from one corner. 'Guess it is,' sounded as a general chorus from the others, all save Ned, who was peering closely round the sides of the cavern, reflecting to himself as he did so that hewn stone was not placed at the tunnel entrance for nothing. On one side of the cavern wall the rock appeared to have been cut away in a sloping inward direction, as though to form a pocket or recess in the rock itself. A careless observer might have easily failed to note this, as the ceaseless drip of the stalactite-forming water had flowed into and over the recess, depositing lime drop by drop until the pocket had been nearly filled up. Ned's quick eyes saw this, and grasping a short bar he began to chip and break the crust of lime before him, the others holding lights to let him see. The brittle crust gave way reluctantly to his vigorous blows, and forcing out a large block with the bar, he cried: 'We've got it, boys.' Below the opening he had made lay a solid mass of golden nuggets of various sizes, shining in the fitful candle-light with a rich dull splendour. They were cemented together by the dripping lime water, which binds everything that it touches in a firm embrace; the steel bar, however, quickly loosened the lumps of nuggets. Deeper down did Ned go, the muscles on his brawny arms quivering, and the perspiration standing in large drops on his face.

Exclamations of surprise and delight from his comrades at the discovery were heard on all sides, and then he ceased his labours, his bar ringing against the solid rock at the bottom of the pocket. The gold was carefully laid in a heap on the cavern floor, and each man made his own estimate of the quantity. An average of the guesses placed the weight at half a ton, roughly in value worth about forty-five thousand pounds. The gold when afterwards weighed rather exceeded this estimate. They stood long, gazing lovingly at the heap, each one mentally calculating how much his share came to; and it was only the expiring candles that recalled them from their dreams. Erskine seemed to be the most unconcerned; and saying, 'Well, boys, we had better get outside and talk there,' led the way.

While they sat down on the bank near the tunnel mouth, the whisky jug was brought from the cabin, and each man drank solemnly to the new find. Then a silence followed; each one was thinking what this meant to him personally. Away with future toil and trouble; away with privation and bitter disappointment—harder far to bear than hunger and thirst. Ring out the old life of care, ring in the new of idleness and unlimited supplies, with pockets full of cash to gamble with; for Ned's partners, though hard-working, honest fellows, were simply children of the hour, and like many of their class, lived their lives from day to day; their only thought of the future being the hope that they would 'strike it rich' sometime, and then the future might take care of itself. Years apart from civilisation had hardened them and made them reckless, and each one silently vowed then and there that he would not do another hour's work so long as his share remained unspent. Erskine's thoughts were busy also; but through all his plans for the future there floated a constant vision of a pale face, with red, entreating lips—a vision that refused to be dismissed, and he felt he must take time before he decided on his next movements—little dreaming that Nature's forces were already at work to decide for him and affect his whole future life in that masterful manner assumed at times by Nature when she proposes to do anything thoroughly. This wonderful stroke of luck to all present had come so suddenly that it needed time to grasp the possibilities it opened out; so another drink was taken, pipes lighted, tongues unloosed, and they discussed the question as to how this gold had been placed in the cave, and by whom. The general theory was that it was hidden there by Aztecs from Mexico, as Indian traditions familiar to the white men confirmed the theory that the Aztecs had penetrated far to the north in the search for gold for their temple decorations. Why so much labour had been expended by the ancient miners in making the tunnel instead of taking the gold with them when they left was a puzzle; an attempted solution being offered by one of the men saying:

'Wall, boys, may be those fellows found more than they could carry, and so they made this cache until they should come back, but got wiped out meanwhile.'

This terse solution was accepted as being better than none; not that any one present cared much how the gold got there; it was there in sight; it was theirs by virtue of discovery; and that was quite sufficient for their simple minds. Erskine, who was practical in his views, cut short the discussion by calling his listeners' attention to the fact that finding this treasure was merely the first act; the second and more difficult one was to get it safely out of the country. The district was swarming with desperadoes too lazy to work, preferring the simpler method of robbing, and killing if necessary, those who did, and who, if they once got scent of this discovery, would never rest until they secured it. Ned urged that the stone be replaced in the tunnel mouth, and that all concerned should maintain a discreet silence meanwhile on the subject. This course being agreed to, the stone was replaced after some labour, a heap of long willow branches being loosely thrown on the bank to conceal it; willows being constantly used by

miners in making dams, breastworks, &c., cause no comment from passers by.

The party then adjourned to the cabin for a hasty meal, and as the afternoon was well advanced, they proceeded to the pit to collect their tools, as all had agreed to cease work and hold council as to the best way of removing the treasure. Ned paused on his way to pour some oil on the bearings of the water-wheel; he did this mechanically, as was his daily custom, not reflecting that it was now needless, as neither wheel nor pump would be longer used. Just then he heard a roar like a mighty wind, and hastily looking up, saw a huge wave of water pouring into the pit. A cloud-burst on the upper hills had caused one of those overwhelming floods so disastrous to the gold miners. It came raging down the narrow cañon, sweeping everything before it — huge logs, timbers, and great trees uprooted being tossed about like corks as they rushed by with the resistless fury of the torrent. A crest of water, six feet in height, poured into the pit, carrying with it great boulders, stones, and tons of gravel. Ned rushed to his partners' assistance, but before he got half way the water caught him, and a swirling eddy, lifting him off his feet, swung him against the bank of growing willows; grasping the nearest stems with the grip of a drowning man, he felt the waters meet above his head, a singing in his ears, a sensation of choking, and then a blank.

When he next opened his eyes he found himself lying on the grass, old Dave and Nita kneeling beside him chafing his hands and feet. Dave, lifting his head, gave him a few drops of whisky; presently he sat up, and gazing round him in a bewildered manner, asked where he was. It appeared that the girl and her father, who had just returned from a fishing expedition, were looking at the flood, when Nita, with a sudden cry, grasped her father's arm, and pointing to the stream, ran down to the bank, where poor Ned lay floating at the edge, his clothes entangled in some overhanging branches. To drag him out and carry him to camp was but a few minutes' work, and they joyfully saw him regain consciousness under their care. Erskine got on his feet, and beyond a giddiness in his head, declared he felt all right again. He had really only been in the water a short time. Then suddenly the scenes of the afternoon came back to his memory, and with a groan he said: 'My God! all drowned!' Nita asked him anxiously what he meant. He told them of the awful disaster, not mentioning the gold discovery however; and adding that he must return to camp to see if any of the men were saved—but as he spoke he reeled with faintness. Nita made him sit down again, heaping up a pile of skins for him to lean against, and turning to her father, spoke a few rapid sentences to him in Indian dialect; then, turning to Ned, she told him that her father would go up to the claim and bring back news, declaring, 'You must remain here until you are better.' She spoke with a pretty little air of authority, as though he must obey her, and Ned, as he gazed at the dark eyes now filled with anxiety for him, gave way after a faint remonstrance. Dave took Erskine to his lodge, giving him some dry clothes to wear; and telling his daughter to have supper ready by his return, he started for the claim.

Nita, after piling on great sticks of dead red pine to insure a heap of glowing embers to cook with, produced a large pan, and in it deftly made a mass of dough for the hot bread of the evening meal; and Ned, as he reclined on the grass, lazily watching her, noticed her pretty rounded arms and little hands. Presently she ceased her work, and going up to Ned, asked him how he felt.

'Looking at you seems to take all my pains away,' he replied. A slight blush and a faint smile was her only response. Begging her to sit beside him for a moment, he placed his arm round her waist, and gently pulling her towards him, said: 'Nita, you saved my life to-day; what reward do you claim?' The girl made no reply, but her head sank on his shoulder, her face hidden, her whole body trembling with agitation. 'Speak to me, Nita; claim your reward,' he murmured softly.

She looked up at him, her eyes swimming with tears, her bosom throbbing violently against his own, and then, with broken utterance—broken by the intensity of her emotion—she said:

'Oh Ned! if I am to have any reward, it must be you and you only.'

As he held her to his heart, their lips met in a long, passionate kiss, and broken words of tenderness and entreaty were exchanged under the silent stars and by the flickering light of the low-burned fire. And for weal or woe, for life or death, did these two pledge their solemn faith to each other.

De Gros returned with sad news; he said there was not a trace of the workings left—pit, wheel, and pump, tools and all had vanished, and in their place was left a flat waste of gravel. The flood had gone as quickly as it came; the treacherous stream again murmured its musical song and looked as harmless as it had done that morning. He had visited the cabin, but saw no sign of living soul. Erskine shared Dave's blankets that night, and next morning went up himself to the cabin, after going to the stream with Nita to bring her water for the day; thick bushes hid them for the moment. Taking her face between his hands, he lifted it to his own and kissed her, telling her he would return that day and have a talk with her father. The girl clasped her hands round Ned's neck, her tall, supple figure standing straight and motionless before him.

'My Ned,' she murmured, 'my own Ned,' she repeated, as though her newly-acquired ownership pleased her. Then, with a long, searching look, she added slowly: 'Ned, you will be true to me—you will always love me, and you will never tire!' Then quickly, 'Oh! it would kill me, the very thought'—and with a sudden gleam from the depths of the liquid eyes, she added—'It would kill you too, Ned. You would die.'

Kissing her again and again, he comforted this impulsive beauty, telling her not to distract herself about impossibilities, and then left her. And all that day Nita carried a soft, triumphant look in her face, for she was very

proud of her conquest, with the pride that every woman with Indian or negro blood in her veins feels when she has secured the love of a white man—and such a lover too! Ned, 'her Ned,' as she termed him mentally, was of a very different stamp from the whites she had seen in her isolated life. Handsome, strong, and big—points dear to most womankind—he was a conquest to be proud of. With the passionate unreserve of her race, when she loved she loved always; she had freely given her whole life and happiness into his hands, and she thanked God for sending her such a lover.

Erskine, as he slowly wended his way along the trail, had time to reflect on what he had done—on its prudence or its folly. He was deeply in love with this strangely beautiful girl; but was he wise? How would this affair end? He must marry or leave her; he could never leave her, he felt. And yet, to marry a half-caste—what would the good people at home say? Still, why not please himself; it was his affair, not his relatives'. Nor need he ever return to England. His native land had not been so kind to him at one time that he should deem it requisite to return to it. Besides, he needed old Dave's assistance and counsel in getting his buried treasure away, for Dave was wise and of infinite resource. Ned's brain was whirling with the excitement of the last few hours; his escape from drowning; the loss of his partners; the discovery of the gold; his love for Nita—all kept churning over and over in his restless mind. He suddenly stood still as the memory of the previous evening came stealing over him like a subtle perfume, when she had freely told him she was his, and the glorious face and figure had nestled in his arms. Stretching his clenched hands before him, he muttered: 'Right or wrong, I must and will marry her.'

## MONKEYANA.

Dr Adam Clarke, of 'Bible Commentary' fame, is said to have held the curious theory that before the Fall monkeys were possessed of extraordinary powers of fascination, and that the real tempter of Eve was probably a monkey. We do not know on what grounds the pious and learned doctor based his theory, but we are so far in agreement with him that we regard the fascinating powers of monkeys even now as remarkable. At any rate, they have always had a fascination for ourselves. We have never been able to look at the face of a monkey, so pathetically human in its expression, without an uncanny feeling of kinship. He is our poor relation who, from an unfortunate inability to discard his tail, has fallen hopelessly behind ourselves in the race for evolutionary honours.

There has probably always been an unacknowledged suspicion among mankind that the ape could claim relationship with humanity. Long before Darwin threw light on the origin of species, that eccentric Scotch judge, Monboddo, stoutly maintained our lineal descent from the baboon, and contended that we men are merely civilised and tailless monkeys, neither so happy nor so virtuous as in our primitive state of simian savagery. And who that has read that delightful medley of satire and irony, *Melincourt*, does not remember with what inimitable gravity Thomas Love Peacock, the witty and whimsical, works out his theory that the orang-outang possesses qualities which enable him to fill successfully and without suspicion of his origin the *rôle* of English baronet and member of parliament?

Mr Garner, who has announced a new book on the subject, declared his belief that the monkeys have a language analogous to our own, which he proposed to master, and which may be found to contain the germ and root from which human speech has sprung. Whilst Herr Brehm, the great German naturalist, in his remarkable and fascinating work, *The North Pole to the Equator*, of which an English translation has just been published under the auspices of Mr J. Arthur Thomson, states, as the result of long and close study of the habits of the chimpanzees, that 'any person who will associate with them as I have done, will discover with wonder and amazement, perhaps with slight horror, how much the gulf between man and beast can be diminished.' We shall refer later to the extraordinary and startling stories with which Herr Brehm corroborates this statement, and shall proceed first to give some curious and well-authenticated anecdotes which we have ourselves collected in illustration of the human traits in the monkey.

Sir Gore Ouseley, diplomatist and traveller, gives a remarkable instance of the 'exquisite sensibility' of the monkey. On board the man-of-war which took him out as ambassador to Persia there was a pet monkey of the captain's, a peculiarly affectionate, gentle, amiable creature, which was a favourite with the whole ship's company. But it was not without the mischievous propensities of its kind. There was a milch-goat kept on board specially for the ambassador's use. One morning the monkey lashed the goat to the tackle of a gun, and milked it into a marine's hat—the headgear of the marines at that time was a stiff glazed hat. Caught red-handed, the monkey was brought before the captain, who sentenced him to be sent to Coventry for a week, any one taking the slightest notice of the culprit during that period to forfeit his grog. The monkey went about wistfully seeking the attentions to which he had been accustomed, but none of his old friends had a kind look or word for him. In vain he put on his most coaxing and engaging airs; they were wasted. For two days he bore his punishment, but on the morning of the third, finding himself still in disgrace, his sensitive heart broke under the strain of misery. He sprang on the bulwarks, and placing both hands over his head, gave one pitiful cry, then leaped into the sea and was seen no more.

The following story, too, shows a similar trait in the simian character. On board one of Her Majesty's ships on the West Indies station there were two monkeys, a big one and a little one, both great favourites. Dressed in the uniform of middies, the two would parade the deck, gravely salute the captain, and imitate every action of the officer of the watch. The pair were sworn friends and confederates. Both were arrant thieves; but the big one did the

actual stealing, whilst the little one bolted with the stolen goods and hid them. On one occasion the captain's gold snuff-box was missing. That the monkeys had stolen it was obvious, for both of them were seized with convulsions of sneezing; but the minutest search failed to find the box, till the smaller monkey was seen surreptitiously peering into a middy's chest, and there beneath the linen was found the missing box. When the ship was at anchor in Kingston harbour, Jamaica, the big monkey stole a bottle of Madeira, which he emptied without sharing a drop with his 'pal,' who sat and looked at him reproachfully. The wine made the bibulous monkey very drunk. He jumped on the bulwarks, and got so excited at the sight of a shark which was swimming round the ship that at last, after a great deal of jabbering and gesticulation, he sprang into the water, perhaps with some vague idea of playing with the fish. It was a fatal mistake. The shark turned over on its back, opened its huge jaws, and—exit monkey. His little comrade watched the tragedy in agony; his screams were painful to hear. His grief was inconsolable, and the next day he jumped overboard and joined his dead mate. After that, who will deny that monkeys have their feelings, and very human feelings too?

As a rule, so far as our experience goes, the mischievousness of monkeys is not purely wanton, but is prompted by a motive. Sometimes the motive is revenge, as in the following case. A retired colonel at Bath had a pet monkey. His next-door neighbour was a widow lady with three mischievous and troublesome boys, who, when they were home for the holidays, made that unhappy monkey's life a burden to him by throwing lighted squibs and crackers at him, and giving him nuts filled with pepper or mustard. When his tormentors went back to school, the monkey, from a respectful distance, watched them depart, then came down, crept cautiously along the balcony to the widow's drawing-room window, and seeing that there was no one about, entered, got hold of a bottle of ink, and liberally sprinkled its contents over the carpet and furniture. He was caught *in flagrante delicto*, handed over to his master, and soundly whipped—but he had had his revenge.

In another curious case jealousy of a quite human type prompted revenge. A nobleman, well-known as a prominent member of the Royal Yacht Club, had a pet monkey, which used to accompany him on his yachting cruises, and was accustomed to receive a great deal of attention from every one on board. Among the guests on the yacht on one occasion was a beautiful girl, who attracted general admiration; but, as she professed a dislike for monkeys, Master Pug's presence was not encouraged. The monkey felt himself aggrieved and neglected. But when the party landed to inspect some caves, he contrived to slip into the boat unobserved and accompany them. Watching his opportunity, he seized a large crab, and placed it against the heel of the young lady, which it gripped with its huge claw so fiercely that she screamed with pain. Unfortunately for the monkey, he had been detected in the act, and he suffered for it.

But most of the mischievous pranks of which monkeys are guilty proceed from no worse motive than a desire to imitate the actions of their masters. And if imitation be the sincerest form of flattery, the mischief of the monkey should be regarded more leniently than it generally is. And yet it must have been difficult for a late Royal Academician to appreciate this subtle form of flattery when his pet monkey, taking advantage of the master's absence from the studio, calmly seated himself on a stool before a nearly finished canvas, and with mahl-stick, palette, and brush, proceeded to lay on the colours with a recklessness and dash worthy of a latter-day 'impressionist.'

Nor were the inmates of a Suffolk vicarage, on returning from morning service one Sunday, altogether pleased to find that in their absence the pet monkey had removed the table-cloth, which had been laid for dinner, with all the appurtenances from the table to the floor, where it was set out with a scrupulous attention to details which showed how carefully the lesson had been learned.

One of the drollest instances of the monkey's keenness of observation and power of mimicry that we have met with is the following. A retired admiral and his wife living at Cheltenham had a favourite monkey. One day the lady, hearing a strange noise in the dining-room, looked in to see what it was. The sight which met her eyes was a ludicrous one. Seated in the arm-chair, with the admiral's smoking-cap on his head, and the admiral's spectacles on his nose, was the monkey; and in his hand was the open newspaper, which he shook and patted, whilst he jabbered and gesticulated with great emphasis at the cat which lay blinking on the hearthrug. It was a clever and carefully-studied imitation of the testy old admiral's tone and manner when reading to his wife some passage from the newspaper which excited his wrath or indignation.

It is strange that so little attempt is made to utilise this strong imitative faculty in monkeys. They might easily be trained to perform as athletes and acrobats. Some fifty years ago an Italian count who had a villa on the shore of Lake Albano kept a monkey which he had taught both to row and sail a small skiff. The monkey used to navigate this tiny craft with great skill; but, unfortunately, one day, when climbing the mast, he capsized the boat and was drowned. As jockeys, monkeys might surely be made useful, and would fulfil every purpose for which the mannikins who ride on racehorses are artificially stunted and sweated. And there is, we feel sure, a fortune awaiting the enterprising *entrepreneur* who will organise a travelling team of monkey cricketers or footballers. They would be much more interesting to watch than the so-called 'ladies' who burlesque those popular games.

Then there is the stage. If marionettes will 'draw' as they did in *L'Enfant Prodigue*, what success should attend a company of monkey mummers! It has been cruelly said that the popularity of the actor's art affords indisputable proof of man's descent from the ape, for your monkey is the cleverest of actors and the most

perfect of mimics. Possibly the reason why monkeys have been so little on the boards is that their appearance there would emphasise too strongly the striking similarity between man and monkey.

Something of the sort, indeed, was tried in London in 1753, and 'Mrs Midnight's Animal Comedians' for a brief space took the town by storm. A trained troupe of dogs and monkeys took part in a ballet, dressed in the costume of the day, and their dancing is said to have been clever and graceful. The ballet was followed by a stirring battle-piece. The monkeys defended and the dogs assaulted a mimic fortress. Everything was *en règle*—uniforms, arms, and all the paraphernalia of war. The stormers with scaling ladders dashed gallantly to the assault. The monkeys received them with a withering fire of musketry. After a fierce struggle the ramparts were carried. Then the firing ceased, and when the smoke cleared away, the gallant foemen were seen drawn up side by side, waving their shakos, whilst the band played 'God save the King.' If this sort of spectacle could be produced successfully a hundred and fifty years ago, why not now?

We have referred already to Herr Brehm's fascinating book, and as it is as yet almost unknown in this country, we may be pardoned for quoting one or two anecdotes from it. Here is a droll one. 'A female baboon which I brought up in my family got hold of a kitten with the intention of making a pet of it and mothering it, but was scratched by the terrified foundling. The monkey carefully examined the kitten's paws, pressed the claws forward, looked at them from above, from beneath, and from the side, and then bit them off to secure itself against further scratches.'

This tendency of monkeys to make pets of other animals is curiously illustrated by an instance in our own experience. In this case the monkey had a mania for nursing, or 'mothering,' as Herr Brehm has it, pets both animate and inanimate; sometimes it was a doll, sometimes a guinea-pig, sometimes a white rat. This craze, however, brought the monkey to an untimely end. He had fixed covetous eyes upon a litter of young pigs, and resolved to steal one to make a pet of it. He popped over the wall of the stye and seized a sucking grunter. He leapt with his prize on the door of the stye; it was rickety, and, giving way with his weight, precipitated him back right into the jaws of the infuriated sow, who quickly made an end of him.

Herr Brehm claims for the monkey the possession of almost every human feeling—shame, remorse, gratitude, love, hatred, anger, revenge, jealousy, besides memory, reflection, reasoning power, and the highest forms of intelligence. He tells us that one of his pet chimpanzees sits upright at table, handles its knife and fork, stirs its tea, and uses its serviette with all the ease and grace of a well-bred gentleman. It will even clink glasses and take its liquor in the most approved convivial fashion.

This, however, is merely the exercise of that mimetic faculty of which we have already given examples. But the great German naturalist goes further. He says: 'All or most animals will, at life's risk, defend their young, but the monkey is the only animal that will run into danger for the sake of rescuing one of his species.' We are not presumptuous enough to set our opinion against that of, perhaps, the profoundest student of animal life in Europe, but we have our doubts of the accuracy of that statement, and should like to hear what close observers of the habits of dogs, for example, have to say on that point.

But, indeed, the good Herr does sometimes make large demands upon our credulity in his apotheosis of the ape. Take the following passage, for example, where he describes the monkey's recognition of the physician as a benefactor.

'He (the ape) holds out his arm to him, and stretches out his tongue as soon as he is told, and even does so of his own accord after a few visits from the physician. He swallows medicine readily, submits even to a surgical operation, and, in a word, behaves very like a human patient in similar circumstances. *As his end approaches, he becomes more gentle, the animal in him is lost sight of, and the nobler traits of his character stand out prominently.*' Is not this picture of the dying monkey somewhat highly-coloured? We are willing to recognise *some* human attributes in the ape, but we are not prepared to go quite so far as to credit him with the virtues of the philosopher and the saint.

## THE STORY OF CHARTERED COMPANIES.

'THAT trade follows the flag' is a popular British maxim, but the more one studies our national history the more one is struck with the fact that the flag has followed trade in most of our external developments. No doubt in our earlier ventures the sword and the ledger went hand in hand, but it is quite remarkable how the 'expansion of England' has been the result of mercantile effort. So vast has become our territorial growth that we forget how much of it has been the work of commercial pioneers. The subject is at any time an interesting one, and it has peculiar interest just now when men's minds are concentrated upon the problem presented in South Africa. 'They thrive in law that trust in charters,' according to the old distich quoted by Scott; but although British Parliament and people are showing some distrust of charters, it may be well to take a retrospective view of what has been done by Chartered Companies in the past towards building up the Empire of the present.* In the political

* The reader desirous of further information on the subject may consult *The Pioneers of Empire* (Methuen), *The Old Chartered Companies* (Ed. Arnold), and *English Trade and Finance in the Seventeenth Century* (Methuen), to which works we have to express our indebtedness; also *The Romance of Commerce*, by Oxley (W. & R. Chambers).

controversy of the moment, however, we take no part.

Of the great trading companies of the 16th and 17th centuries it has been said, with truth, that their influence on our foreign trade was as far-reaching as that of the guilds, or gilds, of the Middle Ages on our home trade. This is true, but only part of the truth. As monopolies, some of these concerns may be indefensible from the point of view of modern economics, but then they belonged to an age of monopolies, and they performed work beyond the ability of individuals. One may find in the old chartered trading companies some analogy not only with the modern Railway Company (which is also a monopoly) but also with the modern Colonial Government. Even if their organisation was economically objectionable, it was politically necessary because of the conditions under which our foreign trade had to be conducted. With these few words we must dismiss the subject of constitution, and proceed with our examination of facts. And here it should be explained that charters were granted to two sorts of companies—regulated and joint stock—and that during the 17th century there was much controversy as to the merits of each. In a 'regulated' company any member, on the payment of fees and subject to the rules and bylaws of the company, could trade on his own capital and at his own risk to any amount, within the sphere of the company's privileges, but without reference to it as a corporation. In a joint-stock chartered company the trading was corporate, and each member shared in the common profit and loss.

The principle of granting charters with special privileges, immunities, and monopolies to traders banded together for trade purposes is a very old one, but these charters also imposed obligations and enforced certain duties. Such were the charters granted to the goldsmiths in 1327, to the mercers in 1393, to the haberdashers in 1407, to the fishmongers in 1433, and so on. The extension of this principle to bodies of traders for foreign trade was later, and the charter in such cases was ostensibly for the purposes of encouraging exploration and colonisation, and in spreading the national interests generally. The first British charter granted for trading (as distinguished from trade) was, curiously enough, given to foreigners. It was granted in 1232 by Henry III. to certain merchants of Flanders, and the Hanse towns of Lubeck, Hamburg, Bremen, and Cologne (afterwards known as the Hanseatic League), giving them exclusive possession of the trading station on the Thames known as the German Steelyard, and certain privileges in return for services rendered and to be rendered. And for three hundred years thereafter the Hanseatics continued to flourish in England under an English charter. The first *English* corporate body, however, to receive a charter for purely trading purposes was that of the Merchants of the Staple, or dealers in wool, skins, lead, and tin. This body was in existence early in the 13th century, but was then chiefly composed of foreigners, and did not become a really English body until after 1362. Closely associated with it was the Fraternity of St Thomas à Becket, who had a monopoly of the sale of English woollen cloths in Flanders, and who in 1406 received a charter from Henry IV. One hundred years later, out of this Fraternity developed the Company of Merchant Adventurers of England under a new charter, granting extensive rights and privileges for trading to 'Flanders, Brabant, Holland, Zealand, and the countries adjacent under the Archduke's Government.' None of these companies, however, had the peculiar functions of exploration, colonisation, and administration which we now associate with charters.

In point of fact, the first company of this kind was not English, and curiously enough (considering recent years) it was in connection with Africa. Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal, to whom geography owes so much, granted in 1443 to a company of Portuguese merchants the exclusive right of exploring and trading in the lands of the Moors of the African coast for a limited period; and this company proceeded to set up 'factories' on the coast, to which they sent every year cargoes of goods to be exchanged for slaves and gold-dust. The first chartered company in the accepted sense was thus the initiator of that great traffic in human flesh which has played such a momentous part in modern history.

It was more than a hundred years later before England embodied the principles of both Prince Henry's charter and that of the Merchant Adventurers above named, who came to be known as the Hamburg Company when their operations centred in that city.

The next development was an extremely interesting one. In 1554 a number of English merchants subscribed a joint-stock to cut out Portugal in the east, by opening up direct relations with China *viâ* the north-east passage. An expedition was despatched under Sir Hugh Willoughby, who came to grief. It did not discover the north-east passage; but Captain Richard Chancellor, in one of the ships, did discover Archangel, from where he made his way on sledges to Moscow, where he saw the Tsar, and obtained from him letters to King Edward VI. promising trading privileges to English merchants. By the time Chancellor reached London again Edward was dead, but Queen Mary granted a charter to certain merchant adventurers for the 'Discovery of lands, countries, isles, &c., not before known or frequented by any English,' and with special liberty to resort to all the Tsar's dominions. Thus was founded the famous Russia Company, which not only opened up Russia to our trade, but also pushed its way into Persia, and made valiant efforts to force a passage through the Arctic regions. Now, in connection with this company we find three interesting things. It formed (in 1613) a daring scheme to open up the whole trade of India and Persia, over the Hindu Kush, and by way of the Oxus; it took possession in the king's name of Spitzbergen, and is thus the first chartered trading corporation that added territory to the Empire; and it developed the whale fisheries in Greenland waters. Curiously enough, the East India Company later combined with the Russia Company for the prosecution of the whale fishery, an

industry quite outside the original designs of each. The Russia Company was many-sided. It did an enormous trade in salmon as well as in silk; and while endeavouring to reach China and India, struggled with the Dutch in the Arctic Seas, and for a long period was sole master of Anglo-Russian commerce. But rivals and jealousies increased and multiplied, its influence gradually waned, and before the middle of the 18th century the Russia Company was reduced to a mere name. It was in connection with the enterprises of this company that diplomatic relations were established with Russia and with sundry oriental potentates. It is pointed out by Mr Cawston that 'as the consuls and political agents in the Netherlands, France, and Germany were at first supported by the companies, so the first embassies to the far east were similarly equipped at the expense of the great corporations needing their intervention.'

The Russia Company was on the 'regulated' principle already described. So also was the 'Fellowship of Eastland Merchants,' who in 1579 obtained by charter the privilege 'to enjoy the sole trade through the Sound into Norway, Sweden, Poland, Lithuania' (except Narva, which was reserved by the Russia Company), 'Prussia and also Pomerania, from the river Oder eastward to Dantzich, Elbing, and Königsberg, also to Copenhagen, Elsinore, Finland, Gothland, Bornholm, and Œland,' with power to make bylaws and to impose fines and punishments on all interlopers in these preserves. For fifty years this Eastland Company flourished and made much wealth, but Charles I. took away its grain monopoly. Charles II. threw open the Baltic trade to all on a nominal payment, and in 1689 the Eastland Company disappeared before the Declaration of Rights, which made illegal all monopolies not expressly sanctioned by parliament.

In the same year in which the Eastland Company was chartered was laid the foundation of another great historic enterprise. Queen Elizabeth despatched William Harburn to Turkey as her ambassador. Now Harburn was not a diplomat but a merchant, and all his efforts were bent on obtaining trading concessions from the Sultan. He was so far successful that in 1581 Elizabeth granted a charter of incorporation to certain merchants who 'at their own great cost and charges found out and opened a trade in Turkey not heretofore in the memory of any man now living, known to be commonly used and frequented by way of merchandise . . . whereby many good offices may be done for the peace of Christendom, and relief of Christian slaves, and good vent for the commodities of the realm, to the advancement of her honour and dignity, the increase of her revenue, and of the general wealth of the realm.' This was the beginning of the Turkey, or Levant, Company, by whose means all the produce of Greece, Syria, Egypt, Persia, and India was brought into England more abundantly, and more cheaply than before. This company sent out great fleets of ships with which they did a good deal of carrying for other nations as well. The trade and influence of the Levant Company developed so enormously that it became necessary to despatch one Thomas Glover as resident envoy and agent of the King (James) in Turkey, with power to appoint consuls for the good government of the English in any of the ports of the Empire. Then came contentions with the East India Company (about which presently) with reference to the Eastern trade, and finally a great quarrel under which the fortunes of the Levant Company sank. It really endured as a corporation until the present century, not surrendering the last of its ancient privileges and immunities until 1825.

The Turkey or Levant Company is not only interesting as the last of the 'regulated' companies, but also as the precursor, and in some sort the initiator, of the great East India Company. Some of the members of the Levant Company formed the idea of establishing an overland trade with India, and obtained letters from Queen Elizabeth to the 'King of Cambaya' and the 'King of China.' They actually went overland to Agra, Lahore, Pegu, &c., returned by sea to Ormuz, and then up the Tigris to Bagdad, whence they made their way to Aleppo and Tripoli, and so home by sea to London. These bold adventurers, Newberry, Leedes, and Fitch, brought back such glowing information that the Turkey Company, under a new charter in 1593, extended its sphere to India by an overland route, while leaving Persia to the Russia Company. It was not easy, however, to maintain commercial relations with India through the territories of Turkey and Persia, always either at war with each other or with some neighbour. The Cape route was too precarious so long as Spain scoured the seas with her fleets; but after the destruction of the Spanish Armada men began to think more of a seaward than of an overland route to the East. The business that the Levant Company did succeed in doing with India quickened the desire for more, and so certain members of the Levant Company petitioned the Queen for permission to send ships direct to the Indies. Several voyages were made with such success that in 1599 a further petition was presented for incorporation as a joint-stock company, 'for that the trade of the Indies being so remote, could not be traded on but on a joint and united stock,' and for certain privileges, including freedom from customs duties and liberty to export bullion.

And so it came to pass that on the 31st December 1600, Queen Elizabeth granted a charter for fifteen years to the Earl of Cumberland, and some two hundred and fifteen knights, aldermen, and merchants, that 'at their own cost and charges they might set forth one or more voyages to the East Indians in the country and parts of Asia and Africa, and to the islands thereabouts, to be one body politic and corporate by the name of the Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies, to have succession, to purchase lands without limitations, to have one Governor and twenty-four persons to be elected annually, who shall be called committees, jointly to have the direction of the voyages and the management of all other things belonging to the said company.' This charter was for fifteen years, and it granted exemption from customs for four

years. The share capital was £72,000 in shares of £50 each, and the sum subscribed by the petitioners was £30,133, 6s. 8d.

This was the beginning of the Honourable East India Company, and the foundation of our great Indian Empire. At first the company contented itself with factories at Surat, Ahmedabad, Cambay, and Gogo, for purposes of trade only, but it had hardly passed its majority when it began to develop larger desires. Thus it obtained from James I. power to punish its servants by martial as well as municipal law, and in 1639 it formed Fort St George, now known as Madras. By the end of the century it was making treaties, acquiring territories, suppressing rebellions, exercising government, and building up an army and navy, and performing all the civil, judicial, and military functions of a state.

The story of John Company is, of course, the history of British India, and is much too large for treatment here. Suffice it to say that the charter was renewed from time to time in spite of contentions and controversies, until the mutiny of 1857 put an end to Government by Charter. The company which began as a trading corporation with a sum of £30,000, ended by bequeathing to the Empire an area of two million square miles, and a population of nearly three hundred million souls—one of the most marvellous evolutions in the history of the world.

While the East India Company was already becoming a great political power, a new enterprise was at work in the west, and an enterprise also full of romance and of thrilling adventure. The Russia Company had failed to find a north-east passage to India; but Frobisher, Davis, Hudson, Batten, and Baffin strove in succession to find a route by the north-west. Baffin declared as the result of his effort that there is no such passage. This was in 1616; but fifteen years later a fresh series of efforts began. The result was not the finding of the passage, but the foundation of a new Empire in the west. For in 1670 Charles II. granted a charter to Prince Rupert, the Duke of Albemarle, and sixteen other noblemen and gentlemen, conferring the sole trade and rights to lands, mines, minerals, and fisheries within the territory around and beyond Hudson Bay, to be known as Rupert's Land. 'The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay' were very liberally endowed with privileges and powers, and for the first twenty years their profits were very large, notwithstanding heavy losses caused by the depredations of the French. Several times, indeed, the proprietors received a dividend of fifty per cent. on their stock. In its third decade, however, the company lost so much through conflicts with the French that it had to borrow money. The leading feature in the enterprise was the fur trade, and for that trade it had a sore and lengthy struggle with the North-west Company of Montreal, with which, however, it amalgamated in 1821. Later, taking advantage of an Act of Parliament of George IV., the Hudson Bay Company surrendered its charter in return for a license for exclusive trade for twenty-one years, which license was renewed, but finally expired in 1858, leaving the company with no special advantages beyond its large experience and splendid organisation. Its lands, with certain reservations, were transferred to government for £300,000, and were incorporated in 1870 in the Dominion of Canada. The great and growing North-west Territory is one of the Imperial outcomes of the charter granted to Prince Rupert two hundred and twenty-six years ago.

With the charter ended for two centuries the practice of royal grants and special privileges to British trading corporations. Besides the great concerns we have dealt with, other chartered companies have done work of a more or less permanent kind. Thus Sir Walter Raleigh founded the colony of Virginia under a charter from Queen Elizabeth. The South Virginia (or London) Company and the Plymouth Adventurers were formed for the settlement and trade of what are now respectively the Southern States and the New England States of the American Union. And there were several other chartered enterprises in America, which, however, can hardly be regarded as having built up the British Empire.

In Africa the first English charter was granted by Queen Elizabeth to certain merchants in London and Exeter, for exclusive trade to the rivers Senegal and Gambia. This was the first of a succession of Guinea or African Companies culminating in the Royal African Company incorporated in 1672, under the patronage of the Duke of York. This company traded much in gold, yet more in slaves; but being unable to keep up its forts without parliamentary assistance, was dissolved in 1752.

After the Hudson's Bay Company, no more charters were granted until the British North Borneo Company was created in 1881, and incorporated by Royal Charter for administrative and trading purposes in Borneo. Since then the Royal Niger, the Imperial British East Africa, and the British South Africa Companies have been formed under charters; but what they have done and are doing for trade and Empire is matter of common knowledge.

## ON THE HEIGHT.

Friend who with dauntless soul art climbing still
The path so few have courage to pursue,
For whom life's storms assailing but renew
The strength of thine indomitable will,
Alone thou mountest the laborious hill;
I having lapsed and vanished from thy view,
For, where I faltered, thou remainedst true,
Strong with the strength that liveth to fulfil.

So climb true soul, till Autumn's russet gleams
Fade in the grasp of Winter's whitening palm,
And on the hill-top of our glorious dreams
Thou hast thy wage—life's last, immortal calm!
Content am I to ponder from afar,
Like some lone soul enamoured of a star.

Edgar Dewey.

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## THE CORNISH MINING CAPTAIN.

By S. Baring-Gould.

Alack-a-day! As the old order changeth, one of the most fresh and delightful characters Old England has produced is disappearing. Cornish mining is almost at its end. Every week away from the peninsula goes a shipload of miners for whom their occupation is gone, and with them the old cap'n.

Well, what is our loss is others' gain! and he goes to another part of the round world to be there as a waft of fresh air, a racy and delightful companion, a typical Cornish Celt, every inch a man, strong in body, and as strong in opinions, a little rough at times, but with a tenderness of heart like that of a woman.

If we go along the great backbone of Cornwall, we find it a mass of refuse heaps—every here and there is a bristling chimney, an old engine-house, but all desolate; the chimney gives forth no smoke, the engine is silent. The story is everywhere the same—the mine has failed. Is the lode worked out? Oh dear no! There is still plenty of tin—but foreign competition has struck the death-blow to Cornish mining, and the Cornish miner, if he will not starve, must seek his future elsewhere.

Of course there are captains and captains; there is the clever, wheedling captain, who starts mines never intended to pay, of which the only metal to be found is in the pockets of the dupes who are persuaded to invest in them. I knew one such. He found a mine, and was very anxious to get up a company, so he 'salted' it cleverly enough, by dynamiting tin into the soil. But the mining engineer sent down to see this mine and report on it to the investors was too shrewd for him. The projected mine was not in Cornwall but in Devon. 'Halloa!' said he, 'how comes this tin here? It is Cornish metal.'

So that mine never got on all fours.

In a great number of cases, in the large majority, in fact, the captain is himself the dupe, and dupe of his own ambition. Mining is a speculation; it is a bit of gambling. No one can see an inch into solid rock, and no one can say for certain that indications that promise may not be deceptive. The captain sees the indications, the dupes do all the rest. If the lode proves a failure, then those who have lost in it come down on the captain and condemn him as a rascal.

But there are cases where concealment or falsification of the truth is actually dishonest. Caradon Hill, near Liskeard, according to the saying, is vastly rich in ore:

> 'Caradon Hill well wrought
> Is worth London Town dear bought.'

It has been mined from time immemorial, but is now left at rest, and has been deserted for some years. The tale is told—we will not vouch for its accuracy—that in one of the principal mines on Caradon, the miners came on an immense 'bunch' of copper; and at once, by the captain's orders, covered it up and carried on their work where it was sure to be unproductive. Down, ever more downwards went the shares, as the mine turned out less and less copper, and just as all concerned in the bit of roguery were about to buy up the shares at an absurd price, in burst the water and swamped the mine. To clear it of water would require powerful engines, take time, and prove costly. But as shares had fallen so low no capitalists could be found to invest, and there lies this vast treasure of copper unlifted, deep under water. 'I tell the tale as 'twas told to me.' Is it true? I cannot say—at all events it gives a peep into the methods by which the rise and fall of shares can be managed, and it shows how completely investors are at the mercy of the mining captains. But that there are rogues among the captains does not prove that roguery is prevalent, or that many are tainted with it. On the contrary, as a body they are thoroughly honest, but speculative and hopeful.

There is a certain captain who has great faith in the divining-rod. One day he was bragging about what he had done therewith, when an old miner standing near remarked:

'How about them eighteen mines, cap'n, you've been on as have turned out flukes?'

'I don't say that the rod tells *how much* metal there is, but that it tells where metal lies that is sure sartain. Now look here, you unbelieving Thomas, I'll tell you what happened to me. There was a pas'le o' fools wouldn't believe nothing about the divining-rod, and they said they'd give me a trial wi' my hazel rod; so I took it, and I went afore 'em over the ground, and at last the rod kicked, just like my old woman when her's a bit contrary. Well, said I, you dig there! and dig they did.'

'And did you come on a lode, cap'n?'

'I'll tell you what we came on—a farmer's old 'oss as had been buried 'cos her died o' strangles. Well, I promise you, they laughed and jeered and made terrible fools o' themselves, and said I was done. I done! said I—not I; the divining-rod is right enough. Look, they buried the old 'oss wi' her four shoes on. The rod told the truth—but mark you, her didn't say how much metal is under ground.'

The endurance and coolness of the miner are remarkable. But an instance or two will show this better than by dilating on the fact.

At a certain mine, which we will call Bearwalls, the shaft crumbled in. It was sunk through a sandy or rubbly matter that had no cohesion. When it ran in, there were below a miner and a boy. The latter was nearly frantic with terror, whined and wept, and could not be comforted. The man, whom we will call Thomas Penfound, considered the situation, and at once saw that if they were to be recovered alive, it would not be for many days. Accordingly, said he to his lad, 'Now, Jim, us must resarve our candles to eat. Us must do without light,' and at once he doused the candles.

For five days and nights these two were entombed. The cold was intense, and Thomas Penfound was obliged to keep the boy walking in the dark lest he should fall asleep, when he would not wake again, and he had, of course, also to keep himself awake. The tallow candles served them as food—and, by the way, miners are somewhat fond of tallow dips. I do not know that they consider them as a delicacy, but they do not dislike them.

Those without saw that the only way to save the entombed man and boy was to sink another shaft, and this was at once put in hand under the directions of the captain, Cap'n Zackie. That man worked for four days and nights without ceasing, save to take his meals, and that as a hasty snack. He neither lay down for one hour nor dosed, but kept at work for all those one hundred and twenty hours as though he were a machine.

At the end of that time the buried miners were reached. The boy was in a dazed condition. Not so Thomas Penfound. The first remark he made was, 'Any fellow han' me a light and a bit o' 'baccy for my pipe?' and on reaching the grass he said, 'I wonder if my old woman have got summot cookin' for me.'

He was much surprised that all wished to shake him by the hand. 'Why,' said he, 'what is all this about? I ain't done nothin' but sit in darkness.'

Captain Zackie received the Victoria medal for his devotion. He had to go up to town for it, and was presented with it by the Princess of Wales.

Very often the captains are sober, and teetotalers. But this is not always the case, unhappily; and some are temperance advocates on the platform, but something else in the public-house. There was an old chap of this description who was known far and wide for his ardent temperance harangues. A very good friend one day went with him to prospect a promising new district. They entered to refresh at the little tavern, situated some twelve hundred feet above the sea, perhaps the highest planted public-house in England. The friend was amused to see Captain Jonas take the whisky bottle, and half-fill his glass, holding his hand round the tumbler to hide how much he had helped himself to.

'Halloa, Cap'n!' exclaimed the friend, 'I thought you took naught but water.'

'Sir,' answered Jonas with great composure, 'us must live up to our elevation. I does it on principle.'

Some of the Cornish mining captains have had experiences out of England as common miners. There is one I know who worked in the Australian gold-fields many years ago, and he loves to yarn about those days.

'We were a queer lot,' said he to me one day; 'several of us—and my mate was one—(not I, you understand)—were old convicts. But it was as much as my life was worth to let 'em know that I was aware of it. There were various ways in which a score against a man might be wiped out. I'll tell you what happened once. There was a chap called Rogers—he came from Redruth way—and he let his tongue run too free one day, and said as how he knew something of the back history of a few of our mates. Well, I knew evil would come of it, and evil did. Things was rough and ready in those days, and we'd tin buckets for carrying up the gold, and sand, and so on. Well, one day when Rogers was about to come up the shaft, by the merest chance, one of them buckets was tipped over, and fell down. I went after him down the shaft, and that there bucket had cut off half his head, and cut near through his shoulder. You wouldn't ha' thought it would have done it, but it did. Bless you, I've seen a tumblerful of water knock a man down if the water didn't 'break,' as they call it, before reaching the bottom of a deep shaft; it comes down in one lump like lead.'

After a while he went on—'I had a near squeak once, the nearest I ever had. When we were going to blast below, all men were sent up except the one who was to light the fuse. Well, one day there was only myself to do it. I set fire to the fuse, and away I went, hauled up. But somehow it didn't go off. I thought that the water had got in, so before I reached the top and had got out, I signalled to be lowered again. I had just reached the bottom

when the explosion took place. The rocks and stones went up past me in a rush, and down they came again. How it happened that I escaped is more than I can tell you; but God willed it; that was enough for me. I was back with my shoulder to the rock, and the stones came down in a rain, but not one any bigger than a cherry stone hit me. But I can tell you the men above were frightened. They couldn't believe their ears when I shouted; they couldn't believe their eyes when they saw me come up without a scratch. Folks say the age o' miracles is past. I'll never say that; it was a miracle I weren't killed, and no mistake.'

'Well, Captain,' said I, 'and did you make a fortune out at the Australian gold-fields?'

He looked at me with a twinkle in his eye. 'I went out with half-a-crown in my pocket. When I came back I'd got just one ha'penny.'

'But all the gold you found?'

'That had a curious way of leaving me, and getting into the possession of my mate — him who'd been a convict. He grew rich, he did. I didn't. Well, I came back with experience.'

'And now, Cap'n, what are you going to do?'

'There's nothing going on in the old country. I'm off somewhere over the seas again. Can't help it. I love dear old England, and blessed old Cornwall above all, but if they won't or can't support me and my family, I must go elsewhere.'

Alas! this is too true. The mines are nearly all shut down. In one parish alone, that of Calstock, there were twenty-two in active operation a few years ago, now not one.

The miners are scattered over the world. They are gone to South Africa, to Brazil, to the Straits Settlements.

The Cornish arms represent a pile of fifteen balls, and the motto beneath runs, 'One and all.' Now all the component parts of Cornish industry, the Cornish people, are scattered, and one and all dispersed through the globe; but give them the chance, and back they will come to old Cornwall again. Trust them.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER VIII. (*continued*).

SPURRING our horses to a last endeavour, we pressed through the town amid the enthusiastic welcome of the inhabitants and began to ascend the steep path to the citadel. It was plain that our arrival had been noticed, for a guard of honour was drawn up in the gateway to receive us. Our horses clattered under the archway and with the guard presenting arms we entered the court-yard to pull up before the palace steps. The group that I saw gathered there to welcome me I shall never forget. It included both the king and queen, and standing beside them, her hand resting upon my sister's shoulder—the Princess Natalie.

Springing from my horse, I clasped Olivia in my arms and kissed her, then shook hands with the princess, and afterwards with the king, who could scarcely greet me, so overcome was he with emotion.

'You must have ridden hard; we did not expect you for another day at least,' said the king after he had recovered himself a little. 'When your appearance on the plain was reported to me, I could scarcely believe it could be you. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for this prompt reply to my call.'

As he spoke Olivia put her hand in mine and with her eyes swimming with tears said:

'And I thank you too.'

The Princess Natalie was about to speak, but she stopped herself at the last moment. A bright flush crimsoned her fair face and made her look lovelier than I had ever seen her before.

Having expressed his approval to Verman, who stood waiting upon the steps, the king escorted me into the palace, where a room had been prepared for me. A delicious cold bath, followed by a substantial meal, quite revived me; and within an hour of my arrival I was able to accompany the king to his study and to hear the story of his trouble.

As I sat in a long cane chair by the window, and he stood before me with the light falling upon his face, I was able to take stock of him, and to observe the great change the last year had worked in his appearance. When I had left the Médangs he had looked, even if he had not been, a comparatively strong man. Now he was only a shadow of his former self. His eyes were even more hollow than before, though they still retained much of their fire; his cheeks were sunken, and he walked with a more decided stoop than I had remembered of old. His mind, however, was as clear and his faculties as acute as when I had first spoken to him of his kingdom.

'Verman has probably explained all that has occurred,' he said when we were alone together, 'so that, beyond recapitulating the main points, I need not at present go deeply into that. In my own mind I am convinced that our enemies are taking advantage of the trouble that has occurred on the frontier to make an attempt to obtain possession of my kingdom, but fortunately I am prepared for them. Two or three small engagements have been fought with varying loss on either side, but so far nothing on a larger scale has been done. Here, as near as I can gather, are the particulars of our opponent's forces.'

He led me to a table in the centre of the room, on which was pinned a large chart representing the kingdom of the Médangs. On a small slip of paper pinned to this, and coloured to correspond with certain dots upon the chart itself, was an approximate estimate of the enemy's forces, with their distribution; also an exact account of the Médang army in all its branches. The king pointed out to me the plan upon which he was acting, and described in glowing terms the qualifications of the generals holding the different commands. He told me that the temper of his troops was excellent, and I gathered from his words that he was quite confident as to the result. For my own part, however, I was not so sanguine. His army seemed too small and too untried to hope to be able to cope for any length of time with the forces France would be certain to put into

the field against it; while the reserves he was mobilising, and upon which I was counting so much, would scarcely be sufficiently matured to afford them the support they undoubtedly would require. Taken altogether, the outlook was not a bright one, but for more reasons than one I determined not to allow my friend to suppose that I had any fear as to the ultimate result.

When we had discussed the situation in all its lights, had interviewed two officers leaving for the front, and my attention had been drawn to the bustle going forward in the arsenal, the king turned to me, and laying his hand upon my shoulder, said quickly:

'But I am forgetting there is some one you have not yet seen. Come with me.'

So saying, he led me from the room, down the long corridor towards his consort's apartments on the other side of the palace. Having learned from one of the women-servants the whereabouts of the queen, we were conducted to the room in question. There we discovered Olivia seated by the window, holding in her arms a bundle, the sight of which almost brought my heart up into my mouth. On seeing her husband she rose and came to meet us. The king drew back the veil that hid the little face, and with a pride that I have never seen, showed me the countenance of his first-born son. I bent down and kissed it, and as I did so, for some reason for which I could not then account, the tears rose in my eyes and trickled down my cheeks. Had I been in a position to analyse my emotion as I did later, I should have contrasted the visit to the king's study with this call upon the nursery. The two events seemed so opposite. In the first I had had brought home to me the lamentable insufficiency of the king's forces and the consequent danger to the dynasty of the Médangs; in the second I had placed before me for my consideration the father's joy in the heir to the throne he had built up for himself. One, the thing he most desired; the other, what he most dreaded. Small wonder therefore that my heart was touched.

'If you could only realise, Instow,' said the king as he took the child from his mother's arms, 'how all my hopes in life are centred in this little one, you would come nearer understanding my character than you have ever done yet. For his sake I shall fight to the death for my throne; and may God grant me success!'

His words and the sincerity with which they were spoken went to my heart, and the glimpse I caught of Olivia's face over his shoulder nearly broke down my fortitude. Her love and her pride in her husband was a most pathetic sight to see, and if you had realised how everything that meant life to them was hanging by a hair, your heart would have been touched like mine. The king's health, the safety of his kingdom, nay, even the very life of this little child, trembled in the balance, and I could do nothing but look on and wait. But *was* there nothing I could do? There and then, heedless of the consequences, regardless of what difficulties it might raise up for me in England later on, I offered my services, which were immediately accepted. All I could do to keep Marie I. upon the throne should be done, and if he fell it should be through no fault of mine.

'God bless you, Instow,' said the king in a choking voice. 'With you at my back I shall feel even more certain of success than ever.'

'God bless you too,' said Olivia with unaccustomed seriousness, while the babe in her arms sucked his little dimpled fist and gazed round-eyed at his father and myself.

For the rest of that day and the day following we were kept as busy as bees. Despatches from the front arrived in the early morning and at mid-day, and had to be considered and instructions given where necessary. There was the supply of arms and ammunition to be pushed forward for the new troops that were being hourly enrolled, officers of all branches of the service arrived to have audience with the king, and in addition there were all the thousand and one nameless odds and ends incidental to a campaign to be attended to.

Towards nightfall a messenger was announced with an important despatch from the front. It was to the effect that an engagement of some importance had been fought, in which the king's troops had been driven back. In the general's opinion another was imminent; and he gave the strength of the respective forces, and asked for instructions. A council meeting, consisting of His Majesty, the prime-minister, the Governor of the citadel, and myself, was immediately called to consider it. At any other time I would have resented Roche's presence after what had occurred between us, but in the face of this new danger I was not prepared to upset the king by raising minor difficulties.

'Gentlemen,' said His Majesty when we were seated at the council table, 'you have heard the news that has been brought to me this evening. I will not disguise the pain this intelligence has caused me. However, as what is done cannot be undone, it behoves us to guard against a repetition of such a catastrophe. General Du Berg forwards me a plan showing his present position and also that of the enemy. I will spread it out upon the table that you may be able to study it for yourselves.'

He did so, and for something like five minutes we pored over it in silence.

'Now that we have made ourselves conversant with the situation of our troops,' he said when we had finished, 'we have to consider the general's question whether it is better to risk a big battle here, in the open country near the border, or whether it would be advisable to retire from our present position and endeavour to draw the foe after us into the jungle, where our men are more at home, and where we shall be in closer touch with our reserves. I shall be glad to hear your opinions upon that point.'

The question was a difficult one for a non-military man like myself to answer, and I waited for General Roche to speak first. My own opinion favoured the latter alternative, but it appeared that the general's preference was decidedly for risking an advance. He felt confident, he said, that the reverse the Médang arms had just suffered was the effect of the

shilly-shallying policy that had hitherto been adopted. There was a vast difference, he pointed out, in attacking and being attacked. Up to this time the French had invariably attacked, and in consequence, the heart of the troops had suffered. Let them, however, once obtain a success and their temper would be entirely changed. That success could only be obtained by advancing. On the other hand, if they were to retire into the jungle and allow themselves to be followed by the enemy, then the forces would be certain to imagine that their leaders were doubtful of success, and from that time forward the war might be considered at an end. The battle-field, he continued, was all in favour of their side, the troops were still willing, and under such circumstances it would be the greatest folly possible to think of withdrawing. So fervid was his language, so convincing his arguments, that I could see that the king was prejudiced in their favour. He was a staunch believer in his army, and would not dream it possible that they could remain long covered by this cloud of defeat.

Under these circumstances, it was with some trepidation I gave utterance to my own humble opinions in favour of withdrawal. That they were not well received I must admit. His Majesty greeted them with scarcely concealed impatience, the prime-minister with surprise, and Roche with a sneer upon his face for which I could have struck him. That the latter had some reason other than we knew for his advice I could not help feeling certain; but whatever I may have thought on the subject, I took care to keep to myself.

'I am sorry that you should not feel sufficient confidence in my troops to advise an advance, my lord,' said the king, more coldly than he had ever yet spoken to me.

'Your Majesty must remember that I do not know your army as well as you do,' I replied, 'and I only gave my opinion for what it is worth. Your men are at home in the jungle, and the French are not. Nature will assist you there as she will not do in the open, and, as you said just now, you will be more in touch with your reserves. However, both your Majesty and General Roche are military men; I am not. I therefore state my opinion with deference, and bow to your superior judgment.'

'If your Majesty will allow me to make a suggestion,' said Roche, 'I would advise that you visit the scene of action yourself, and consult with General Du Berg. You will then be placed in a better position for considering the merits of both plans and of judging between them.'

The king slapped his hand upon the table and then sprang to his feet.

'You have hit the nail on the head this time, Roche,' he cried. 'That is the best advice I have received yet. I will certainly visit the scene of action myself.'

'But, your Majesty'—— I began.

'My lord,' he interposed hastily and with a little show of impatience, 'we must have no more "buts." My mind is made up. I shall leave for the front to-night. If I start in an hour, I shall be there by daylight, and then I shall see for myself what is best to be done.'

I looked at his haggard face, the stooping shoulders, and wondered that he could be so mad as to propose such an excursion. But in the face of his declared intention, I determined not to say anything on the subject to him. It would be better to find Olivia and get her to endeavour to persuade him from such a course.

This I did as soon as the council meeting was at an end, and she agreed with me that at any cost such a proceeding must be prevented. An hour later she came to me in my sitting-room.

'I can do nothing with him,' she said, almost with tears in her eyes. 'General Roche seems to have convinced him that the issue of the war depends upon his presence at this engagement, and nothing I can say or do will make him stay at home.'

'Then what is to be done?'

'We can only let him have his way,' she replied. 'But I cannot tell you how frightened I am for him. He is so ill, and he will take no care. He seems to think of every one and everything but himself.'

'Will it make you easier in your mind, dear, if I accompany him?' I asked.

'Much easier,' she answered quickly. 'I know I can trust you to see that he comes to no harm.'

'Then I will go. And throughout the time we are absent from the citadel he shall not leave my sight. Under those circumstances he cannot come to much harm.'

'God bless you, Instow,' said Olivia, and as she spoke the king entered the room.

When I told him that it was my intention to accompany him he seized my hand and shook it with all his old friendliness.

'Come with me, Instow,' he said, 'and you shall see my arms victorious. Remember they are fighting for my son and for my throne, and I know God will let them be victorious.'

## MUNICIPAL PAWNBROKING.

THE proposal which was brought forward on a recent occasion in the London County Council with the object of establishing a system of municipal pawnbroking in the metropolis was dismissed very summarily, both by the members of the Council and by the general public. Why the question was not seriously discussed it would be rather difficult to say. On the Continent the authorities do not regard it as an undignified proceeding to advance money to the public on approved security. Almost every nation in Europe except ourselves has its system of state or municipal pawn-shops, or of societies which, under government authorisation, carry on their business solely as charitable institutions.

In England no attempt has been made by public authority to advance money to small borrowers, and private enterprise has alone dealt with the matter. Even the legislation on the subject is not of very great antiquity. The earliest trace of any enactment in regard to pawnbroking was a statute of the first parliament of James I., entitled 'An Act against Brokers.' From that time till 1872 various

measures were passed; but in this year the Pawnbrokers' Consolidated Statute was enacted, and has remained in force in Great Britain ever since. Under its regulations, which were made when money was much dearer than it is now, a pawnbroker is entitled to charge, for a loan above ten shillings and not exceeding forty shillings, a profit of a halfpenny on each two shillings lent on the pledge for each calendar month. The term is for twelve months, with seven days' grace, when the pledge may be sold by auction; but it can be redeemed at any time before the actual day of sale. Even within three years after the sale the pawner is entitled to receive any surplus which may have remained after payment to the pawnbroker of the amount due to him. Pledges, however, pawned for ten shillings or under, if not redeemed in time, become the property of the pawnbroker. For sums over two pounds special terms can be arranged, provided they are embodied in the form required by the Act. If the advance is above ten pounds, the pawnbroker is in exactly the same position as any other money-lender, and can make what terms he likes with his customer. He is not allowed to take in pawn articles either from an intoxicated person or from a child under sixteen years of age, nor to receive linen or apparel or unfinished materials entrusted to wash or make up. He has to take out an annual license for each of his establishments, for which he pays seven pounds ten shillings; and if he trades in plate, an additional license of five pounds fifteen shillings. In Ireland the regulations which deal with pawnbroking are almost entirely contained in the statutes of 1786 and 1788, which were passed by the Irish parliament before the Union. Attempts have been made at various times to carry on pawnbroking in England on a more or less charitable scale, but they have all ended disastrously. Perhaps the most notable fiasco was the Equitable Loan Bank, founded in 1825 under the patronage of the Duke of York. The most recent attempt was that of a company called the 'Mont-de-piété of England, Limited,' which was formed in 1886. According to its prospectus, it proposed 'to help the poor in their time of need without pauperising them.' As its charity began at home, and consisted in making advances to its own directors on mining and other speculative securities, it is not very surprising that it ultimately came under the cognisance of the official receiver in bankruptcy. In Ireland the 'Mont-de-piété' system lived for a few years, but finally disappeared in 1853.

The country in which the smallest amount of pawnbroking is carried on is Switzerland. Being a frugal and thrifty nation, the Swiss do not encourage the system of raising money on personal property. In the canton of Berne there were a few years ago only two pawnbrokers. One retired because he did not receive sufficient support, and the other, who only did a small business, has recently died. In the whole canton of Zurich there are only two pawnbroking establishments. They are at Zurich and Winterthur, and are both carried on by the Cantonal Bank, which, being a state bank, can conduct the business without regard to a large profit. By the cantonal law, pawnbrokers are only allowed to charge one per cent. per month; and this very low rate, coupled with the stringency of the law, precludes private individuals from embarking in such an unprofitable trade. The result is that there are a number of second-hand dealers, who are also subject to the cantonal law and under the control of the police, who buy outright the articles brought to them. Their customers content themselves with the vague and frequently illusory promise that they will be able to buy them back; but they are at the mercy of the dealers, who can ask what price they like for the repurchase of the articles. For some reason which is not very obvious, the people prefer to have recourse to the second-hand dealers, who are increasing every year, rather than raise money by pledging their property at the pawnshops of the Cantonal Bank.

The impecunious in Portugal can have recourse to the banks, the great benefit society called the 'Monte Pio Geral,' or the ordinary pawnbrokers. The pledges accepted for loans by the banks are mainly debentures and other marketable securities; but they do not disdain to increase their revenue by making advances on plate, jewellery, and precious stones. Like the 'Monte Pio Geral,' they employ licensed valuers to appraise the securities which are deposited with them, and the amount advanced on each article is about three-fourths of its certified value. The valuations are paid for by the pawner on a fixed scale, and hold good for twelve months. At the expiration of this period a fresh valuation may be made, when the pawner may be required to either reduce his liability or increase the value of his security. The interest varies with the official bank-rate, which it slightly exceeds. The business of the ordinary pawnbroker is regulated by statute. He has to obtain a license from the civil governor; he must declare the amount of capital he intends to embark in his business, and deposit at the proper office securities equivalent to the proposed sum. He has, furthermore, to give satisfactory evidence of his good character, and also of his commercial ability. Having commenced his business, he has every three months to submit his register of loans, showing the interest he is charging, to the chief of police or to the chief administrative authority. Whether there is any legal limit to the amount of interest he can charge it is difficult to say. If there be, he knows how to evade it.

In Paris pawning operations are conducted with a certain air of distinction, for the tutelary guardians of the pledges are the Minister of the Interior and the Préfet de la Seine, the latter being the president of the Mont-de-piété administration. He is assisted by the Préfet de Police, some members of the Municipal Council, of the Assistance Publique, and of directly elected representatives of the citizens. The Mont-de-piété was founded in 1777, and no other institution of the kind can be established in Paris without the authority of the Government. But Paris was by no means the initiator of the system in France, for exactly two hundred years previous to this date Avignon distinguished itself by founding

the first Monte-de-piété. Although the state in the capital and the municipalities in the provinces have a monopoly of these establishments, private pawnbroking exists in France, but it has no legal status. There are certain clandestine agencies which lend money on pledges illicitly, and there are the 'Marchands de Reconnaissances,' or pledge-brokers, who buy the pawn-tickets of the Mont-de-piété, and resell them at a very considerable profit to the original holders. The rate of interest charged by the Monts-de-piété is seven per cent., and the minimum advance is three francs. From this sum up to five francs no charge is made if the pledges are redeemed within two months. There is practically no limit to which an advance may be made. The name, address, and profession of the pawner must be given, and if the sum exceeds sixteen francs, papers of identity must also be produced. In the case of a soldier, he must be accompanied by a non-commissioned officer of his company. There are stringent regulations in regard to receiving pledges from women and children for sums over sixteen francs, and every precaution is taken to prevent stolen goods from being pawned. No advances are made upon furs, uniforms, or weapons of any kind, but bedding is accepted as a security, and the administration takes care to properly disinfect it. In fact, the poorest classes in Paris during the summer months may be said to live on their beds while they are being taken care of by the Monts-de-piété.

Like a certain historic piece of furniture, the Mont-de-piété contrives a double debt to pay. Indeed it does more, for besides making advances to the needy and necessitous, it receives for the conduct of its business loans from the public, who find a safe investment in Mont-de-piété bonds. Furthermore, the surplus profits, which realise a very considerable sum, are devoted to the Paris hospitals, and indigence thus becomes the handmaid of the afflicted. But the Mont-de-piété system is not a perfect one from the borrower's point of view. Owing to the arrangement by which the appraisers are made responsible for any loss or deterioration on the articles pledged, most, if not all of them, are undervalued, and a really fair advance is rarely obtained. In the provinces the Monts-de-piété, which are regarded as charitable institutions, are under the control of the local authorities, the mayor of the town being *ex-officio* president of the council of administration. They are exempt from stamp-duties, and the rate of interest varies in accordance with the working expenses. At Nice, where the Mont-de-piété has only been established since 1891, the rate of interest is nine per cent.

In Germany pawnbroking is carried on by the state, by the parish, and by private enterprise. The State Loan Office in Berlin is under the direction of the Prussian State Bank, and it has three branches in the city. As in Paris, these establishments are conducted solely for the benefit of the public, and the surplus profits are devoted to charitable purposes. Even the private pawnbrokers are not allowed to retain any surplus which may be obtained on the sale of unredeemed pledges after the payment of all expenses. The amount has to be paid into the savings-bank to the account of the owner, and if not claimed within a year, the money may be devoted to parochial objects. The State Loan Office charges twelve per cent. interest per annum, whilst the private pawnbrokers are allowed to charge twenty-four per cent. on loans not exceeding thirty shillings, and twelve per cent. on advances above this sum. But whereas the money is lent for six months in each instance, the state office gives six months' grace, and the private office only four weeks, before the sale of the pledge. As under the Mont-de-piété system, government securities can be pledged for about three-fourths of their value, and only six per cent. interest is charged. This facility is a great advantage to the poorer classes who have invested their savings, as they are not compelled to sell in what may perhaps be a falling market. Amongst the favourite articles pledged in Germany are fur-coats and watches, which appear to be a perennial source of revenue. In the State Loan Office special provision is made to prevent the ravages of moths in the coats, which are stored in a cool place. On a certain day in January 1894 the state office had no less than twenty-seven thousand watches to take care of. They constituted eighteen per cent. of all the articles pledged.

Private pawnbrokers in Austria-Hungary carry on the largest amount of business, under laws very similar to those in force in England. There also exists throughout the empire a system of Monts-de-piété, under the control of either the municipalities or the state, whilst Vienna rejoices in the possession of the Imperial Pawn Office. At the head of the Imperial Institution is the Emperor, through his Imperial Chancery, but the office is practically under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior. It has one branch in the suburbs, and although originally established with the aid of the privy-purse and the Vienna poor-fund, it is now run at a profit, one-half of which is annually devoted to the poor of the capital. Its staff are all servants of the crown, and it has a pension list of £3000 a year. The rate of interest is ten per cent., and as no charge is made for a less term than a fortnight, the poorer classes are largely driven to apply to the private pawnbrokers when the article to be pawned is of small value. The private pawnbrokers are, however, resorted to by the lowest class of the community for another purpose. During nine months of the year they not only store but preserve from the moths an immense quantity of clothing, greatcoats and furs, which are entrusted to their care, and which the Imperial establishment will not accept.

The systems in vogue in the other European states may be briefly described. In Belgium, after many changes and vicissitudes, the Monts-de-piété were finally established in 1848, under the control of the government, and the necessary funds obtained from charitable institutions and from the municipalities. The rate of interest varies from four to sixteen per cent. At Brussels during recent years it has been six per cent. per annum. There exist also in

Belgium speculators called 'Marchands de Reconnaissances,' who buy up pawn-tickets, redeem the goods at once, distribute them in fresh lots, and repawn them. Their business is illegal, but, owing to the system they adopt, it is difficult to secure a conviction. An extremely useful object which the Monts-de-piété serve is the granting of loans, without interest, to indigent persons, when their funds permit after the payment of all establishment expenses. In Italy also the Monts-de-piété are regarded as benevolent institutions. That at Rome was founded by a monk named Giovanni Calvo more than three hundred and fifty years ago; whilst in Florence pawnbroking under government control was introduced at the end of the fifteenth century, at the instance of the great Savonarola. The rate of interest charged by the Mont-de-piété at Rome varies, according to the amount of the loan, from five to seven per cent., but loans up to five lire are exempt from any charge. The term is for six months. Woollen goods, however, are not renewable, and other articles must be revalued on renewal. There are agencies throughout the city which work in connection with the central office, but they charge rather a higher rate of interest. The private pawnbrokers, who carry on business under the authorisation of the police, charge an exorbitant interest, reaching sometimes to sixty per cent. They buy up pawn-tickets, and speculate on the proceeds of the sale of the pledges.

The 'Banken van Leening,' or pawn-banks of the Netherlands, are managed by the municipalities under a royal decree. There are also in Holland private pawnshops, which are not subject to any special regulations. They charge what interest they like, and pocket the surplus proceeds arising from the sale of the pledges. Owing to there being fewer formalities than at the municipal pawn-office, they are, despite their abuses, much resorted to by the poorer classes. They can lend money on real property, ecclesiastical symbols, military goods, workmen's tools, and public securities, which the municipal banks are not allowed to do. In Madrid the Savings-bank and the Mont-de-piété is a joint institution under the protection of the Minister of the Interior. It is managed by an honorary council of thirty, appointed by the government. The joint institution is worked in the following manner: The Savings-bank pays four per cent. on its deposits; the Mont-de-piété takes the deposits, pays five per cent. interest for them, and reissues them again to its customers at six per cent. Each establishment thus makes one per cent. profit, which is sufficient to pay working expenses and leave something for the increase of capital. Advances on jewels, precious stones, and plate are made for one year; on linen articles of clothing for six months; and on government securities for four months. There are in Madrid a great many private pawnbrokers, whose usual charge is equivalent to about sixty per cent. They are said to give larger advances than the Mont-de-piété, and remain open for business longer. Almost every town in Spain of any importance possesses a Mont-de-piété. In Norway and Sweden pawnbroking is carried on by various banking companies, of which the 'Pant Aktie Bank' makes ten per cent. profit on its operations. In Denmark the system is conducted by private enterprise under the regulations of the state. Although in almost every state in Europe pawnbroking is carried on under the ægis of the government or municipal authorities for the benefit of the poor and needy, it is not a little singular that in the British Isles, where exists the most extensive system of organised public charity in the world, nothing should have been done in this direction.

## JUANITA.

### CHAPTER III.

He found the cabin deserted as he feared. Not a trace of the workings below was to be seen; the entrance to the treasure cave was covered with fifteen feet of gravel above it, safely hid for the present; and then it dawned on him, for the first time, that he was now the sole owner of all the gold. His unfortunate partners were buried twenty feet below the surface—struck as they were stooping, and crushed down by tons of water and great boulders. Such fatalities were too common in those days. The huge pits, sunk through the gravel to the bed-rock below, were often twenty to twenty-five feet deep, the sides having hardly any slope to them, for the gravel was so packed and beaten by the weight and action of the stream as to stand erect like any wall. As the workings were always up-stream, this compelled the miners to work at the most dangerous place. The enormous downpour of water struck them as they were gathering up their tools, preparatory to leaving the pit; without a moment's warning, stunned by blows from great stones and rocks hurled on them by the torrent, and thus helpless to escape, they were buried in a moment almost by the stream of rushing sand and gravel carried with the water. Escape was impossible; and it was owing to Erskine's being behind at the wheel that his life was saved, the water only reaching him, while the stones remained in the pit and filled it up.

Erskine knew nothing of these men, his late partners, or where they came from. In those days men were reticent as to their belongings and their past; they met and parted, worked together and alone, and none knew from where the other came. In case of sudden death, the custom was that failing any special bequest made by the deceased, the share of the dead man went to his partners. So all this wealth went to Ned, and his thoughts wandered back to a dear old country place at home, once in his family; now he could buy it back, perhaps, and live the most perfect life on earth, that of an English country gentleman. And then the pale, olive face—that persistent face—of Nita floated before him, and he sighed, as men will sigh when they have all they deserve and deem it hard they cannot have more. He had secured a lovely bride, and wealth beyond his dreams, and yet he sighed. Poor Ned, he was to be pitied! Packing the greater part of his effects on one mule, he mounted the other

and returned to Dave's camp, thinking his wisest course would be to stay there meanwhile, and discuss with the old man the best method of moving the treasure; besides, he would see Nita daily, and he now felt that this was necessary to his existence. He had yet formed no plans—to be with her was enough; of course he must tell her father; he had promised that much. He little knew the surprise in store for him, however.

On arriving at the camp he found father and daughter absent. Pitched close by were the lodges of a small hunting party of Indians—four or five young bucks, and an older Indian squatted on their heels round an expiring fire, busily gnawing the ribs of an antelope whose skin lay near. Ned, dismounting, tied his mules to a tree. He did not love the Indians much—mistrusted them, in fact; and, like most white men in the west, deemed a dead red-skin of superior value to a live one, well knowing that treachery was considered a virtue by most of these children of the forest and the plains. So, carelessly swinging his revolver to the front, where it would be handy in case of need, he advanced with the usual salutation of 'How.' The elder Indian rose to his feet, and gazing fixedly at Ned for a moment, said: 'Me savvy you—you killim grizzly—me Tindoy.' Erskine remembered the man and the incident, and at once felt at his ease. He had, over a year before, shot a grizzly bear under circumstances of special risk to himself, and at the same time had probably saved Tindoy's life. An Indian never forgets a friend or an enemy, and this man considered Ned a friend. Tindoy, chief of the Banak tribe of the Sioux nation, was a fine specimen of the red man. Muscular and strong, he stood erect as an arrow, like all his race; his raven hair hanging to the neck, with braided locks on either cheek, was decked with coloured beads. Fastened on the crown of his bare head was a long feather from an eagle's plume—the badge of chiefdom. He had moccasins and leggings of dressed buckskin reaching to the waist and a vest of lighter substance, while over all fell from the shoulders a striped blanket of brilliant colours, worn like the Roman toga, leaving the right arm free. He was considered loyal to the Government during some serious Indian troubles, and had used his influence successfully in keeping the greater part of his hot-headed tribe from the war-path.

Dave and his daughter returned to camp laden with fat trout and grayling in addition to three blue grouse shot by the old man. Erskine took the fish from Nita and helped her to prepare them at the water's edge. She said: 'Ned, I have told my father. I had to tell him; my heart is so full of joy, I was compelled to tell some one. You must speak to him this evening, Ned,' then softly, 'my husband.' This last expression convinced Erskine that the girl viewed him as her actual husband, and that her stern old father probably took the same view. He remembered how she had told him that any failure on his part in love or fidelity towards her would not only kill her but himself as well; and he fully realised that she was quite capable of making matters warm for him if her jealousy or passion was aroused. He was touched by the pathetic manner she had deplored her having no bosom friend in whom she could confide her new delicious story, the story of her love, and her being compelled to fall back on her grim taciturn father as a confidant. Ned felt the plot was thickening, little suspecting that Nita with a woman's instinct had spoken to her father freely, and had pressed him to arrange a marriage without delay. She was quite as acute in her own little way, this handsome half-caste girl, as many of her grander sisters in the fashionable world; and having hooked her fish securely, she saw no reason for incurring a possible loss in landing him by needless delays. She was not trammelled by ancient precedents or useless conventionalities. She was simply unaware of any reason why she and Ned should not be married at once, if they were to be married at all; and she was haunted by a lurking dread that something might happen to prevent her marriage if it was postponed. She was deeply in love with Ned and very proud of her victory, but equally anxious that their marriage should be at once, for then she would have him safe and her very own always, and she would be content; but until that consummation of her dearest hopes and wishes was effected she could not rest. So she told her father in her imperious way, and knowing her of old he consented for the sake of peace, though grieving to lose his daughter.

It occurred to Erskine to ask the assistance of Tindoy and his party as well as of Dave Le Gros in moving the treasure. He knew but few of the miners above his claim, and those not well enough to trust. He felt his secret would be safe with all the party present, and ere long he made up his mind to let matters take their own course. If the safe removal of the gold compelled him also to take a handsome bride, why then he would marry Nita. So turning to her with a smile he said: 'All right, Nita Mia, I will speak to him to-night.' The Indians did not join the others at supper, preferring their own food and their own style of cooking—this being simply to thrust a rib into the fire for a few moments and then gnaw it nearly raw like wolves. Later on the party joined together round the fire; and Tindoy, producing a short briar pipe, filled it from Erskine's proffered tobacco-pouch. The Indian had visited Le Gros' camp to consult him regarding the disposition for peace or war of some border tribes well known to Dave. The two men had known each other for years, and each respected the other. Erskine rose to his feet, Nita's eyes upon him; and after he had begged Dave to join him, they strolled down the glade. In a few words he told the old man he loved his daughter, that she returned his love, and asked for his consent. Le Gros stopped suddenly, his fierce eyes fixed on Ned's.

'My daughter has told me of this; I believe you are a good man, from what I know of you, but my girl has always been a good girl to me, my only friend and comrade for years past. Together we have hunted, shot, and fished, enduring many a privation and hardship; and now that I am getting old and worn, you would rob me of her and let me go my way alone. She loves me as her father, you as her future

husband, and her love for you will outweigh that for me. Ah! I have long dreaded this day,' added the old man sadly, as though talking to himself. Then fiercely he addressed Ned again: 'Why have you come between me and my girl? Why could you not have left her alone, left her heart in peace and left her to me?' Now his voice fell, and in the soft Mexican language of Nita's dead mother he talked to himself, his heart gone back to the long ago when he too won his dark-eyed bride against her parents' wishes. A silence followed, Dave looking on the ground as though his thoughts were elsewhere—as indeed they were.

When next Ned spoke, he in earnest tones pointed out to the old man the needlessness of any parting between his daughter and himself, concluding, 'I wish to camp with you and make your home mine meanwhile.'

Le Gros, looking up, asked: 'What means have you to keep a wife? I take it for granted you wish to marry my girl and make her legally your wife.'

This was a very natural question; for left-handed marriages, so-called, were too common in those days, and Dave was determined that his daughter should never contract such a tie—to be broken at the pleasure of either of the parties. Ned with a quiet smile reassured him:

'I think my means are sufficient for all our wants—I will tell you of them later on. It is your consent I first want.'

'I have not quite finished yet,' rejoined the trapper. 'Have you reflected that my daughter is not white as you are? She has both Indian and Mexican blood in her veins. Are you prepared to protect and care for her in years to come? Will you always treat her as your equal? I know the ways of the white men too well,' he added bitterly; 'I know how they lie—some of them; how they deem any woman not a white inferior to themselves, and when they return to the East leave her and their children behind them without a thought. I know all this. But my daughter is to me as precious as though her blood was pure as the great white queen's. Should you marry her, and fail to treat her always with the same respect and attention you would a wife from your own country, then remember two things—first, that Nita can take good care of herself, and if you do her any wrong, she would quickly avenge herself; second, if she failed, *I would not.*'

The old man spoke with a quiet and impressive dignity; and the last sentence was accompanied by a gleam from his piercing eyes that would in any case have convinced Erskine of his sincerity. Ned had listened silently to Le Gros. There was a certain grim humour in gaining the consent of this man for his daughter's hand, on the condition that he did not fail in his fidelity to her, under the penalty of death at the hand of father or daughter.

He was fascinated with Nita's piquant beauty and bright winning ways. He had no thought of retreat, even were it possible; and as he looked back to camp he saw her watching them, her tall figure a model of graceful curves and outlines, standing like a silhouette sharply cut against the golden sunset.

Le Gros, as they returned to camp, was evidently pondering the matter deeply in his mind. He was a man of action in all he did, and he decided that under existing circumstances the sooner this marriage was accomplished the better. He did not believe in Ned Erskine hanging for weeks or perhaps months about Nita, each of them in love with the other; and he acted accordingly.

Calling his daughter to him, and addressing Tindoy and his party in Indian, he spoke for some minutes; after which the Indians consulted together for a moment, and then rose to their feet. Le Gros, placing his daughter's right hand in Erskine's right, said, first in English, then in Indian: 'Do you both wish to marry each other, and be man and wife as long as both of you live?'

Nita and Ned signified their assent.

Le Gros again in English and Indian said: 'I now declare you to be man and wife, married as legally as though by a priest, and joined till death parts you.'

The Indian chieftain then faced the setting sun, and stooping down lifted a handful of earth; next, standing motionless with uplifted arm, he cried: 'By the sun above me and the earth below me, do I swear that from this day this man and woman are to me as my brother and sister, and that at all times and places I am their friend when they call to me.'

The other Indians present repeated this oath, the oath an Indian never breaks. Nita grew very pale during the ceremony, brief and informal though it was, and when it was over, with a low cry, she threw herself on Erskine's breast, sobbing violently. Ned soothed her agitation, murmuring softly, 'Nita, dearest wife;' she soon raised her tearful eyes to his, and with a tender smile said: 'Ned, my real husband now.'

The reader may consider these nuptials were rushed through with unreasonable haste and lack of ceremony; but in the Far West people are not accustomed to delay when anything has to be done. In this case there was no complicated trousseau to be prepared, for obvious reasons, and there was no earthly reason for postponing this wedding for days or weeks. Old Dave was no believer in dangerous delays, and Nita, with the shrewdness of her sex, had quite agreed with her father as to the wisdom of a speedy wedding. The law in that day recognised the absolute validity of such marriages.

Ned's feelings were somewhat mixed at this moment, when he found himself supporting his blushing, tearful, and charmingly beautiful bride, now also his legally married wife. He had not foreseen the sudden manner he was to be hurled into matrimony. Not that he objected by any means, but still the haste was no doubt a little startling. No time certainly had been lost in taking him at his own proposal; and now that he had attained what he had long sighed for, Nita's hand, he felt the proceedings had been carried through with somewhat too great rapidity. However, it was now done and past recall, and as he stood there, with his bride leaning on his heart, her soft arms clasped round his neck, her eyes suffused with tenderness, he imprinted kiss after kiss on the red lips, and mentally concluded he was a lucky fellow.

A happy party sat round the camp-fire that evening, Ned with his arm round his young wife's

supple waist, and Nita's head on his shoulder. Both gazed silently at the glowing logs, each thinking of the new change in their lives—she proud and happy, with no concealment of her love; while if to him a lurking doubt would at times present itself as to the wisdom of his choice, one glance at his young wife's perfect face dispelled the doubt and left him exultant. The Indians and Le Gros on the opposite side of the fire discussed the action of the hostiles, against whom Tindoy spoke in severest terms. In times of war Indians keep touch with each other's doings in a marvellous way. News flies like lightning. Foot and mounted runners, smoke and fire signals, sun-signals made by small mirrors obtained from the whites, are all used to convey intelligence; and Tindoy related the results of severe fighting two hundred miles away, which had occurred just three days before. An Indian runner had silently come to the camp, and after a few hurried words to his chief, had taken a handful of dried venison and as silently vanished.

Ned, who had been deeply considering the matter, withdrew his arm from his wife's waist, and told Dave at full length the story of the gold discovery. He let him know that he wished for the assistance of the Indians and himself in moving the treasure out of the country, and begged him to explain the matter fully to Tindoy and his party. Then turning to Nita, he said laughingly:

'You little thought when you married me that you would be the richest woman in this district, did you?'

The girl's eyes dilated with surprise when he told her all the story, and then, nestling closer to him, she said softly: 'The gold is good, Ned, and very good to have, but you, my husband, are better to me than all the gold on earth.' Soon after, taking his hand with a rosy blush, she led him to her tent, where Dave and Tindoy had placed a great pile of soft robes and skins as their joint marriage present. And there the happy pair were lulled to sleep by the scented wind sighing through the pines, while overhead the stars shone forth with dazzling glory.

. . . . . .

Sam Blay was a type common in the hills, with a plausible tongue and an easy smile; he preferred lying to the truth, even when the latter was the more prudent course. Calling himself a miner, he rarely worked as one; jumping a claim and then threatening to blow the owner's head off suited him better. Sam was usually to be found in the nearest saloon, where he was always ready for a free drink from drunken fools or nervous strangers anxious to propitiate all and sundry. He picked up a doubtful living by gambling, blackmailing, and stealing, for Sam was essentially lazy and hated honest work. He talked big, a coward at heart and a bully on the surface, and for trickiness was unsurpassed. Those who knew him—and few did not—called him Slippery Sam. He had been prowling down the cañon, looking for something to levy toll on—an unprotected claim or a side of bacon, all was grist to his mill—when he saw below him a party of Indians and two white men busily engaged in some work at the creek bottom. Crouching behind a projecting rock, Sam peered over the edge, seeing but unseen. He observed the men going in and out of a hole in the rock below the gravel, where a shaft had been sunk; while from time to time they came up with small bags which seemed heavy, judging from the way the bearers held them, and placed them in a heap on the surface. Sam's eyes dilated with amazement.

'Great thunder,' he muttered, 'what is this?' The sacks held gold. He was long enough in mining camps to know that much at a glance. 'But, Cæsar's ghost, what does it all mean? Indians too!' Then he recognised old Dave and Erskine, and he softly said to himself: 'I guess I have struck it this time.' He lay crouching, watching the party. He was in no hurry; this lucky stroll of his promised big results if properly worked; and his snaky eyes gleamed and the easy smile had a cruel tinge as he watched the proceedings beneath him. He saw the small sacks packed in larger ones, and loaded on to the waiting mules, then mules and party followed the lower trail down stream. Sam followed at a safe distance on the upper trail, and from his vantage ground above he saw the camp reached, and the sacks delivered inside a white tent which stood apart from the Indian lodges near it. He took careful notes of everything, and departed. Tindoy, it should be mentioned, had willingly assented to Ned's request, but disdained any share of the treasure; he did this for 'his brother,' not for reward.

Nita had been busily at work for days beforehand, cutting up and sewing into bags the choicest deer and antelope skins in camp, and using for thread the sinews of the deer's forelegs, fine as silk and thrice as strong. Buckskin is impervious to gold-dust, and is about the only material, save metal, that is.

Le Gros and Ned had sunk a shaft or small pit to the tunnel mouth, the Indians helping to transport the treasure; and the whole party intended next day to leave the country. Slippery Sam knew every one, and most people knew Sam—some to their sorrow. When he returned from his afternoon stroll—and he came back at a faster pace than he had ever done before—he stopped at a small log cabin standing apart from the others near by. Passing through the open door without knocking, he found the friend he was seeking sitting on an upturned keg before a table of rough boards, eating his newly cooked supper—a lean sinewy man, with evil eyes and unshaven face and thin lips that rarely smiled. This resolute dare-devil was James Jackson, a gambler by profession, suspected of being a road-agent when times served, and a known murderer and scoundrel. Unlike Sam, he was no coward. Fearless, quick in action as in thought, he could gallop midway between trees some sixty feet apart, and deftly plant a bullet in each at the same moment from revolvers in each hand. He was a man who would shake hands with an enemy, and with his left fist pound the enemy's face to jelly, holding his right hand fast meanwhile. An expert sharper, who would deal kings, queens, and knaves to others, reserving aces for himself, at the festive game of poker. He was hated, feared, and fawned on. Sam, out of breath with haste, gasped:

'Jim, there 's the biggest lot of boodle down

the crick you ever saw. Gosh! there's loads of it, all sacked up too, nice and handy. Never seed nothin' like it in my time.'

He proceeded to give Jackson a detailed account of what he had seen, and the two worthies sat talking together eagerly until night had fallen. They decided they would make their visit to Le Gros' camp that night, and risk no delay.

Sim Harvey kept the best drinks and the greatest variety in the district. His saloon was a huge barn-like structure, built of logs, roughly hewn inside; a long, low-ceilinged room, the rear piled up with barrels of whisky from Kentucky and wines from California. He himself was a short-legged man, with long arms of brawny muscle, and enormous width of shoulders. Leaning against the bar stood a man dressed in riding-costume of stout corduroy, with high boots and spurs. This was Lindesay, the captain of the Vigilantes, an organisation then approved by all peaceable people, while it was equally dreaded by the other side, the thieves, murderers, and rascals. Often had his life been threatened, and his cool gray eyes and firmly-cut lips had merely smiled contemptuously in reply. As he stood there, quietly chatting to the bar-keeper, a half-drunken loafer staggered past him, making Lindesay a sign as he passed on to the door. The latter waited a few moments, and then followed his spy outside. Passing up a deserted alley he found his man waiting, who told him in a few words that while he was lying on a bench feigning sleep in a deserted corner of the saloon, he had overheard the plot of Jackson and Blay's raid discussed by them and two other men they called in to help them, as they all sat, drinking together, near to where he was stretched out. Lindesay listened quietly, asked a question or two, and then moved slowly away. That very day he had ridden within sight of Le Gros' camp, and knew how to go there. He strolled leisurely along the deserted streets of the mining camp, calling at one or two cabins on his way, and then going to his own, sat down to write some letters—he did not dare to sleep, tired though he was with his long day's ride. He had been waiting for months to catch Mr Jackson in some serious criminal act, for he had long known him to be a dangerous leader and instigator of more timid small fry.

## ORANGE-GROWING IN JAFFA.

By Reinhold Palmer, Jerusalem.

That much-prized fruit, the Jaffa Orange, is now so well known and appreciated in England that it may interest readers of this journal to learn some details of the method of its cultivation.

The name by which this variety of orange is known in England is derived from the place where it is cultivated, the growing and prosperous little town of Jaffa on the coast of Syria, so well known to those who have visited Jerusalem, for which it is the port. In the vernacular the name for orange is 'Portugan,' doubtless a corruption of the word Portugal, and is an indication that the orange was probably in the first instance introduced into Palestine from Portugal; but as it is not recorded when or by whom this tree was thus introduced, the origin of the name can only be a matter of surmise. Although not a native of Syria, it thrives on the sandy coast of that country better probably than anywhere else in the world, the climatic conditions—the rainless summer, accompanied by heavy night-dews, and the winter without frost—being well suited to the growth and development of the fruit. But the culture must of course be supported throughout the long summer by artificial irrigation. Were it not that water to any amount can be procured in every garden and at a moderate depth, it would be impossible to grow oranges in Jaffa. The whole neighbourhood seems to cover a river of vast breadth, percolating through the sand *en route* to the sea. Hundreds of Persian wheels working night and day produce no sensible diminution in the supply of life-giving water.

Several varieties of the orange, such as the round Beladi, the Blood Orange, the Mandarin, &c., thrive along the coast of Syria, but the oval and almost pipless kind known as the Jaffa Orange is only produced in Jaffa itself and its vicinity; and this peculiarity, according to the native gardeners, must be attributed to the quality of the brackish water used in its irrigation. Until about thirty years ago this oval form was quite unknown, when a native gardener, quite by chance, through careful attention to his trees, succeeded, much to his own astonishment no doubt, in improving his Beladi or Spanish variety of orange into the Shamuti, by which name the Jaffa kind is known in the vernacular. By selling grafts from his improved variety to other garden proprietors, he was instrumental in substituting the Shamuti for the Beladi orange throughout Jaffa. It is a remarkable fact that all attempts hitherto made at growing the oval orange elsewhere than at Jaffa have not been successful; even at Sidon and Tripoli on the Syrian coast, where the climate and soil seem precisely of the same nature as at Jaffa, all experiments in this direction have failed.

The method of laying out a garden in Jaffa is as follows. The land having been carefully selected and purchased—preference being always given to a red sandy soil—the owner will get in his workmen and start them on levelling and working up the ground. This is very thoroughly done; the levelling of the earth being important with a view to the future irrigating of the orange trees. The ground is in the first instance well ploughed, and then with the object of effectually removing every particle of weed, the workmen use their hoes to turn up the soil to a depth of fully three feet. This expensive process is very necessary, as the presence of even the smallest root of a weed will prove injurious to the trees and be difficult to remove later on. While this work is going on the proprietor will have fixed upon the spot where the well is to be sunk, and have commenced operations. The depth at which water is found varies materially in different gardens, and ranges from about twelve to sixty feet below the surface; consequently the cost of sinking his well is always more or less a matter of speculation to the proprietor.

The deeper wells are, however, the exception and not the rule. The system of irrigating is by Persian wheels, simple in construction, cheap, quickly made and repaired; and experience has shown that they are much better adapted for the purpose intended than the steam pump. The whole of this simple machinery is quickly specified and described. A wide cog-wheel is kept going horizontally by a mule with a sweep; this turns a larger one perpendicularly, which is directly above the mouth of the well. Over this revolve two thick ropes, and upon these are fastened small wooden buckets; one side descends while the other rises carrying the buckets with them, these descending empty, those ascending full; and as they pass over the top they discharge the water into a trough which conveys it into an adjoining tank. The quantity of water discharged within the twenty-four hours depends on the speed at which the mule is kept going, and also, of course, on the depth of the well. An average-sized garden requires the constant labour of three to four mules to provide the necessary amount of water, the animals being relieved about every three hours.

The ground prepared and manured, the Persian wheel fixed, and accommodation—of the simplest kind of course—being provided for the gardener and the mules, the proprietor now proceeds to buy young lemon trees about a year old. These are meant to be used as stocks upon which the orange slips are later on grafted; and of them there is always a fair supply available in the nurseries of the older gardens. These lemon trees are now planted, under the supervision of the head-gardener, at a distance of four yards apart, and the most suitable time for this operation is during the months of March and April, before the great heat has set in. A hedge of cactus or prickly pear is planted at the same time round the garden, which in a few years' time grows into an impenetrable mass, preventing the intrusion of man or beast.

The young lemon trees will now thrive without much further attention, except that they must be carefully irrigated; this is done by a system of small masonry troughs running in all directions through the garden, and fed from the tank adjoining the well. The garden is generally divided into four equal parts, each part being irrigated within the course of two days, so that every tree receives its share of water every eighth day in rotation; and this is considered ample. A small trench is dug round each tree sufficiently large to hold its requirement of water, and as the tree grows and needs a larger supply, the trench is enlarged; the amount of water that will eventually be required must therefore be calculated on the basis of the irrigation necessary when the trees are six years old, and may be said to have reached maturity. If the garden is a full-sized one, and contains about six thousand trees, it will be necessary to sink either two wells or one well sufficiently wide to admit a double set of buckets, thus raising double the quantity of a single set in the same space of time.

During the winter months the garden is left to itself, the gardener employing his time in taking the mules to graze, thus saving the cost of feed. The winter (or rather rains) over, the garden is weeded, manure is worked into the soil, and the trenches round the trees are remade and enlarged. Irrigating commences about the end of June, and lasts till the end of October or middle of November.

In order to recoup himself for his outlay while the trees are growing, the proprietor will sometimes arrange with his gardener to grow vegetables in the empty spaces between the young trees, giving him the seed and one-third to one-half the produce of the vegetables in lieu of wages. This system is, however, not considered economical in the long run, as the trees, which are purposely grown in close proximity to each other, really require the whole of the soil; and their development and productiveness is retarded by the growing of vegetables.

The young lemon trees are allowed to grow for two summers before the orange slip is grafted upon them; this operation is performed in the autumn by the head-gardener, who is an adept at this work. After the fourth summer, calculating from the time the lemon stock was planted, a few oranges may appear on the trees; and during the following two years the whole of the expenses of a garden will, as a general rule, be covered by the sale of the orange crops.

It is generally assumed that after the fourth year a garden becomes self-supporting; but it will require two years longer before a return in capital outlay can be expected. After the sixth year, however, a garden that has been well attended to will not only pay all expenses, but give a handsome return as well. The fortunate proprietor will now also have the further satisfaction of knowing that the marketable value of his property represents probably more than double the whole of his outlay. This will give an idea how profitable orange-growing in Jaffa really is, to those who can afford to wait a few years for a return on capital. To the native of Jaffa only one form of investment has a charm—the height of his ambition is to own a 'Biarah,' the technical term for an orange-garden; unfortunately for him, however, he as frequently as not launches upon the enterprise without having sufficient capital to see it through successfully, with the result that he is compelled to borrow money at a ruinous rate of interest in order to meet his current expenses, and finally has to part with his property before he has seen any of its fruit. This explains why most of the garden property is in the hands of the money-lending class, who have had very little trouble in growing the trees.

Once the garden is in full bearing, the proprietor, apart from an occasional visit of supervision, has little to do beyond selling his crop of oranges, paying the expenses, and pocketing the balance.

The gardener in charge receives a fixed wage of from two to two pounds ten shillings per measure only as long as the trees do not bear; once they are in full bearing he is no longer paid by a fixed wage, but receives a share of the produce, generally one-twelfth to one-tenth of the crop. It is also understood that the

gardener's wife and family, who live on the premises, assist in the garden-work without extra remuneration, hence the size of his gardener's family is a matter of some consideration with the owner. This system of making the gardener a partner in the produce of the garden works very well, as he thereby acquires an interest in the general up-keep of the property.

It is difficult to calculate the exact cost of laying down a garden. The price of the land varies of course according to position and quality; then the depth of the water below the surface and consequent cost of sinking the well cannot be estimated to a nicety. As a general rule, however, a garden containing six thousand young trees will cost from eleven hundred to twelve hundred pounds to lay down complete, with live-stock. To this sum will have to be added five years' expenditure (during which period the garden is assumed to be unproductive) at the rate of one hundred and twenty pounds per annum, making six hundred pounds. We have therefore a total of eighteen hundred pounds, representing the capital outlay on the garden up to the time that the trees are in full bearing. From now onwards the crop of oranges will have an annual value of from four hundred to five hundred pounds; and this will leave the proprietor, after deducting all expenses for wages, feed of live-stock, taxes, repairs, &c., a clear revenue of ten to fifteen per cent. on his total capital outlay of eighteen hundred pounds.

The risks which the Jaffa orange-grower runs, as compared with those which the grower in Florida has to face, are infinitesimal. The storms that visit the Syrian coast, although of frequent occurrence during the winter months, are not of such force as to damage the trees; in fact it is remarkable how very small is the proportion of ripe fruit even which falls to the ground after a storm. This is no doubt due to the fact that the Jaffa orange tree is not allowed to grow larger than a good-sized shrub; and as the trees are placed only four yards apart they afford each other very considerable protection from the force of the wind. The cactus shrubs also, forming the hedge of the garden, grow very thick and high, and give additional protection from the storms. Blizzards and frosts, which have proved so ruinous in Florida, are quite unknown in Jaffa.

Owing to the good keeping qualities of Jaffa oranges, which enables them to be shipped to distant parts, there is always a brisk demand for them, and the grower has hitherto had very little difficulty in disposing of his crops at good prices. If not exorbitant in his demands, he can almost invariably sell his fruit for a lump sum while the fruit is still green, and before the winter, with its risks of hail, &c., has set in. The shipper who purchases the fruit in this way takes over the whole of the risk of any damage that may happen to it, and he cuts the oranges from the trees whenever it suits him to do so; the contract only stipulating that the garden is to be cleared by the middle of March, as the proprietor likes to see his trees free of fruit before the new blossoms appear.

The whole of the crop of Jaffa oranges does not at the present time exceed three hundred thousand boxes of about one hundred and sixty oranges each, which is a mere trifle compared with Spanish or American crops, and about four-fifths of this quantity is at present shipped to England.

The orange-growing industry is almost entirely in the hands of natives; a few of the newer gardens are, however, owned by Germans and Frenchmen.

## MATING FISHES.

By W. Anderson Smith.

We are gradually becoming better acquainted with the wonders of the sea, and discovering a strange similarity in its general features with much that is familiar to us in the better-known land-section of the globe. If we once got to understand that a mile of sea is a much more extensive hunting-ground than any mile of land, we should better grasp the enormous possibilities and more complex conditions of the ocean world. For in place of the few feet of the earth's surface that is inhabited, a mile of sea surface may be of vast depth, and all of it may be the scene of life and rivalry and struggle. There are different classes of fishes, and varied conditions for fish life, in all the various zones of sea. There is food of different kinds—often exceedingly minute—throughout the larger portion of it during the greater part of the year; and the lives of the inhabitants vary to as remarkable an extent as do the conditions under which their existence is passed.

It is commonly believed that a sort of communistic indifference is the ordinary law of nature that regulates the intercourse between the sexes of fish, and that 'love' does not exist amongst the cold-blooded inhabitants of the deep. This, however, is a misconception. In the case of the gregarious fishes, indeed, there is no apparent individual preference; for with the cod spawning over a period of six weeks or more, and sending its millions of eggs to take their chance on the surface of the water, this would be almost an impossibility. Yet such promiscuity is by no means a universal condition. With the plentifulness of eggs the regardlessness of the parents as to the future of their offspring seems to increase. We can scarcely look upon any creatures, much less vertebrate animals such as fishes, as wholly indifferent to the safety of their species; yet the herring will freely devour the young of its own species, and cannot possibly distinguish its own offspring amid the throng. This is the more remarkable, as the balance of evidence would lead me to believe that this gregarious and non-mating fish was originally of a higher character, and has degenerated; as humanity would probably do if compelled to live under conditions as unfavourable to domesticity. The herring spawns like an inshore fish, depositing its ova on rough sea-growths, in place of consigning them to the winds and waves like the ordinary sea-fishes. It also used to spawn close inshore until driven farther and farther out into deep water by the persistent onslaught of

man. Its American congeners on the Pacific coast still shed their spawn close inshore on wattling laid down for them by the Indians, which is afterwards removed for the purpose of collecting the ova for food. Further, there are Australian species that are even yet inhabitants of fresh water, and—a fact of great importance for our present argument—these are non-gregarious. I am of opinion that the beautiful fishes of the herring kind were originally mating fishes, and developed their beauty as a sex character; and that their great increase has driven them to become gregarious only within comparatively recent times, so that they have not yet lost all the characteristics of mating fishes, with their deposited and guarded ova. Under what conditions have the various fishes advanced to that cultivated and, as it were, partially civilised state, in which their young are cared for, and their mates delighted with a display of gay colours and startling physical adornments? There is a wonderful sameness under the complexity of the animal creation, and we find very similar conditions in all classes of life, from the insect to man. All types of family and non-family arrangement have been tried, and, found wanting under fresh social conditions, have been dropped for new ones. Yet the advantages that have accrued from the earlier arrangement often survive for a very considerable time, and defy the ordinary observer to understand how they have originally arisen.

It may safely be premised that with no kind of animals was any considerable intellectual progress made until they advanced from the original communism of the sexes, and adopted that family life which is the most powerful aid and stimulus to advance in civilisation. On the other hand, the falling away into ancient savage courses meant a similar decay in intelligence. The number of human races that have thus degenerated is probably greater than we are willing to admit. I now desire to call attention to the indications of similar degeneration on the part of fishes, and arising from similar causes. In order to take a broad view of the question, we must not be content to regard the present condition of our native fishes as representing the general character even of their own genus, much less of genera closely allied. Thus some of the herring of Australia are not only gregarious and marine like our own, but other species dwell in fresh water and are non-gregarious. So that it is no great stretch of probability to assume that all the herring tribe originally belonged to fresh or brackish water, and were mated; and that they only gradually became marine, gregarious, and sexually communistic. Rapid increase, and the necessity for an increased supply of food, would account for the inevitable movement in this retrograde direction, forcing them to return to the salt water ere the growth of land and fresh-water streams made a higher life possible. Domesticity in a great ocean seems hard to imagine. There is a primary demand for suitable physical conditions, so that the female mate can be isolated and left comparatively secure in some definite position. This can only be done in a river or along a comparatively protected coast. So that when we find in the sea fishes in which male and female have come to be sharply distinguished in appearance and which have developed special sexual characteristics, we conclude that they have so developed originally under very different conditions, and have formerly been river or shore fishes. We do not know a great deal of the habits and customs of that most brilliant of our fishes, the Skulpin (*Callionymus lyra*); but the fact that the male is so gorgeous, while the female is so plain, points to a condition of things like that which has developed birds on land. The male must have the desire to specially attract, while the female must have the æsthetic instinct and admire a 'gay wooer.' Although somewhat of a rover, the skulpin belongs to a class of shore fishes, and doubtless developed his character and physical peculiarities as a shore fish. We may take it that he is a monogamist like other gay fishes, and endeavours to attract his mate by the embellishments of his person.

One curious character of the most highly domestic fishes within our knowledge is that what elsewhere we look on as the maternal instinct is in their case paternal. Thus the little sticklebacks are amongst the most noted of nest-builders; but it is the male that watches over the eggs, as it is the male that builds the nest for their accommodation. Curiously he is not monogamous, and has to guard the ova from the mothers, as the hen turkey has to hide her eggs from the father. The sea species is also a nest-builder; but it can scarcely be called marine, seeing that it is as indifferent to fresh water as the common stickleback is indifferent to salt. Still more remarkable in this direction is the pipe-fish, or Syngnathus, which, when the female has ejected the ova, takes them, and placing them in a long pouch (or series of small pouches, according to the species), hatches them himself, and undertakes all the care of the young—a care that is also unusually prolonged. This is a sluggish, slow-swimming fish, much given to coiling itself round seaweed, with a tube in place of jaws, and no very marked intelligence. But it has developed the domestic instincts powerfully in a special direction, and is a singular instance of a fish that is often, however unwillingly, pelagic, and provides against the risks incidental to its pelagic existence. Although producing comparatively few ova, the pipe-fish is often exceedingly abundant; no doubt the exceptional care of the young secures them a fair start in life. They are originally, however, shore fishes and fishes of the quiet waters—they could not otherwise have maintained an existence with their weak powers of progression. I attribute the comparatively unintelligent character of this fish to the too prolonged care of the young; they are too long tied to their father's apron-strings. Their main defence lies in the tough cartilaginous casing with which they are armed, and which renders them a by no means attractive morsel to the hungriest cod. The other shore domestic fishes are specially intelligent, although often delicate and unprotected. Thus the little sucker fishes of all species are gelatinous and incapable of defence. But they deposit their ova in a safe place, and watch over them with persistent devotion. Any one accustomed to dredging in the spring over scallop ground must be familiar with the dainty little

creature, often of surpassing beauty, that is frequently found in the half-open shell of the departed scallop. She will be found to be lying on rows of eggs, which she has deposited on the inner surface of a shell just sufficiently open to permit her entrance and exit. I cannot say to what extent the male aids the female in attending to the ova; but as he is at this season in his best wedding plumage, a very ocean gem, he may often be noted as at least in attendance upon her ladyship, and neither will willingly leave their charge. These are indeed true mating fishes, and in captivity are greatly devoted to each other and to their young. Besides this little two-spot sucker there is a still more distinctively shore fish of the same family. It has a row of bright spots along the dorsal fin in the male, and though as to species it is somewhat mixed up by authorities (no doubt owing to the marked difference of the sexes), there is no doubt about its being generically Lepidogaster. This fish is very numerous in localities in the spring under stones on the shore, and then is found in pairs, watching over the deposited ova, being distinctly monogamous. The male is larger as well as more gay and brilliant than the female. It may be noted that this superiority in the male is not always found amongst fishes. The male sole was long in being discovered, being so diminutive compared with the female as to be thought undeveloped. Another species or variety of Lepidogaster is found in more exposed situations, and is provided with two brilliant ocellated markings behind the true eyes, as if to act as a protection and scare away any casual enemy. These give the impression of belonging to some huge creature; and it requires a close scrutiny to discover that, in place of being the eyes of a large fish, they are like the dragon on a Chinese shield, meant only for terrifying the enemy. These gentle, intelligent, domestic, 'mating' fishes have not many eggs, but as they carefully tend these, they have a better chance of continuing the species than the more prolific pelagic fishes. Still another genus is the Montague sucker, Liparis, which is equally domestic, varied in colouring, and elegant. No doubt in all these cases the beauty is determined by the sex sentiment, universally acknowledged to have such a vital influence on the appearance of animated creation. This is one reason why I hold that in such cases as the herring, with so many affinities to inshore and fresh-water fishes, the beauty may originally have been developed under conditions where the sex sentiments had better opportunities of cultivation along domestic and monogamous (or polygamous) lines.

These shore fishes are of many and varied genera, but commonly agree in the fact of their domesticity, although the manner of its display may be as different as the character of the fishes themselves. This suggests the fact that it is the opportunity that is wanted, and that the lack of it has more to do with the result than the nature of the creature. For even the Gunnel, or butter-fish, allied to the great ocean ribbon-fish, is as domestic as his neighbours. His walnut-shaped roll of ova is always found with the parent coiled round it, like a hen on the nest, and reckless of its own safety in presence of danger to its young.

The conclusion to be arrived at in regard to the more beautiful and interesting fishes of our own coast is that brilliancy of colouring, with general attractiveness, has been developed as a sexual peculiarity; that it is mainly apparent in shore and fresh-water fishes; and that where the conditions are not now such as to support this contention, the evidence tends to show that these have changed, while the result of former conditions still remains. Further, suitable conditions not only produce domesticity, but monogamy, which among fishes, as amongst mankind, is an advanced sexual condition. It is also one that may be lost, more especially through over-population and unsuitable surroundings. In some instances the difficulties are met by the parents carrying the ova about externally or in pouches; while in others, such as the various viviparous and ovo-viviparous fishes, a closer communication is demanded. The homogeneity of nature is strongly shown by the great world of waters displaying the various arrangements for the continuation of species that have been, or are still, in use amongst the highest types of terrestrial mammalia. But only suitable surroundings conduce to monogamy and domesticity. The 'mating fishes,' however minute, are the triumph of intelligent sentiment.

## CONSOLATION.

Ye classic bards, whose verses seem
Untroubled and serene
And smoothly flowing as the stream
That gushed from Hippocrene,
Did words to you seem dowered with life,
Volition unpropitious,
The Muses, jades who stirred up strife,
Elusive and malicious?

Did Homer, when hexameters
Proved obstinate or coy,
Wish he had never tried in verse
To tell the tale of Troy?
Was Sophocles at times inclined
To turn his dithyrambics
Against the weak misguided mind
That first contrived iambics?

Did Horace keep a temper sweet,
When one deceitful line
In vain he called on to complete
An epode else divine?
Did Virgil e'er in anger sit
And call down classic curses,
Because the verse would not admit
His Corydon and Thyrsis?

Chafed by a struggle long and hard
As ever poet sung,
The wooing by the anxious bard
Of his coquettish tongue,
We hug, O mighty men of old,
This fancy to console us,
That there was sifting of the gold
Rolled down by your Pactolus.

W. Hogg.

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# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

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## CLEVER FOOLING.

Just as the pent-up forces of Nature must find some outlet for their playful energy, and are forever running to waste, so the active brain of man often seeks relief in frivolous occupations of no apparent value. The most learned of men have at times employed their leisure moments and found relaxation in what may be styled, for want of a better term, clever fooling, often with a view to playing tricks upon credulous antiquaries and scientists.

The composition of sham Latin inscriptions seems always to have been a favourite subject, of which none is more widely known than

> I Sybille hæres ago
> Fortibus es in aro
> Nosces mari Thisbe trux
> Se vaticinum 'Pes an dux,'

which appeared in a Dublin paper some years ago, before wit had died out of Ireland, and purported to have been found near the site of a church dedicated to the saint known to the old chroniclers as Uncatus Ambulans [Hookey Walker. The first words are: 'I say, Billy']. In 1756 a clever print was published which depicted a knot of eager archæologists grouped around a tombstone, endeavouring to spell out this extremely Latin-looking inscription, which some declared referred to the Emperor Claudian, till a lad one day spelled it out. 'Beneath this stone reposeth Claud Coster, tripe-seller of Impington, as doth his consort Jane.'

BENE.
A.T.H. T.H. I.S.S.T
ONERE. POS. ET.
H. CLAUD. COSTER. TRIP.
E. SELLERO.
F. IMP.
IN. GT. ONAS. DO.
TH. HI.
S. C.
ON. SOR.
T.I.A.N.E.

The following artful combinations of Latin words so as to produce sensible English sounds was thought by Coleridge to be among the most witty productions of Dean Swift:

| | |
|---|---|
| Mollis abuti | Moll is a beauty |
| Has an acuti | Has an acute eye |
| No lasso finis | No lass so fine is |
| O mi de armistres | O, my dear mistress |
| Cantu disco ver | Can't you discover |
| Meas alo ver? | Me as a lover? |

In the following clever hexameters the puzzling effect is heightened by the blending of Latin words in their own sense with renderings in the most canine of dog-Latin. They contain the announcement to his head-master by a (surely exceptional) pupil that he had passed his examination.

> Care mihi princeps, sum per, mirabile dictu:
> Proxima sed rasura firit, ni fallor, aratri.

'Sum per' is of course 'I am through,' and the ingenuity in suggesting 'very close shave' and 'being ploughed' will be noted.

> Visa mori in somno nobis est et vice versâ

is not a very reverent way of giving,

> We thought her dying when she slept
> And sleeping when she died.

Here are a few amusing specimens of dog-Latin and translation:

| | |
|---|---|
| bene audax, | well bowled. |
| equinox, | nightmare. |
| sotto voce, | in a drunken voice. |
| pax in bello, | the dogs of war. |
| splendide mendax, | lying in state. |

Learning has sometimes been lavished on hoaxes which the world insists on accepting as real. Such was the legend of the Upas tree of Java, purported to have been written by a Dutch surgeon, whose identity, however, was never made out. This is now generally believed to have been the invention of George Steevens, a malicious *savant*, who, to take his revenge on the Society of Antiquaries for refusing him their Fellowship, wasted much scholarship and time which might have been

better spent. Among others, Erasmus Darwin accepted the myth and embalmed it in stately verse.

Occasionally our learned Societies are offered papers of an apocryphal character. A description of the exploration of Wrangel Land, north of Behring Strait, with its herds of mastodons, met with a temporary success a few years back at the Royal Geographical Society; while Sir John Hill hoaxed the Royal Society with his tales of marvellous cures by Bishop Berkeley's tar-water.

The 'lunar hoax,' a pamphlet purporting to describe the discoveries of Sir John Herschel at the Cape of Good Hope, though full of the most palpable blunders in astronomy and mathematics, was so plausible that an edition of sixty thousand sold in one week. This folly was the handiwork of Richard Alton Locke, editor of a New York newspaper. And to show that science is not always proof against colourable absurdities when they ingeniously fall in with preconceived notions, we need only quote the ease with which M. Chasles was deceived by the forged Pascal papers.

That clever and well-educated men should deliberately lay themselves out to play such pranks can only be explained on one of two hypotheses: revenge, as in the case of George Steevens, or sheer love of mischief. Most, if not all, have their playful moods, times at which they must give rein to their animal spirits or, as the Yankees would say, 'bust;' and to these periods we are indebted for many of our best literary conceits. Some, like Canning, break out into punful rhyming; others into compounding elegant riddles and charades, or, like Lord Lyttelton and Horace Walpole, into writing smart and pithy epigrams. The more boisterous class of spirits, too, must have their fun, if even at the expense of their best friend, like Sothern, who—so the story goes—once made an appointment with Toole to dine at a well-known restaurant. The hour of meeting was fixed, and Sothern arrived some few minutes before the appointed time. An elderly gentleman was dining at a table at some little distance from that prepared for the two actors. He was reading a newspaper, which he had comfortably arranged before him, as he was eating his dinner. Sothern walked up to him, and striking him a smart blow between the shoulders, said:

'Hallo, old fellow! who'd have thought of seeing you here? I thought you never'——

The assaulted diner turned round angrily, when Sothern exclaimed: 'I beg you a thousand pardons, sir; I thought you were an old friend of mine—a family man, whom I never expected to see here. I hope you will pardon me.'

The old gentleman growled a reply, and Sothern returned to his table, where he was presently joined by Toole, to whom he said:

'See that old boy? I'll bet you half-a-crown you daren't go and give him a slap on the back, and pretend you have mistaken him for a friend.'

'Done!' said Toole; and done it was immediately, with a result that may be imagined.

This, perhaps, savours too much of the practical joke to come strictly under the title of clever fooling, but it is hard to draw the line between where humour ends and folly steps in—the borderland is so wide. Take, for example, these paradoxical lines on a familiar subject, recently accredited to a working-man, which are at the same time witty and nonsensical:

Cold water is the best of drinks,
The temperance poet sings;
But who am I, that I should have
The very best of things?
Let princes revel at the pump,
Let peers enjoy their tea;
Whisky or beer, or even wine,
Is good enough for me.

The construction of a palindrome such as Napoleon's supposed reply when asked in his latter days whether he could have captured London:

Able was I ere I saw Elba,

simple though it looks, displays considerable ingenuity, and, without even trespassing on the borderland, we might name numerous other fields for the exercise of like talent—acrostics, conundrums, logogriphs, rebuses—in short, word games and puzzles of endless variety.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER IX.—THE PLOT THICKENS.

THE sun was in the act of rising above the eastern hills when the king and I, dead tired after our long ride, urged our horses up the slope of the last hill, and reaching the top looked down and saw before us, on the plain below, the encampment of the army of which we had come in search.

'Thank God, we are in time. They have not retired,' said His Majesty fervently as he began to descend again. 'In another hour we might have been too late. I see they are already moving.'

I followed the direction of his eyes, and saw that men were hurrying in all directions. It was evident that something important was toward. A moment later, however, the jungle took us into its embrace, and for a while we lost sight altogether of the camp. A brook lay before us, and our horses were in the act of crossing it when a sentry appeared from behind a mass of creeper and challenged us. Next moment we found ourselves face to face with a picket, the officer of which turned his men out instantly on perceiving that he was in the presence of the king. Having discovered in which direction the general's headquarters were situated, we urged our horses on again, for we had left the jungle and were once more on open ground, and hastened towards them. The news of our arrival had spread like wildfire through the camp, and by the time we reached the hut towards which we were making our way, the general and his staff were standing before it ready to receive us.

General Du Berg, if I have not yet described

him to you, was a fine-looking, well set-up man of about five-and-forty years of age. He carried himself with soldierly erectness, had short curly hair, blue eyes, a gray moustache, a gruff voice, and the reputation of ruling his men with a rod of iron. It was in a great measure to his exertions and the confidence reposed in him by his master that the army of the Médangs owed its efficiency, though he could never be induced to state in what country's service he had acquired his own training. Indeed, what countryman he was himself it was well-nigh impossible to tell. He spoke English, French, German, and Italian with equal fluency, and was understood to have once confessed to several years' active service under the flag of one of the South American republics.

His surprise at seeing His Majesty was not as great as I had expected it would be. He was doubtless accustomed to the king's rapid comings and goings, and thought it in no way strange that the sovereign should desire to be present on such a momentous occasion as the first real battle in which his army was to be engaged.

As soon as our greetings had been exchanged the king led the way into the hut, and I followed with the general. His Majesty looked very tired and pale after his long ride, and it was with delight I noticed that the general had ordered a meal to be placed upon the table for us. Marie, however, would touch nothing; he said he was too excited to eat. He hungered only for news.

'In which direction are the enemy encamped?' he asked, as he threw himself down on a seat.

'On the hillside across the plain, five miles due south of our present position,' replied Du Berg with that brevity characteristic of him.

'Have they moved at all since you sent me that message yesterday?' asked the king.

'They have extended their outposts half a mile or so to the east and west,' he answered. 'Otherwise they have not made any perceptible change in their arrangements.'

'And your men—what of them? Are they prepared to retrieve what your despatch told me they had let slip?'

'They are ready for anything,' replied the general. 'They are furious at having been beaten the day before yesterday, and if I but give the word they will be at their enemies' throats like bulldogs.'

'They shall have their opportunity before many hours are over,' said the king. 'Let us hope they will take advantage of it. Now, is there any point from which we can see both camps and the land between?'

'If your Majesty will accompany me, I will show you everything,' Du Berg replied.

So saying, he led the way from the hut, and the king and myself followed him. Strong man though I was, our eighty-mile ride had tired me almost to the point of dropping; the king, however, seemed as fresh as when we had ridden out of the citadel gate ten hours before. It is my belief that he was too excited to feel fatigue; but I dreaded the reaction that must inevitably follow. He climbed the hill until he came to the point to which the general desired to bring him, and then leaning against a tree took careful stock of both camps and the stretch of sparsely-timbered plain, which would undoubtedly be the battle-field, lying between. When he had been looking at it for upwards of ten minutes, he consulted a paper he held in his hand, made several notes upon it, and turning to the general, asked him what he intended to do.

'With your Majesty's permission, I think we should advance while we have the opportunity,' Du Berg answered. 'The enemy are waiting for their reinforcements to come up, and if we are going to attack them at all, now is the time. We shall not find a better.'

'Then let it be as you wish,' said the king. 'You had better give the necessary instructions at once.'

As he spoke I caught a glimpse of his face. It was deathly pale. Thinking he was unwell, I ran towards him.

'You are feeling ill,' I cried. 'You have done too much. Will you not rest for a little while and let me give you some stimulant?'

He waved me off, however, declaring at the same time that there was nothing the matter with him.

'I am tired, that is all,' he said. 'Let me see my men victorious and I promise you will have no fault to find with the colour of my face.'

There was nothing for it but to be content with this assurance, and we accordingly turned our attention to the troops in the valley below. While we watched, a mule battery passed through the jungle behind us on its way to take up a position amongst some palms on an eminence half a mile or so to our right. The men looked as happy as schoolboys at the prospect of what was before them.

As I have already said, the main body of the enemy had intrenched themselves upon a plateau on the side of a steep hill across the valley, a mile or so from where we stood. Thence they were able to observe all our preparations. To show that they were aware that our men had fallen in, a shell left their camp and burst with a terrific report in the jungle a little to the left of the general's headquarters. This was the first shot of the battle. A few minutes later the battery which had passed us was returning the compliment, and after that the engagement might have been said to have fairly started. For the first time in my life I was under fire, and I can assure you the situation was not altogether a pleasant one. More than once the shells seemed to be aimed directly for the spot where we stood, and on each occasion I made up my mind that I could not fail to be killed, but somehow they invariably changed their course before they reached us. At any rate we remained unhurt. The king all the time stood unmoved, watching the movements of his own troops and those of the enemy through his field-glass as composedly as if he had been witnessing a review from one of his own palace windows.

At the end of a quarter of an hour the general's instructions had been carried out, and the regiments were moving forward from the valley on to the plain, under the protection

of guns on the hillside. Out in the open, however, it was a very different thing. Being within range, they were subjected to such a fusilade from the battery which had first opened fire upon us that they came to a sudden halt, and twice fell back, being unable to face it. The king watched the result with growing impatience.

'That battery must be silenced at any cost,' he cried, stamping his foot as the regiment nearest us showed signs of wavering.

'It shall be stopped if we can do it,' replied the general, and gave an order to an officer standing beside him, who immediately made his way down the hillside.

Five minutes or so later a column on the extreme left began to move forward towards the battery in question, but they had not proceeded more than a hundred yards across the plain before they too halted and began to evince a desire to turn back. At the same instant a wing of the enemy began to move along the lower side of the hill to the east with the intention of attacking us upon our left flank. Seeing this, His Majesty became almost beside himself, and, before we could prevent him, had called up a trooper who was holding a horse a few paces to the rear. Then throwing himself into the saddle, he galloped down the hillside regardless of the broken ground and the shells and rifle-bullets which were descending on all sides of him like hail. His action had been so sudden that it had taken us all by surprise, and nothing therefore remained for it but to watch and wait. We saw him gallop across the plain and finally reach the regiment in question. Once there, he pulled his horse to a standstill, and it was evident from his gestures that he was haranguing them. Shell after shell burst to right and left of him, and on one occasion three exploded almost simultaneously in the centre of the regiment not more than fifty yards distant from where he stood, causing such confusion that it seemed impossible it could ever unite again. At the same instant Du Berg's horse nozzled my elbow, and I turned to push him farther from me.

When I looked on the plain again, it was a very different scene I had before me. Raised to a pitch of wildest enthusiasm by the king's words, the regiment had sprung forward like one man, and with His Majesty at its head, was racing for the fort on the hillside, heedless of the leaden storm that was being poured into it. Still carried away by his excitement, His Majesty rode at its head, waving his sword and cheering his men on to the assault. I could scarcely believe the evidence of my own eyes, and I dared not think of what might happen.

Nearer and nearer the regiment came to the hill. Another hundred yards would see it beginning its climb, and already a second column was hastening forward to its support. Suddenly my glasses almost dropped from my hands, and I fell back against a palm with a choking sensation in my throat, such as I shall never forget as long as I live. At the foot of the hill the horse His Majesty was riding was shot under him, and I saw him go down with it.

That was sufficient for me. I could stand no more. Olivia's committal of him to my care flashed back upon me, and calling for a horse, I sprang into the saddle, and drove him down the hillside in the direction of the fort as fast as he could go. How he managed to get to the bottom at such a pace without breaking his neck, or how I escaped destruction from the shot and shell that were tearing up the ground all round me, are two things I shall never understand. Certain it was, however, that I did escape, reaching the hillside just as the men I was following were swarming on to the battery against which they had been led.

Heedless of everything save one irresistible desire to be by the king's side, if he were still alive, I urged my horse up the hillside, drawing my sword as I went. The gunners had resisted valiantly, but before our men they were like chaff blown by the wind. As Du Berg afterwards remarked to me, 'led by the king, the men would have stormed the gates of hell itself, and thought nothing of it.' At any rate, by the time I reached the plateau the guns were silenced, the gunners were dead, and those who remained alive of the regiment, who had captured it with such conspicuous gallantry, were lying upon the ground utterly exhausted.

Bringing my panting horse to a standstill as soon as I reached the top, I dismounted and looked about me for the king. At first I could see nothing of him, and my heart went down to zero when I thought of Olivia and the news it might be my fate to have to carry to her. But a second glance relieved me of my anxiety. He was leaning against a gun-carriage, his dripping sword still in his hand, and his face white as the sheet of paper upon which I am now writing. A more ghastly sight could scarcely be imagined. His face was stained with blood from a cut upon his cheek, he was struggling for breath, and save for his dark restless eyes, looked more like a dead man than a live one. Fortunately I had had the forethought to bring with me a flask of spirit, and seeing his condition, I hastened to pour him out a cupful. He drank it eagerly, and when he had done so, declared that he felt like a different man. I was about to expostulate with him for his rash act, but he would not hear me.

'This is no time for such talk,' he cried, with a wave of his hand. 'To-day I am showing the world of what I and my troops are capable. To-day I am putting a new rivet into my throne, which will hold it together even more firmly than before, and one which will never be broken.'

As he spoke the regiment which had been sent to support him put in an appearance, accompanied by a battery which Du Berg had forwarded posthaste to work the guns that had been captured from the enemy.

Thus reinforced, His Majesty bade the senior officer re-form his men, for he had further need of them. While this was being done I endeavoured to induce Marie to mount my horse. At first he would not hear of it, but after some considerable trouble I succeeded in making him do so. And it was well that I did, for almost at the same instant that he reached the saddle an *aide-de-camp* arrived from Du

Berg, bidding the officer in command cross the valley at its narrowest point, and attack the left flank of the enemy with all the speed at his command. A glance at the main body on the plain showed us that it was advancing to attack the centre, while a regiment similar to ours had just been successful in carrying the position on the right.

'My children,' said the king, as he rode down the line, his face beaming with pride, 'you see what is required of you. Go forward, and may God prosper your endeavours. Remember your king believes in you and is proud of what you have done this day.'

With a cheer that might have been heard a mile away, the regiment moved at the double down the hill on the side to the right of that by which they had ascended, and as they disappeared, the gunners sent to manipulate the captured guns opened fire upon the dark mass of the enemy. Then, turning to the *aide-de-camp* who had waited to see the general's orders executed, the king bade him dismount and give me his horse. He could easily make his way back to the staff by way of the jungle, and once there he would be able to obtain a fresh animal without any trouble.

'Now for the *coup-de-grace*,' cried the king, pointing as he spoke to the main body of his troops which were pressing forward towards the hill under a heavy fire. 'Are you coming with me, or would you prefer to rejoin Du Berg?'

'You are surely not thinking of risking your life again?' I said, aghast at the folly of such a proceeding.

'I am going to lead my men to victory once more, if that is what you mean,' he cried, his eyes sparkling as he spoke.

'For heaven's sake, think what you are doing,' I said. 'Remember your wife, your child, your throne, and your people. What will become of them if you are killed?'

'I have thought of them,' he answered, 'and it is for their sakes I am determined to rid my country of its foes. Are you coming with me or not? Have no fear; I shall not be hurt; my fate lies in a different direction.'

'You must know I shall not let you go alone,' I said, seeing that it was useless trying to persuade him against his rash act.

'Then forward, my lord,' he cried; 'I will show you such a victory to-day as you never dreamt of. Let us be starting or we shall be too late.'

So saying, we struck in our spurs and galloped down the hill at our best speed. The main body of the troops, under one of the king's oldest and most trusted officers, was charging directly up the middle of the valley, under a severe fire, towards the hill on which the enemy had intrenched themselves. Regardless of the dangers to which they were exposed, they pressed on, to the accompaniment of the thunder of the batteries on the heights above, the screaming of innumerable shells, and the cries of the wounded who lay thick upon the field behind them. From what I had seen of the troops prior to that time, I must confess that I should never have credited them with such obstinate courage. But to-day their blood was up, their fighting spirit was roused, and with remembrance of the example that had just been afforded them fresh in their minds, there was nothing they would not do or dare.

## OUT WITH THE INDIA-RUBBER GATHERERS.

### INDIA-RUBBER: ITS COLLECTION AND CULTIVATION IN NICARAGUA.

By Rowland W. Cater.

At or near the mouth of all the large rivers on the Mosquito Coast will be found the bungalow of a trader, generally English or American, fitted up as a shop, and stocked with cloth, tinned and other provisions, rope, tobacco, rum, gunpowder, and similar necessaries. When the unsophisticated Indian from the interior has collected a canoe-load of jungle-produce, such as rubber, vanilla beans, sarsaparilla, herons' feathers, gold, deer, jaguar, and puma skins, &c., he pays a visit to the trader, and an exchange of commodities is promptly effected. Hard cash plays a very small part in these transactions. In due course the merchant ships the produce to New York or London, reaping a profit of—I am almost afraid to say how much per cent.—two or three hundred perhaps. At any rate the trader speedily makes a fortune large enough to recompense him for his banishment from some more civilised country.

Many of these merchants are large employers of labour in the shape of mahogany cutters and rubber collectors. The men, Indians and Caribs mostly, bind themselves to a patron for a certain period and become practically serfs. The laws regulating these 'mozos matriculados,' as they are called, are very severe and strictly enforced. The patron or master supplies provisions, implements, and perhaps a small sum of money in advance, and each mozo is constrained to be diligent, and to return with the fruits of his labour at the expiration of the term. Rubber gatherers (huléros) are obliged to deliver one-half of their caucho to their employer and to sell him the remainder at the current market price, less the value of the provisions, &c., previously advanced. But the patron almost invariably keeps a shop. He does not pay for the huléros' share of the rubber in cash, but mostly in goods. Consequently all the evils of the truck system are rampant.

A large proportion of the rubber exported from Nicaragua comes from the Prinzapulca district. At the mouth of the Prinzapulca River—called Apulca in some maps—there is a village where scarcely a week passes without the arrival or departure of huléros, and there I found myself during my travels on the Mosquito Coast. My host was one of the principal traders, an American, whom I will call Hayes. In his employ were many rubber collectors, so that I experienced no difficulty in making arrangements to accompany a gang into the interior. This comprised six men, four Mosquito Indians of pure blood and two Caribs of negro type.

We started at daybreak in the usual frail dug-out, and at nine o'clock the following morning reached the point from which the huléros intended to take to the woods. Disembarking,

we concealed the canoe in a sedge thicket, and after a meal of boiled rice and salmon, set out across a sandy plain in the direction of a cone-shaped hill. José, one of the Caribs, informed me that the rubber trees are usually found in groups of twenty or thirty, and that he had often travelled for days together without discovering a single one.

'Dis time, sah,' he added, 'we go straight to big lot. See dem long time ago.'

But José was unaware of what the elements had in store for us. A belt of forest intervened between the plain and the hill which was our landmark. I noticed pine trees, cedar, oak, and mahogany, interspersed with wild cherries and cacao, ceibas, or silk-cotton trees, and here and there a guayava, not unlike an apple tree, but with more foliage. This is the white guava, from the fruit of which the famous jelly is made. It grows to a height of twenty feet, and is to be found in many dry jungles as well as in almost every garden or patio. The apple-shaped fruit is a little larger than a hen's egg, smooth, and somewhat resembling a small lemon when ripe. Inside is an aromatic pulp full of small white seeds. The red guava of the West Indies is more acid and less agreeable.

We had cut our way through some miles of this forest, and had just reached a part where the undergrowth and creepers were less dense, when one of the Indians stopped suddenly and uttered an exclamation. A peculiar sound, between a moan and a sigh, was creeping through the woods; the tops of the trees were in motion.

'Huracan, señor!' shouted the Indian in a tone of alarm, and all set off running as fast as they could.

I followed, buffeted by branches and climbing plants, and torn by thorns at every step. It was a desperate race to get into the open and out of danger before the dreaded hurricane should overtake us. In speed I was no match for those practised woodmen. They left me behind. The forest swallowed them up. But I could hear their shouts and the crashing of bushes as they tore their way, and I struggled on until I could run no longer. In a cleft of a big rock on the outskirts of the wood I crouched and waited for the storm to pass.

It came quickly. The murmur swelled to a roar. The sky grew black almost as night. Branches and twigs fell in showers. Great trees bent and swayed as reeds, groaning like giants in torture. Soon crash followed swiftly on crash as the older monarchs of the forest were swept down. Some, stripped of every branch, defied the fearful blast, comparatively safe in their nakedness. Others were torn up entire, and carried yards away from the great pit their roots had left behind. But while the tornado raged, even if I had dared to look out from my place of refuge, it would have been impossible to distinguish anything, except perhaps when a flash of lightning revealed the hurtling mass of leaves and branches overhead and all around.

As suddenly almost as it came, the hurricane swept onward and passed, followed in its course by myriads of twigs and small boughs, drawn forward it seemed by suction. For long afterwards these floated in the direction taken by the storm, resting apparently on the thick cloud of dust which seemed to reach from the ground to the tops of those trees that had withstood the storm.

No hurricane so terrific had visited Central America for many years, but luckily it was confined to the coast. Adjectives are of small use to describe its effects. These provided the Indians with a topic of conversation for months, and very marvellous were some of their stories.

An old man walking beside a river was said to have been lifted up and deposited on the opposite bank. An Indian who had lost his horse discovered it in the fork of a tree thirty feet from the ground, and was compelled to fell the tree to recover it. Whether it remained sound in wind and limb the more or less veracious chronicler omitted to state. Another found in his garden a row of banana trees which he had not possessed before. Great was the mystery until the owner of an hacienda many miles away identified them as his property. Some of the tales might be true —*Quien sabe?* Nobody is obliged to believe them. But I can testify that the hurricane was a very bad one, as also do the many wrecks remaining to this day on the beach near the mouth of the Prinzapulca and other rivers.

Pushing on over the debris, I eventually reached the hill, and there found the huléros, who had sheltered in a cave with which they were acquainted.

From the hill-top the keen-sighted fellows marked down several clumps of rubber trees not in the track of the hurricane and set out in couples to tap them. I accompanied José and Pete, the Caribs, both of whom spoke English after a fashion of their own.

Here I should observe that the best and purest rubber comes from the great forests intersected by the Amazon and its many branches. It is known as Pará rubber, and is obtained from several species of Hevea. The india-rubber plant of our greenhouses is *Ficus elastica* of India, generally epiphytic, the seeds germinating at the top of forest trees, whence are sent down numerous aerial roots. Rubber, or caoutchouc as it is called commercially, is also obtained from species of Manihot, Landolphia, Willughbeia, &c., in addition to the subject of this paper, the *Castilloa elastica* of Mexico and Central America.

The Castilloa grows to an average height of sixty feet, and throws out its huge branches, many of them a yard in diameter, at a considerable elevation. The bark is of a dark slate or ash colour; the leaves measure from ten to eighteen inches long, are elliptical, glossy, closely veined, and paler beneath than above. They usually grow at the end of the boughs in compact groups of three. The fruit consists of a capsule comprising three divisions, each containing a large seed, white, irregularly marked with black.

The best season for tapping is from August to February; and the operation should be performed early in the morning, before the daily rain, or in the evening after the rain has fallen. In the latter case the milk should be coagulated as soon after sunrise as possible next morning.

The milk, or sap, is white, and of the consistency of cream. The tree thrives best in moist but not marshy forests on a warm sandy

clay. It seeds in the tenth year, and ought not to be tapped before its eighth year, or its growth may be much retarded.

On reaching the group of trees, which numbered seventeen of various sizes, my Carib friends first cut away the twining creepers that almost hid the trunks, and then carefully removed a couple of buruchas, natural ropes of rubber, formed in the following manner: From incisions in the bark, possibly caused by woodpeckers or some insect, the juice often exudes, trickling down the trunk, in and out of the encircling creepers, and sometimes reaching the ground. The milky stream coagulates and turns black as it runs, forming a long strip or cord, with which the huléros often tie up their bales.

The parasites removed, Pete and José strapped on their espuelas (climbing spurs), fastened at the knee and ankle, and having dug a small pit or basin at the foot of each of a couple of trees, passed a ring of stout rope round the trunks and their own waists, and walked up with their machetes between their teeth. By lifting the rope at every step they were enabled to stand almost erect, and when lying back in the ring both hands were at liberty.

José, whom I watched closely, commenced operations immediately below the first branch. With his broad-bladed sword he cut in the bark a horizontal canal which almost encircled the trunk and terminated in a V-shaped angle. From the point of the V downwards he next cut a perpendicular canal about two feet in length, which joined another horizontal channel ending in a V, and so on to the ground. In the last cut he inserted a large green leaf to serve as a funnel and guide the milk into the basin.

The Brazilian rubber collectors always place a receptacle of tin or earthenware in the hole at the foot of the tree to prevent the admixture of grit or other foreign matters; they also strain the milk through coarse muslin; hence the greater value of Pará rubber. But Nicaraguan methods are primitive.

The sap runs down the incisions to the basin, where the water evaporates. Artificial heat is employed to hasten this evaporation in Brazil, but happy-go-lucky Nicaraguans leave the process to nature. When the huléro is of opinion that no water remains, he makes a decoction of liana vines, or of a kind of convolvulus, and adds it to the juice in the proportion of one pint of the former to a gallon of the latter, when the sap immediately coagulates and forms india-rubber.

When the sap had ceased to run, my Carib companions ought to have filled up the canals carefully with mud or clay. There was a stream close at hand, but they did nothing of the kind. Consequently, when next they passed that way, the trees would probably be dried up and sapless. It is said that a kind of wood-leech attacks the tapped Castilloa, introducing itself through the channels, and so injures the tree as to cause its eventual decay. This the clay would prevent, and at the expiration of six months the tree might be again tapped, with as much profit as on the first occasion. I took José to task on the matter.

'Plenty hulé heah, sah,' he answered, grinning. 'Me find ten—twenty mo' trees while 'um doin' dat. An' what good? Perhaps I neber come heah no mo.'

To that I had nothing to say. The forests are No Man's Land, and another huléro would probably have reaped the fruit of his labour.

The heated air speedily evaporated the water from our rubber milk, and the necessary coagulation did not occupy much time, though the process appeared to me very wasteful. With this I will deal presently, however. While the evaporation was taking place other trees were being tapped. When the sun sank the Caribs left off work. We slept beneath the rubber trees, as is the huléros' custom. All the day following the Caribs toiled, and at sunset we returned to the dug-out, José and Pete carrying about forty pounds of rubber each. The Indians, who had been less successful, were awaiting us. Next morning we ascended the river still farther and again entered the forest, leaving two men with the boat to take care of the rubber and pack it in bales.

Dishonest huléros frequently put stones and pieces of heavy wood in the middle of the bales to increase the weight. But the merchant usually pierces every package with a sharp-pointed steel rod, so the rogues seldom escape detection.

At the expiration of ten days, being then four days from the mouth of the river, we commenced the return journey, towing the bales of rubber behind the dug-out. We did not escape the usual capsize; but as each man had a life-buoy in the shape of a waterproof bag, and, besides, could swim like a fish, nothing more serious than a wetting resulted, and that we could not avoid on land.

These rubber bags, which a native of this coast is seldom seen without, are made by the huléros as they go along, so to say. A sack of unbleached calico is stretched on the ground, and painted over with rubber milk, a cocoa-nut husk serving for a brush. When the first coat is dry the operation is repeated, three coats being necessary before the bag is fit for use. The result is a waterproof article, rather heavy, but in every other respect far superior to any manufactured in Europe. Before setting out in their frail canoes, the natives take care to inflate their bags and tie up the mouth. Thus the sack forms a receptacle for clothes, a pillow on land, and a life-buoy in the event of an accident upon the water.

On arriving at what was left of Mr Hayes' bungalow, for the hurricane had not spared it, I had several discussions with that gentleman in reference to the practical cultivation of *Castilloa elastica*. The result of my inquiries on the Mosquito Coast and in other parts of Nicaragua are here summarised.

The subject has been ventilated by many private persons in addition to the various Central American governments, and in Nicaragua a bounty of ten cents native currency is paid for every tree planted. As the world's supply is rapidly diminishing, while the demand is increasing by leaps and bounds, there appears to be a magnificent field for Englishmen with capital. Certainly, unless the output is soon increased, manufacturers of rubber goods may have to fall back upon substitutes. In Mexico

there are English and American Companies already at work, but, except two plantations in the Chontales district, I am not aware of anything of the kind in Nicaragua. That the industry would be exceedingly profitable has been demonstrated by the results of many experiments; and when I say that neither coffee, tea, cocoa, sugar, bananas, indigo, nor hemp growing would pay so well as the cultivation of india-rubber trees, I speak on the authority of Mr Hart, F.L.S., of the Botanical Gardens, Trinidad.

In March of last year I visited a plantation in Chontales, which, strange to say, is the result of native enterprise. It then comprised one thousand trees, well developed, of hardy appearance, and as large as a good-sized apple tree. An early maturity seemed assured.

Señor Romero, Mexican Minister to the United States, in an article published in the *India-rubber World* (New York) for April 1892, estimates that each six-year-old tree, planted at intervals of fifteen feet, will have cost eight cents U.S. currency, and will yield six pounds of rubber. Other authorities fix the yield at maturity as high as fourteen pounds of rubber. It depends on whether the season has been wet or dry, and whether the trees are well or badly cultivated.

In order to be on the safe side, I propose to estimate the cost to the end of the eighth year at 18 cents U.S. currency, or 9d. per tree, and the eighth year's average yield at five pounds of rubber. The market price of good Central American rubber is 2s. 4d. per lb. Pará rubber fetches from 2s. 3d. to 3s. 6d. per lb.; and if gathered and coagulated in the same cleanly manner, rubber produced in Nicaragua should be worth as much. Nevertheless, I prefer to estimate on a selling-price basis of 2s. per lb. only. The result at the end of the eighth year of an acre plantation comprising 193 trees planted fifteen feet apart would be as under, including the premium of ten cents native currency—say 3d. —per tree paid by the Nicaraguan Government.

| Dr. | | | | Cr. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cost of cultivation for the term of eight years, with seed, &c., of 193 trees at 9d. each | £7 | 4 | 9 | Government premium of 3d. per tree | £2 | 8 | 3 |
| Cost of tapping or harvesting | 3 | 0 | 0 | Yield of 193 trees at the end of the eighth year —965 lb. at 2s. per lb | 96 | 10 | 0 |
| To balance | 88 | 13 | 6 | | | | |
| | £98 | 18 | 3 | | £98 | 18 | 3 |
| Profit | £88 | 13 | 6 | | | | |

I arrive at the cost of tapping, or harvesting, in the following manner: A huléro, working in the dense, overcrowded forest, can tap four wild, creeper-grown trees in a day; therefore it stands to reason that, in a plantation where the trees are weeded and cleaned of all superfluous growth, he could tap five at least, and also plaster up the cuts with mud. Thus the 193 trees would occupy him 39 days. A mozo in Nicaragua is well paid if he earns fifty cents native currency, or say 1s. 3d. per day, but I have calculated his daily wage at rather over 1s. 6d.

Supposing that the plantation comprises five hundred acres, then, on the above figures, the eighth year's profit would amount to the enormous sum of £44,337, 10s. And the yield increases every year, with no outlay except for weeding and harvesting.

The gross capital expenditure for the eight years I estimate as under:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cost of 500 acres of land at 5s. per acre. | £125 | 0 | 0 |
| Surveying and procuring titles thereto.... | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Clearing land for planting | 1000 | 0 | 0 |
| Collecting seed and planting | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| Eight yearly weedings at £200 each | 1600 | 0 | 0 |
| Extras, implements, &c. | 300 | 0 | 0 |
| | £3625 | 0 | 0 |
| Interest on £3625 for eight years at five per cent. per annum | £1450 | 0 | 0 |
| Planter's expenses, cost of living, &c., for eight years at £200 per annum | 1600 | 0 | 0 |
| Cost of gathering the eighth year's crop. | 1500 | 0 | 0 |
| | £8175 | 0 | 0 |

I have included in the above the cost of maintaining the planter during the eight years that should elapse before the Castilloas are tapped; but it should be borne in mind that when the trees are planted fifteen feet apart, coffee, sugar-cane, cotton, cacao, and other shade-loving plants, yielding yearly crops, may be grown between them, and their produce should maintain the planter. But adding five per cent. interest, the planter's expenses, and the cost of harvesting, there still remains a net profit of £36,162, 10s. Estimating the value of the ninth year's yield at £50,000, and deducting £200 for the annual weeding, £1500 for the cost of harvesting, £180 for interest, and £500 for the planter's expenses, the net profit for that year will amount to £47,620, which is a pretty good return for a net capital outlay of £3625. Of course it will be necessary to maintain a nursery of young plants to fill vacancies caused by accidents and replace trees when their rubber-bearing life is over; but the cost of such a nursery would not be great. And one must not count on the Government premium being paid in perpetuity.

In reference to the life of a rubber tree and its increasing productiveness, the following extract from *The World* (New York) of 21st August 1892 will be of interest:

'Three young trees transplanted from the forest to a cultivated field in Soconusco, Mexico, are now said to be seven feet in diameter, and have yielded rubber for more than thirty-five years; the present product averaging more than fifty pounds of gum per year.' The average increase is generally estimated at one pound of rubber for each year of the tree's life up to a certain age, which, however, I am unable to fix.

On the eastern side of Nicaragua, and especially in the Mosquito territory, there are immense tracts of land suitable for the cultivation of *Castilloa elastica*. In choosing land, shelter from strong winds, the greatest enemy of the young Castilloa, should be kept well in view. The seeds should be sown in a nursery bed shaded from the mid-day sun, and the young plants transferred to the hacienda when twelve months old. For each plant a hole should be dug three feet in diameter and one foot deep, and filled with fine loamy soil to

which a little sand has been added. The mixture should be well-trodden down and watered night and morning for two days, when it is ready for the young Castilloa, which must be placed in its new bed at exactly the same depth as in the nursery; if it is weak, a stake support is very desirable.

Trees tapped in the wet season are estimated to yield five times as much milk as in the dry. The quantity of rubber produced therefrom depends to a great extent on the coagulating agent employed. Sixty per cent. of the milk ought to be turned into rubber. A very good agent is one ounce of alum dissolved in sixteen ounces of water. But a weak alcoholic solution will give even better results, for the process is immediate, and the solution may be used many times. In my own experiments I never lost more than forty per cent. of the bulk, and often only thirty-five per cent.

That the cultivation of *Castilloa elastica* is worth the attention of the thousands who are seeking really remunerative investments there cannot be the slightest doubt, and this the author intends to show in a work on the whole subject of india-rubber which he hopes to publish shortly. For success careful study and inquiry is imperative.

## JUANITA.

### CHAPTER IV.

The hour before dawn is the heaviest hour of sleep, and Jackson's party had timed their visit accordingly. The waning moon hung low in the west, shedding a faint mystic glamour around the camp, where complete silence reigned. Two dark forms crawled slowly over the grass towards Erskine's tent, where he and Nita lay sleeping, tired with their previous day's fatigue, when suddenly the sharp ring of a rifle-shot broke the stillness, and one of the figures rolled over writhing on the grass. A second shot, and the remaining figure, bounding to an upright position, dashed into the tent, to be met at the entrance by Erskine, who had sprung to his feet at the first alarm. The shots were fired by Tindoy, who, Indian-like, slept with one eye and both ears open. He had heard a dry twig snap, and rifle in hand, had instantly sprung to his lodge entrance. Seeing two figures crawling towards the tent, he had at once opened fire, hitting Blay, but missing Jackson.

The other two members of Jackson's gang at once opened fire on the Indian lodges from their position in a thicket of young cotton-woods, where they held their horses, trusting to Jackson to cope with Ned and bring off some of the treasure. Meanwhile these two were locked in deadly embrace, Nita helpless to assist her husband, as the men rocked and staggered over the tent floor in the dim half-light. With a gasping cry, Ned fell to the ground, stabbed by Jackson's knife. Pushing the frightened girl aside, Jackson seized some of the small bags of gold lying in a heap at the tent-pole foot, and rushed outside to his comrades, who were exchanging a lively fire with Le Gros and the Indians. He shouted to his men, and running forward, leaped on his horse, after hastily giving some bags of gold to the others, and rode off at full speed; but his horse had hardly gone twenty yards when he reeled, fell on his knees, and then rolled over dead — a bullet from a heavy Colt's revolver had pierced his brain. Jackson, a cool rider, sprang clear of his falling horse, and looking up, saw a horseman before him, who, with pistol pointed at his head, said quietly, 'Hands up, Jim, we want you.' The speaker was Lindesay. His party of four men rode up, and one, sliding from his saddle, deftly slipped the handcuffs on Jackson's outstretched hands. His two partners were also made prisoners and handcuffed, and the three held under guard while Lindesay visited the camp.

Dawn was now well advanced, and the cool air was full of the sweet smells of early morning and the cheery song of birds; but in the camp was sorrow and grief, for poor Ned lay in his tent, with his life-blood slowly ebbing away, his young wife vainly trying to stop the incessant bleeding. Ned's wound was too serious for Nita's limited surgery. Lindesay, kneeling down, closely examined the wound—an ugly knife-thrust between the ribs, but missing the heart. Hastily plunging a piece of dressed deerskin lying near into a pan of water, he squeezed it up like a sponge, and pressing it against the wound, told Nita to hold it firmly in place with both hands. Then quickly bending one of Nita's needles in the smouldering camp fire to secure the necessary curvature, with a thin filament of sinew he neatly stitched up the wound, replacing the wet buckskin, and binding it securely with straps and bandages of skin. And after telling the girl that Ned must keep quite still for some days and the buckskin be kept constantly wet with water, left the tent.

This rough but effective surgery saved Erskine's life, and his poor wife was divided in her gratitude to the Vigilante leader and reproaches on her own head for not having prevented Jackson's murderous attack. But the very suddenness of the affair, the few seconds it lasted, the twisting, struggling figures, the uncertainty as to what it all meant, and then, as she thought, her husband dying at her feet, completely paralysed her. All these combined were sufficient reasons for her inaction, but she felt mortified and annoyed at herself notwithstanding. No other casualties had occurred save Slippery Sam's death from Tindoy's first shot, and a wounded mule belonging to old Dave, who called loudly for vengeance on Jackson's head for his loss.

One morning six leading desperadoes hung side by side in the street, and the following morning three more were added to the row; and the cowardly curs who had followed their lead vanished like an evil mist before the sun. The change was marvellous. Order sprang

from chaos, people breathed freely again, peace and freedom reigned. But the old leaven still lurked in places; and such men as Jackson and Blay merely bided their time to make a sudden stake, and then leave the country.

In the depths of the shady forest, where tall sentinels towered upwards three hundred feet, sat three horsemen, securely bound as to hands and feet, with mounted guards beside them, holding the reins of the prisoners' horses in addition to their own. Near by were some fifteen men superbly mounted and equipped, each one with holstered pistols and rifle slung to the saddle-horn, in addition to a heavy Colt hanging from the cartridge-belt round the waist. Stern, resolute-looking men, these were the acting committee of the Vigilantes; men of substance and position, who had sworn to put down with unrelenting hand the intolerable lawlessness of the district. Lindesay had sent for them to be present at the final act of justice to be meted out to Jackson and his two *confrères*. He addressed a few words to them, relating what he had seen that morning, and after a short pause, asked: 'What say you, gentlemen?' Each man in turn answered the one grim word 'Death.'

The prisoners were at once dismounted, their feet being freed. An active member of the guard scaled a knotty pine from which projected a stout horizontal arm; sitting astride the limb, he quickly adjusted three rope nooses thrown up to him from below, and then descended. Meanwhile the prisoners' horses had been stripped of saddles and bridles, the doomed men were remounted on the bare-backed animals, which by means of a loose rope round their necks were led under the hanging nooses now being placed round the prisoners' necks by a mounted guard. Up to this time no word had been uttered by the men. They knew they played a desperate game, and they equally well knew they had lost—what good was there in saying anything? They dealt no mercy themselves, and expected none. One of them said with an evil scowl: 'I'd sell my soul this moment to kill every blasted one of that gang;' and to this Jackson replied with a gambler's coolness, 'A poor deal for Satan—he has you already.' At that moment, on a sign from Lindesay, the ropes were slipped off the horses' necks; and a sharp blow behind given to each animal caused them to start suddenly forward and leave their late riders dangling in the air.

Erskine's wound healed rapidly, thanks to a good constitution, aided by Nita's careful nursing. Ned, in fact, said he enjoyed his novel honeymoon; to be petted and made much of by a beautiful girl, and that girl your wife, was not only a new experience, he felt, but a very satisfactory one. As for Nita, she was supremely happy; she had her handsome white husband all to herself; he was her prisoner, for he could not move away or move anywhere in fact. She was constantly popping in and out of the tent, bringing him a cool drink or some choice little dish of venison, game, or trout; or caressing and murmuring soft words of love to him, and letting him feast his eyes by gazing into the black depths of her own. There were times when she could hardly yet believe she was actually a white man's wife, his legal wife. It had been her dream for years; for Nita held herself proudly, and no dusky representative of her own class could ever have mated with her. Her convent education had given her desires and aspirations she never expected to see fulfilled. When Erskine crossed her path, and her love leaped out to him, she nervously wondered if he would *marry* her. Now it was all over, and so quickly too, and she was his wife, his real wife! and she glanced at her left hand, to look again at the wedding-ring Ned had given her, his dead mother's ring. She laughed softly to herself, laughed with very joy, and trilled a line or two from an old Mexican love-song—for she could sing well, and with her guitar would amuse her husband for hours during his enforced idleness. Erskine, as he lay in his wife's tent, had ample time for reflection, and for reviewing the sudden rush of late events, events of the deepest interest and importance to him. He felt he had no cause for complaint. Almost in a moment, actually in a few hours, he had won wealth and a wife, ample wealth and a glorious wife; he loved her deeply, she had saved his life. He knew she loved him with her tempestuous southern nature, almost to idolatry, and yet when all was said, deep down in his heart there was a faint jarring note. He felt as though undue despatch had been shown in marrying him to Nita—that he found himself securely tied before he realised what he had done, or what had been done for him. He felt a shadowy grievance somewhere, he hardly knew against whom, Nita or her father, perhaps both; man-like, he excepted himself from any possible blame.

Nita wore her usual camp dress, a short skirt; she discarded moccasins, showing the bare ankles and feet shod with mooseskin sandals, while her arms were bare to the shoulders. A loose crimson kerchief, one of Ned's gifts, barely concealed her perfect bosom; a silken strip of golden colour was wound round the waist and body to the arms, the ends falling in a loose knot at the side. Her dark glossy hair streamed to the waist, but was gathered at the neck with a bright ribbon. If possible, the girl looked more charming in this simple costume than in any other she had yet displayed herself in to her husband. Kneeling down, she lifted his head, placing it on her bosom, then stooping over, kissed him. This simple little action could not have occurred at a more fortunate moment, had Nita been a thought-reader, for it melted and dissolved that latest grain of grievance which had been slowly forming, and which, unchecked, might perhaps have gained uncomfortable prominence in Ned's mind. He felt conquered by the tender steadfastness of his wife's affection, and was happy in his defeat.

As Ned began to recover strength, he and Nita would go out fishing and bring back long strings of trout and grayling; or they would leisurely ride to the nearest lair for bear or elk—picketing the horses, and then cautiously exploring for the game.

Erskine, a keen observer of all the wondrous phenomena of nature in the hills, was delighted to find his wife quite as observant as himself.

He daily found new points in her uttered thoughts, showing clearly that the seed was stored in her mind and merely needed cultivation. For let the woman be ever so fascinating and her physical charms ever so alluring, the man will inevitably—after the hunger for possession is allayed—begin to examine his new partner more critically, to inquire, in fact, just what her acquirements are. If she prove herself an equal companion mentally, and can look after his comforts also, the man is satisfied as a rule. Erskine was more than satisfied; his shrewd common-sense told him that Nita would gradually develop herself if let alone, and would quickly adapt herself to the situation amidst other scenes and other people when the time came. He was quite content to wait. He had already seen her tactfulness and quickness of perception in several instances. The more he saw of her the more he was charmed and in love with her. Her glorious beauty seemed if possible to improve each day, and her playful mode of authority towards him amused him. They told each other of the odd things they had seen when wandering alone through the silent mountains. And they would sit together idly fishing or pretending to fish—for Nita had quickly assumed her wifely prerogative of looking after her husband, and she would not allow Ned to exert himself much. He was not yet very strong, and she made him take matters easy. He was quite willing, in fact he felt he was growing lazy. Being nursed and petted and made much of by such a tender wife was a delicious novelty. He did not care how long it lasted; but the keen pine air, the purest air on earth, rapidly restored him, and returning strength brought appetite, and, like all wives, Nita wished to stuff him, until he laughingly declared he must be active again as he was actually getting fat.

One evening Tindoy said: 'If my brother is able to ride again, I should like to move south. The days are already shortening. The wild geese and swans are leaving the north, and before the early snows come we should be gone.' So camp was struck and everything packed on mules and ponies. The cavalcade started on a bright morning with a trace of early frost in the air. In front rode old Dave and Tindoy, the latter's bright blanket falling from his shoulders to his horse's tail; next was a line of mules and ponies, loaded with camp equipage, the lodge-pole ends trailing on the ground, Indian fashion; then came the precious gold, lashed on the backs of the trustiest mules, secured with the wonderful 'diamond hitch' so easy to learn and so impossible to remember. Last of all, Nita and her husband, she proudly riding a man's saddle, for she disdained such frivolities as side-saddles, and could sit her horse like any Mexican. They rode side by side when the trail permitted, and when it narrowed Ned fell behind, keeping always a watchful eye on the pack train in front. Two Indians scouted in advance and two more brought up the rear, some hundred yards behind, guarding against a possible surprise, as Ned did not feel altogether secure until he had got well away from the late camp. To Dave and Tindoy, who knew every pass and trail for hundreds of miles before them, was left the decision as to where to camp. Pack trains march only some six or seven hours a day—as loading and unloading is a tiring business—and no mid-day halt is made as when wheels are used.

## LEPERS IN CHINA.

By E. H. Parker.

The first place in China where I saw lepers in any great number was Canton. In that city they seem to have a great monopoly of the retail rope and cord trade, and they may be seen any day at the corners of the narrow streets squatting on the ground with their humble stock-in-trade before them; nor does there appear to be any particular dread of personal contact with them. Whether it is that a municipal rule keeps them away, or whether it is that the more repulsive lepers do not care to come into town, it is at any rate unusual to see very advanced cases in the public streets of the city. In order to witness these, one must go to the leper village, situated outside the east gate, in the direction of the execution ground, or rather of the ghastly field into which the dead bodies of executed criminals are thrown, a mile or two below the city walls. There they may be seen in all stages of decay, from a faint livid spot in the lobe of the ear to a sort of scrofulous chalky rottenness covering the greater part of the body, and slowly eating the hands and feet away. In all parts of China where leprosy is common, the people say the same thing, namely, that there is no danger of contagion so long as a healthy person does not actually sleep with a leper. Hence it comes about that, however careless the Chinese may be in their daily intercourse with this unfortunate class, they are always exceedingly particular to turn them out of town before sunset. Tending cows seems to be the occupation of the village lepers; and I remember that at one time this discovery created quite a panic amongst the European ladies of Canton. Perhaps for this reason most Europeans there now milk their own cows. The leper village outside of Canton is a walled enclosure, containing several streets and a considerable number of well-built houses, with a temple and other public buildings for the use of the inmates. These are of all classes; for, no matter how rich a man may be, he is unable to keep a leprous member of his family in his own house if once the fact becomes known to the neighbours. Once in the leper village, there is nothing to prevent one diseased person from marrying with another and begetting children; nor, if a healthy wife chooses to sacrifice herself to a leprous husband, does the law stand in her way. Leprosy, however, is one of the few cases which justify the breaking off of a marriage, even if it be the woman who seeks to cancel her contract with a leprous man.

It is not only the mere bodily contact whilst in occupation of the same sleeping accommodation which transmits the disease; it appears sufficient if the breath of a leper, or the effluvium thrown off by a leper when in a comatose state, is breathed at close quarters by a healthy person whose body is also in a comatose or

receptive condition; thus one sister may get the disease from another, though of course conditions of receptivity are more varied and numerous in the case of man and wife. Naturally the children of lepers are also lepers; but occasionally a generation is skipped, and a healthy son may transmit his father's leprosy to his own progeny. However, the Chinese are so little observant in scientific medicine and surgery that we cannot be quite sure upon this point.

The only recognised way of finding out whether a subject is affected by leprosy or not is to expose the suspected features and members to the light over a crucible of nitre (*k'ing siao lu*), when the traces are shadowed out unmistakably. A native Shanghai newspaper of May last contains the following item: 'Purchasers of female slaves in the region of Canton always subject the proposed purchase to the ordeal of the crucible. But it so happened that last year a friend of ours bought a girl of twelve or thirteen, who, despite the fact that she had been exposed to the nitre stove, very shortly afterwards betrayed a sort of cloudy red spot on her face. A leper doctor at once identified it as leprosy; but when he had her exposed a second time, to every one's surprise she seemed as sound as an ordinary person. No statements of an incriminating nature could be extracted from her, and she roundly swore she was no leper. Recourse was then had to threats, and in order to avoid being pitched into the river, she confessed at last that she really was a leper, and that the seller had told her that *if she kept a silver coin in her mouth during the crucible ordeal, no traces would come out;* he warned her to keep the secret, or else she would certainly be put in the leper village' (called in Chinese the *Fêng-yüan*).

When I was in Canton twenty years ago, there were one or two alleged European or American cases, but it did not appear to me that they were clearly authenticated; and in any event the foreign population of Canton is so fleeting and changeable that the hospital could not possibly have time to form an adequate opinion upon a permanently resident case. There is an expression, 'selling leprosy,' well known at Canton, and possibly some sailor or temporary visitor may have fallen a victim in this way.

In Hoihow, a town in the island of Hainan to the south of Canton, I became 'quite intimate' with the lepers. There, as at Canton, they are confined, for sleeping purposes, to a village just outside the walls of the town, and they are authorised by old custom, or by municipal rule, to proceed twice a month to the island metropolis of Kiungchow in order to beg in the public streets. I used to meet them coming back on the first and fifteenth of each month, their wallets filled with broken food. It is a favourite plan of theirs to force alms from a stranger by feigning to catch hold of the hand. Of course most people draw back in horror, and many are only too glad to throw a few coppers in order to exchange the lepers' company for their room. It always seemed to me that they emitted a sort of 'hot smell,' not a rank or loathsome or acute odour, but a kind of feverish musty smell, as though some sub-metallic fume were being exuded into the air around them. Half-way between Kiungchow and Hoihow there stood a number of tiny mat-huts, scarcely larger than dog-kennels, at intervals of a few yards from each other, on both sides of the road. These huts were inhabited by half-naked leper women, and most of them had lost either arms, toes, or both sets of digits. When I paid my formal visits to the mandarins in my sedan chair, I always directed the official servants who ran after me to put about five hundred cash into the palanquin, and with these cash I used to amuse myself and gratify the women as I ran the leper gauntlet. I well remember one woman who was almost like a skeleton covered with skin. She had no fingers and no upper lip; besides that, her elbows, shoulders, and facial protuberances were all covered with a sort of mouldy fluff. I don't know whether these road cases were so bad that even the leper villages would not take them in, but there they always were during the day, and I suppose they remained there at night too. In the town of Hoihow there was a curious little beggar boy, very bright and intelligent, who used to assist at the local rope-walk, and run about playing with other boys in the streets. He was covered all over by a sort of half-invisible yellow scale, like a fish, and the people used to class him as a 'doubtful leper.' Apparently he slept on the doorsteps, and successfully asserted his doubtfulness to the extent of not having to go to the village at night. I never actually touched him, though I often gave him a copper, and allowed him to walk and talk with me. I believe he used to sleep under my porch occasionally too; probably he is still there.

In the interior provinces of Hu Peh and Kiang Si I twice came across lepers. One of them offered me some fine pears for sale. I cannot say if these inland specimens were indigenous or imported lepers. I also saw a few during my year's stay at the riverine port of Hankow. The remarkable thing is that lepers do not suffer any pain. At first the only sign that leprosy is coming on is a feeling of numbness about the fingers, ears, or nose; the eyebrows get scabby-looking; and the hair begins to thin away. Then the face gets to assume a bright or glazed appearance here and there, as though the parts had just recently healed of a burn or scald; the eyes look hot, inflamed, and rat-like, like those of a white rabbit or common ferret. Progress downwards from this stage is very gradual, but any accidental lesion encourages the formation of deep and fetid ulcers. When I lived at Kewkiang, Dr Shearer used to take lepers in hand, and he told me his experiences. I believe careful treatment with alteratives, coupled with good feeding, may easily arrest the course of the disease; but it will not eradicate it, and the subjects are usually of too humble a walk in life to make it worth any one's while to feed them up, unless it be for scientific purposes, or out of motives of curiosity. No perspiration ever takes place through the glazed portions, and paralysis in the face is a very usual accompaniment. So far as I have been able to ascertain, leprosy in China is confined, firstly, to places near a tidal

river; and, secondly, to places of a marshy and undrained character. In the interior of China no such care is taken to segregate the lepers as is insisted on in Canton and Hoihow; but probably this is on account of the comparative infrequency of the disease. Against smallpox, plague, cholera, and other analogous scourges the Chinese usually take no sanitary precautions whatever; it is only leprosy which imbues them with horror, although it is quite painless, and never affects the general health, except that, in the case of very young people, it retards puberty. The Hoihow people say that leprosy may be specifically acquired by eating the flesh of a dead chicken over which a centipede has run. But there is no end to their medical yarns.

When I was in Burma I saw a few cases of leprosy near Rangoon; but the weather was too hot for me to personally explore in leprous localities. A native Burmese doctor once assured me that he possessed the secret of an absolutely certain cure for leprosy, and offered to cure in my presence any leper I might bring to him. He said he had learned the secret from an old bonze in a *kyaung*, or temple such as the poor use in Burma for all the purposes of an inn. The doctor had done the priest some good turn, and the priest, who was on the verge of death, wished to requite the favour. The cure is as follows: As in the case of the Chinese crucible test, nitre plays an important part, and it is worth while investigating the question why nitre should possess at once the alleged property of disclosing and curing leprosy. It is also remarkable that, as with the Chinese, arsenic is used as an alterative. The Burmese bonze's prescription specified equal parts of saltpetre, arsenic, camphor, vitriol, sulphur, orpiment, common solder, and white arsenic, powdered and heated over a charcoal fire. A piece of paper is laid over the pan to prevent the mixture from flaring up by contact with too much air. The thick vapour which arises is allowed to collect in an alembic in the form of a crust. One sixty-fourth of a rupee in weight of this crusty essence is administered, mixed with pure honey, to the patient, who must have previously devoured at least a pound of honey by way of preparing his stomach. Notwithstanding all this honey, the leper is at once seized with a most violent fit of nausea and vomiting, and during the whole of the next day the leprous spots will be so hot that their glow may be felt at a distance of two feet. (This remarkable glow accords with my own experience of a hot feverish smell.) On the fourth day scabs are peeled off all the affected parts, and the process is repeated, if necessary, until all these leprous spots cease to be feverish. In some cases four or five repetitions are necessary, and occasionally the severe vomiting carries off the patient. Of course there is no cure for disfigurements, nor can parts which have once dropped off be made to grow on again; but the disease is eradicated from all parts where it lurks in an active state.

The above cure, or alleged cure, for leprosy was brought by the Burmese doctor before a European practitioner in Mandalay or Rangoon, and this practitioner advised the man to lay his secret before the Indian Government. But nothing was done. As I held an official position under the Indian Government at that time, I informally undertook to make the suggestion. But there is some knack or secret in the mixing or heating of the drugs above enumerated, and this secret the Burmese doctor would not disclose without a preliminary reward. Thus the thing fell through again. I promised not to disclose the secret even so far as it is explained above; but the man died a couple of years ago, and I therefore consider myself absolved.

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## A MODERN ALCESTIS.

By Rosaline Masson,
Author of *A Departure from Tradition*, &c.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'And you won't marry me, then?' he asked, going back to the original point, just as I thought I had explained it all to him.

'I don't ever intend to enter the domestic service,' I replied.

'Does that mean that you are a "New Woman?"'

'Comparatively new: twenty-three.'

'Ah, now you are flippant!' he cried, turning a white face and angry eyes to me.

We women have all more or less of the cat-and-mouse instinct; but there come times when we are genuinely sorry—ay, and even a trifle frightened.

'I'm not flippant!' I cried. 'But I don't want to marry! Why should I? Women are so happy nowadays! They have everything they want without marrying. They used to marry to be independent, and for the excitement of the thing, you know. Now they have independence and pleasure without, and so they don't marry, unless'——

'Yes?'

'Well, unless the spirit move them to, I suppose,' said I lamely.

He smiled grimly. 'I wonder if anything ever moves a woman except a desire to please herself!'

'I wonder you want to marry me, if that be your opinion of us!'

'I wonder I do! But I've wanted to ever since I first saw you. *Why* won't you marry me?'

'Have you had a classical education?' I asked him.

'I was at Harrow,' he replied sulkily.

'It does not follow. Do you remember the story of Alcestis?'

'No, I don't.'

'I said it did not follow.'

'What has the story got to do with us?'

'If you remembered it, you would see. Alcestis consented to die and go down into Hades instead of her husband.'

'Well, I shouldn't ask you to do *that*, Miss Davrell!'

'Oh yes, you would; every day.'

'What *do* you mean?'

'Spring cleanings, and autumn outings, and

tradesmen's bills, and church attendance, and afternoon calls,' I enumerated.

'Would you kindly consent to explain?'

So I explained.

'Alcestis seems to the modern reader to be an unusually self-sacrificing heroine,' I replied; 'and her husband—Admetus, was he not called?—an unusually selfish lord and master. Indignation struggles with amusement when we read that Admetus first tried hard to persuade his parents to suffer death in his place, using the agreeable argument that their terms of existence were anyhow comparatively short. But the parents were obstinately deaf to reason, and were charmed when Alcestis dutifully undertook dying for her husband as part of the trivial round and the common task. The father of Admetus even led him aside, and earnestly suggested that a judicially selected relay of wives might postpone Hades indefinitely. The story struck me; that is why I remember it. Please don't think that I am as well up in all classical mythology. But really, Captain Despard, do we not see the enacting of this melodrama every day of our lives? I have a great many married lady friends. They would themselves all deny it indignantly; but it is plain to the most casual observer that they, every one of them, make a practice of suffering daily perdition for their husbands.'

I paused, for effect—and breath. But Jack Despard continued in an attitude of polite attention.

'The nearest approach to Hades nowadays that I know of,' I went on, 'since we have eschewed the pit of fire and brimstone of our childhoods—is the spring cleaning. You will allow this?'

'I don't know much about it,' said Jack Despard meekly.

'Exactly so,' I answered drily. 'You were never required to go down into Hades; you probably went to your club instead. During the spring cleaning—which is a recognised necessity among the middle classes—the whole house smells of soft soap and furniture polish; and workmen are perched on ladders; and all the furniture is grouped in the centres of the floors, and covered with shrouds; and meals are irregular and unpalatable; and the servants are untidy and discomposed; and you can't find anything you want; and you are not able to ask a soul to come and see you; and you are disturbed at four in the morning by the banshee moanings of chimney-sweeps; and all day long hammering goes on; and'——

'Oh, stop!' he implored.

'Well, during all this time, who arranges and supervises and suffers uncomplainingly?—the wife! Who lives on a brown-teapot tea and bread and butter, brought when the servants feel inclined?—the wife! Who goes for a week's golf or a little fishing with a friend?—the husband! Who, if he have to remain at home, grumbles incessantly, and considers himself ill-used, and dines daily at his club?—the husband! On this occasion, then, the wife clearly and distinctly suffers Hades on his behalf.'

'He'd be awfully in the way.'

'Oh, if it comes to that, Admetus would probably have been awfully in the way in Hades. Then again, take the autumn exodus to the seaside. Who travels with the servants and the luggage—boxes, baskets, hampers, wraps, gun-cases, violin-cases, baths, bales, tennis-racquets, golf-clubs, fishing-tackle, and wine-hampers?—the wife! Who comes next day, when the cook has had time to get reconciled to the kitchen-range, and everything is unpacked and in order?—the husband! On this occasion, then, the wife clearly and distinctly suffers Hades on his behalf.'

'Ye—es.'

'Or take such minor inflictions as dull callers. When the husband comes in and finds that Mrs M'Jones, who takes a deep interest in the Jews, is upstairs; or Major Mandrake, who has such a painful stammer; or the two Misses Fidgetts, who overlap one another's remarks, and remain from three till six; or Lady Ball, with her ear-trumpet—does he not slink into the library and sulk there? And at dinner, to which his wife comes down with a splitting headache, does he not grumble that she did not send him a cup of tea? And never for a moment does he realise that for two mortal hours or more she has been suffering Hades on his behalf.'

'I do not see the use of calls myself; but ladies seem rather to like them.'

'Admetus did not see the use of death; but he would probably have excused himself on the plea that Alcestis seemed rather to like it. Again, take church attendance—well, we won't discuss that. But house-movings, or—oh! There are so many ways in which wives suffer perdition for their husbands! And you ask me to become your wife!'

'I know it's awfully presumptuous, but—*couldn't* you marry me, May?'

After all my rhetoric! What could one do in the face of such tenacity?

I don't quite know what I said then to make him go away; but when he had wrung my hand and bolted, I sobbed till my head ached. Argument is very exhausting.

Next day Captain Despard called again. He had a smiling countenance, wore a flower, and had by no means the air of a rejected suitor. I felt angry. He took the cup of tea I handed to him, and sat down.

'Miss Dayrell,' he began at once, 'I have been thinking all carefully over, and I've got an idea.'

'Have you?' I responded coldly. 'I am exceedingly glad to hear it: ideas are rare nowadays.'

'Yes,' he continued, unabashed, 'and what is more, it is a capital idea.'

He drank some tea, and then took a calm survey of our drawing-room, holding his cup in his hand, and craning his neck to examine, apparently, the stucco-work on our Adam's ceiling.

'Do you ever have this room thoroughly cleaned?' he asked suddenly.

'Why, of course we do!' I cried, alarmed. 'What makes you ask? Cobwebs?'

'Who sees to it?' he demanded sternly.

'Sees to it?' I repeated.

'Who gives the orders, and overlooks the works, and supervises, so that it is properly done?'

'I do!' I exclaimed, still hunting the ceiling to discover the cobweb.

'Just so.'

There was a change in his voice that arrested my attention; and when I glanced at him to discover its meaning, I noted a triumph on his face that should have warned me, but that only puzzled me.

'Your mother died when you were a baby?' he asked me gently.

'Yes,' I said, still more puzzled to discover the analogy.

'And your sister married and went out to India when you had just left school, I think?'

'Yes.'

'You must have found it difficult at first to manage this large house all by yourself?'

'Oh no! I enjoyed it. And father is very good and patient; he never interferes.'

'He leaves it all to you?'

'Oh, entirely!'

'Where is your father at this moment?'

'In the library. You must forgive his not appearing—he very rarely comes up to tea, because'——

I paused. It would be rather rude to tell him that father hated afternoon callers.

'Are you going abroad this spring?'

I began to wonder if trouble had not unhinged the poor young man, his conversation was so disjointed; and I told him gently, as you would tell a child, that we might go abroad later on; but that at present we had no plans, except that father was meditating a week's yachting.

'While the spring cleaning takes place?'

'Yes,' I owned at once, amazed that he should guess this deep-seated domestic reason so accurately; and then I met his eye and saw the whole plot.

'It seems to me that, as you are already suffering the torments of Hades daily for your father's sake,' he said, 'you might consent to suffer a little of them for mine.'

'I don't see that at all!' I exclaimed, cross at having stepped into his net.

'Have you had a classical education?' he asked me.

'If you are going to tell me the whole story of Alcestis over again, I'——

'Oh, not at all!' he said in an alarmed voice. 'I thought you seemed excellently well up in it. I was merely going to inquire if you knew the meaning of *ceteris paribus*.'

I signified that I did.

'Well then, *ceteris paribus*, it resolves itself into the question of whether you prefer your father's society to mine—either involving you in acquaintance with Hades.'

'Ye-es,' I responded doubtfully.

'I have been thinking it over, you see. I have a great many unmarried lady friends.'

'Indeed,' I said coldly.

'Yes. It is plain to any observer—though they, themselves, would deny the accusation indignantly—that they repeatedly suffer the torments of—er, Hades, for their fathers and brothers and cousins and uncles.'

'I do not see how.'

'Well, take the case of a country vicar, with a son and a daughter. The family resources are meagre, but they are taxed to the uttermost in order to provide Tom with the education suitable to a gentleman, and that will equip him to claim his rank in the world. Mary remains at home in the dull vicarage, surrounded by gooseberry bushes. When Tom returns from Eton or Harrow or Rugby, Mary darns his stockings and worships him. When Tom goes to Oxford, Mary economises in the family commissariat, and denies herself in every way in order that the thing may be. She is greatly impressed by her privileges when she is once taken for a four-days' visit to Oxford during the Eights week, and has tea on her brother's college barge. When Tom gets a curacy, Mary goes and keeps house for him, in order, by thrift and management, to make his little income suffice. When Tom gets a living he marries; and Mary, now grown pitifully shabby and timid, returns to the parental vicarage and the gooseberry bushes. In this case, then, the sister has clearly and undeniably endured—er—Hades for his sake, and sacrificed her life for his, as much as your Alcestis friend ever did. Nor will it occur to Tom, throughout his life, that he has fed the pride and strength of his manhood on the sap of his sister's happiness and youth; and when he has risen to the head of his profession, and counts himself a prosperous and successful man, he will not feel that he owes all this to the gentle maiden lady whose colourless existence he now kindly helps to support.'

'Oh, I agree with you!' I cried. 'I know of so many cases like that!'

'And there are many other minor occasions,' he continued, 'in which sisters suffer—er—Hades for their brothers, and mothers for their sons, and daughters for their parents. When there is a sudden illness in a family—who is called on to give up occupations and engagements at a moment's notice, and retire behind sheets that have been wrung out in carbolic acid?—the mother, the sister, the daughter, or the aunt! Who goes away to golf, or to fish; or, if obliged to remain in town, who lives at his club, and grumbles on the state of affairs, and considers himself personally ill-used?—the father, the brother, the son, or the uncle! Who is expected, by divine right, to know how to deal gently but firmly with the peevish patient, and who accompanies the convalescent to the undesirable seaside?—the mother, the sister, the daughter, or the aunt! Who comes in once a day to ask 'How are you this morning?' and then hurry away to his avocations and pleasures?—the father, the brother, the son, or the uncle! On this occasion, then, the mother, sister, daughter, or aunt, clearly and undeniably suffers—er—Hades.'

'Well, but men are so in the way in a sick-room!'

'Oh, if it comes to that, Admetus would probably have said men were so in the way in Hades. Or take—oh! there are so many times when sisters, and aunts, and daughters suffer martyrdom!'

'Well, granted!—But how does this affect me?'

'It crushes your argument. If you don't approve of woman's subjection, you mustn't only

not marry, you must leave father and brother, and cousin and uncle, and, by leaving them, leave a great many other things besides, and live by yourself and for yourself. Wouldn't you rather marry me?'

'Well, it seems that I gain nothing.'

'You gain certain privileges which society confers on a married lady.'

'*Nous avons changé tout cela!*' I cried. 'What intrinsic value has the feeble Mr Noodle, with his receding chin and his two songs and his five ideas, that I should give precedence to a young woman, just because she has consented to be his wife? Or is the social *status* to be conferred by way of compensation? If so, poor girl, she may sweep her bridal fineries out before me and welcome.'

'But suppose it were not Mr Noodle, but some one who could not sing, and had six ideas?'

'It does not alter the case. A woman, I consider, by assenting to the obsolete doctrine that matrimony dignifies her, is paying a barbaric compliment to man.'

'Will you pay me the barbaric compliment of marrying me?'

'No, I won't.'

'Do you dislike me personally?'

'I shall soon. I never heard of any one proposing in such an argumentative manner before!'

'But you met my proposal by logic, and I have logically proved you to be in the wrong.'

I battled for a little while; but his proposition seemed plausible, and so, as I pride myself on being strictly just, I promised to reflect on it, and he went away, saying he would come to-morrow to learn the result of my reflections.

When he came next day, I told him that I agreed with him: I was acting the part of Alcestis: I would do so no more. As long as a woman pandered to the selfishness of her male relatives—be they fathers, brothers, husbands, cousins, or uncles—as long as she consented to receive anything at their hands, and so put herself into the position of being required to give in return, they required it of her that she should daily give her life for theirs. It was injustice to woman in the abstract to yield to such a state of matters. I would yield no longer.

'You will then be just to one poor fellow in the concrete?' he cried.

'I shall go into lodgings,' I replied.

His face fell suddenly.

'May, you are joking!' he exclaimed.

I assured him that I was not joking. I had suddenly realised that I was a slave.

He looked round the drawing-room. It is a very pretty room, full of old carved wood and soft colours and the scent of many flowers.

'Do you call this slavery?' he asked, with a dramatic gesture.

'It requires cleaning annually,' I replied.

'Your father is very kind and indulgent to you, is he not?'

'I have no doubt that Admetus was kind and indulgent to Alcestis in everything except essentials.'

'Oh, may Alcestis go to everlasting per'——

'It is exactly what she did do.'

'No; Hercules went and brought her back.'

He had evidently been reading it up. I felt snubbed.

He protested till the dressing-gong sounded; but I remained as firm as a rock.

'May,' said my father at dinner that evening, 'that young Despard seems to call here pretty often. This is the third day running, isn't it?'

'Yes, papa; but he won't ever come here again.'

'Why not?' asked my father, looking up at me keenly.

'Because I am going away.'

'Going away? Where?'

'I am going into lod—lod—lodgings!' I cried, bursting into tears.

'My little May, what is it?' he asked, coming round to me at once.

'Oh, you are so—so *very* kind to me, papa!—and—and I'm sure you don't mean it! But you s—s—send me down into Hades for you!'

'My dear child!—what strong language! What do you mean?'

I dried my eyes, and told him all about Alcestis.

He did not take it nearly so well as Captain Despard had done. He was very angry, and talked about 'rank folly,' and 'modern notions derived from reading idiotic novels.' I pointed out that the notions were derived from an intelligent comprehension of ancient classical mythology, and he told me to go to bed. I went, though it was not yet ten o'clock, feeling excessively miserable, but with my mind now firmly made up. What more is needed, save one touch of martyrdom, to make a woman feel sure she is in the right?

## HEAVEN ON EARTH.

The heavens may lose their blue and gold,
The lilies scentless lie;
The roses, when the winds blow cold,
May fade, and fall, and die;
The merles may hide in bush and brake,
The lark and thrush be dumb;
But Love can constant summer make
Within the walls of home.

Though tumults loud may rise and reign
In market-place and square;
Though greed and strife in street and lane
Make discord on the air;
Yet angry feelings enter not,
And discords never come
To noble hall or lowly cot,
If there is Peace at home.

And though the years bring pain and woe,
And many an hour of care;
Though soft cheeks pale and hollow grow,
And silvery white the hair;
Still sorrows lighter seem to bear,
And fuller joys become—
A heaven on earth is surely where
Love reigns with Peace at home.

M. Rock.

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## AN ARMENIAN WEDDING.

By G. B. Burgin.

Ninety-one men and boys of all ages are seated together in double rows. The room is decorated in the usual Armenian fashion, with mirrors, carpets, divans. Bowls of blue china stand on ledges close to the ceiling. These are heirlooms, and must not be broken for fear of ill-luck. There is a gaudy chandelier in the middle of the room, surmounted by a glass peacock, and tin sconces shine dully through the thick haze of tobacco smoke.

As I enter, with as little noise as possible, every one rises effusively. According to oriental ideas of etiquette, a certain amount of importance in one's demeanour is indispensable. The Orientals have no notion that it can pay to respect a man who does not respect himself; and, therefore, if a Pasha of two tails visits you, you should demean yourself as if you were a Pasha of three. This may not be a very gentlemanly rule of conduct; but it is one which is almost indispensable.

A one-eyed gentleman in a blue dressing-gown assures me that it is the proudest day of his life to welcome such a distinguished guest in Mardin. A window is opened to let the smoke clear away, and with two hundred and seventy-three movements of the right arm I salute the ninety-one guests.

The bridegroom's father takes his place below a burly Turk with a mole on his forehead—a Mohammedan is always entitled to sit above a Christian. Then come six Turkish officers, then a boy sucking a cigarette, and a Kurd chief, who, on consideration of receiving a big present, has promised not to molest the bride and bridegroom. He has fine aquiline features, small ears, and tiny feet. His dress consists of a silk turban blazing with false brilliants, striped silk trousers, and a gold-laced, tight-fitting jacket. A natty black lambskin over-jacket fits closely to his shoulders, and a crimson sash, studded with silver-hilted daggers, encircles the waist of this handsome dare-devil. Next to the Kurd sits a solemn-looking fire-worshipper, in closely-fitting black cloth jacket, trousers, and astrakhan cap.

The proceedings commence with a small glass of mastic (a most evil-smelling spirit) all round, including the boy. Then come the musicians; they are shabby and mournful, and their discordant melodies sound like the howling of a pack of wolves. Then there is a solo on an Arabic harp. The performer is so energetic, his little parchment-covered fingers so active, his tum-tiddy-tum-tiddy-tums so rapid, and his despair at the conduct of one Fatima so great that we are full of sympathy when he declares his intention of quaffing the flowing bowl which she hands to him even should it contain poison; for one glance from her eyes can transform the deadliest draught into life-giving nectar. And so on, until the Kurd and the Persian volunteer a dance.

The Kurd takes the Persian's right hand in his left. They commence proceedings with a 'one-two-three, one-two-three, hop, skip, and jump,' to which they add a vocal accompaniment.

'What are they singing about?' I ask, after fifteen minutes of this monotonous performance.

'The death of a Kurd prince.'

After another quarter of an hour has elapsed I make the same inquiry.

'Oh, Effendi, the death of another Kurd prince.'

After supper, which is served on an enormous circular tray supported by a low stool, we return to the salon.

Shriller and shriller ring out the flageolets in the courtyard. Tambourine and guitar players jostle each other; a thrill of excitement lights up the impassive countenances of the spectators. 'What are they going to do?' I ask. 'Where's the bridegroom?'

'Effendi, they are going to dress him. By Allah, he cometh.'

A brawny barber, his arms bare to the elbow, bustles in. His assistant carries a chair, over which is spread a flowered towel. Then enters a procession. The bridegroom, his countenance

of ashen pallor (it has been floured for the occasion), totters along supported by sympathising friends.

After he is shaved by the barber, a variety of costly and wonderful garments are put upon him, all of them gifts from his fair Gemira. Fourteen of the bridegroom's brothers, each holding a candle in the right hand, strip him to the skin, and then re-clothe him—new undergarments, three green silk waistcoats, a blue silk robe, sash, flowered white satin overcoat, two jackets over that, a long loose blue robe, and a new fez. The stockings, however, do not fit, and the bridegroom grumbles. Then he kisses my hands, and sits down beside me on the divan.

'I suppose you're very happy?' I somewhat infelicitously ask, not knowing how to begin.

He smiles as if in pain.

'You love your bride very much?'

'Very much indeed.'

'What's her name?'

'Effendi, I forget.'

Fortunately, at this juncture the music again strikes up in the courtyard, and dancing begins with great spirit around two bonfires—the women at one, and the men at the other. A group of old women squat on the housetop. In another corner of the courtyard the flames throw a Rembrandtish light upon a group of withered crones.

Six beautiful Armenian girls, carrying bundles of the bride's clothes on their heads, take their places at a third fire. They are small and slight, with melting dark eyes, voluptuous forms, and tiny hands. They whirl round and round, blazing with gold and silver coins, in a kind of waltz step, their short blue robes displaying beautifully moulded ankles. Most of them wear blue muslin veils, strings of pearls in their long, braided tresses, and heavy gold bangles on wrists and ankles. Their dancing embodies the poetry of motion. Now darting soft, languishing looks upon the spectators, now revolving around each other with parted lips and flashing eyes, they are alike attractive and beautiful in their unaffected enjoyment and artless desire to please.

Near the dancers stand several old women who utter at intervals a peculiarly shrill cry, thereby invoking all good influences upon the happy couple.

To-morrow evening the bride, surrounded by her friends, will go to the church-door on horseback: the bridegroom walks. On their arrival the priest will come to the porch and explain to bride and bridegroom the obligations of matrimony. The procession will then march slowly round the church, preceded by players on bells and cymbals. On reaching the altar, the bride and bridegroom's foreheads will be placed in juxtaposition, and their heads tied together with gold chains. The bride keeps herself veiled for three days, and is not left alone with her husband until this time has elapsed.

But now there is no more feasting or giving in marriage with these poor people. Their bridegroom is Death—Famine and Pestilence attend him; and the murderous monster who sits upon the throne of Islam smiles cynically, surrounds himself with a vast army, and devises fresh methods by which he may exterminate the whole Armenian race. 'How long, O Lord, how long?'

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER IX. (*continued*).

When their king had crossed before them and it was realised that he intended personally leading them to victory, a yell of joy went up, and it was instantly noticeable that the great mass pushed on even faster than before. I was riding just behind the king, perhaps fifty yards in advance of the fighting line. If anything, my horse was a better one than his, and I had all my work cut out to keep him in his place. The excitement of that charge I cannot hope to make you understand. I had never experienced anything like it before, and I don't suppose I ever shall again. The rush through the crisp air, the roar of the battalions behind me, the wild lust of fighting that was rising in my heart, the total abandonment of all care, and the one set desire to come to close quarters with the foe, were sufficient to produce a peculiar kind of intoxication in which every emotion and every thought seemed quite distinct and enjoyable.

A few seconds now would bring us to close quarters with the foe; already I could see them crouched behind their works waiting to receive us. At this range the execution done by their guns was terrible in the extreme. It seemed to me impossible that any man could live to reach that glittering line of bayonets. And yet, strange to relate, even while that thought was in my mind, I was conscious of no fear. If every other man in our army behind me were killed, it seemed certain that I should escape scot-free. I can only suppose that this must be the case with most men under similar conditions, otherwise no human being would surely be insane enough to run such awful risks.

For upwards of a hundred yards from the base of the hill, the plain was strewn with large rocks. In some places they were so close together that to go straight forward was a most difficult, if not well-nigh impossible proceeding. The pace, however, at which we were travelling rendered it an equally hard matter to turn to right or left. Under these circumstances, we were perforce compelled to continue in as straight a line as possible, dodging the obstacles in our way as best we might. This erratic course was destined to prove my doing or undoing, as I cared to consider it, for in endeavouring to avoid one rock I crashed into another, and the result was eminently disastrous. My horse leapt into the air in an endeavour to clear it, caught it full and fair upon his chest, and turned an almost complete somersault, throwing me over his head, and rolling upon me when he had got me on the ground. I have a vague recollection of crawling under the shelter of the rock to avoid being trampled on, of observing the troops go panting by, and of seeing a young man have his head severed from his body by a shell, and the former come rolling and pitching

towards me, before I lost consciousness and remember no more of what happened.

It must have been upwards of half an hour later when I opened my eyes again. To my surprise, I discovered that I was lying beneath a tree on the same palm-topped hill where I had been standing with the king and the general commanding when the battle had commenced. His Majesty was kneeling by my side with an anxious face, and one of the medical staff was feeling my pulse. As soon as they saw that I was once more conscious, a glass of brandy and water was given to me, and under the influence of this stimulant I was soon myself again, though wofully weak and sore.

'What has happened?' I asked of the king as soon as I could speak. 'Did we capture the position?'

'We have been victorious all along the line,' he answered. 'The enemy are now in full retreat.'

'Thank God,' I said. 'Your Majesty has won a victory to-day of which any nation might be proud.'

When I was able to move, I rose, and leaning on the king's arm, for I was still extremely shaky, looked across the battle-field. Already the ambulance corps were hard at work collecting the wounded of both sides and conveying them to the impromptu hospitals which had been erected on the hill adjoining Du Berg's headquarters. The enemy's strong position on the other side of the plain, as well as the batteries to right and left of it, had fallen into our hands, while a large supply of arms and ammunition had become our property. The army, flushed with its success, was prepared for anything, so the king informed me, and could with difficulty be restrained from following the foe into the jungle to which they had retreated.

Leaving the knoll, we descended to the headquarters' hut in order to recover ourselves after the exertions of the day. The sun was now directly overhead, and we had tasted no food since daylight. Having satisfied our hunger, we laid ourselves down, and in my case I know that in less than a minute I was as fast asleep as I had ever been in my life.

When I woke it was three o'clock, and from the commotion outside the hut it was evident that something important was happening. Having convinced myself that the enemy must be advancing, I sprang to my feet, and clutching my sword ran to the door. But it was nothing of the kind. Up the steep path that had been cleared through the jungle, a man was toiling on a worn-out horse. Covered with foam, lurching from side to side, panting so that we could hear him even at the distance we were from him, he made his way towards us. Who he was it was impossible to tell at that distance, but when he reached the hut a surprise was in store for us. He was none other than the young priest, whom I have mentioned to you before, His Majesty's chaplain at the citadel, Father Ambroise. I could hardly believe my eyes, and I could see that the king was equally astonished.

Having half-scrambled, half-dropped from the saddle to the ground, he staggered towards us, pulling a letter from his pocket as he came. He handed it to the king.

'What is the meaning of this?' cried the king, turning ghastly white as he spoke. 'What is it that brings you here?'

'Treachery, your Majesty,' cried the priest. 'Her Majesty the queen bade me deliver this as soon as my horse could bring me to you. I have ridden from the capital since sunrise this morning.'

As he spoke he gave a little sigh and next moment fell in a dead faint at our feet. Du Berg and one of his aides sprang to his assistance, and having picked him up carried him into the hut.

The king meanwhile had opened the letter, and was reading it as if his life depended on it. When he had finished he seized me by the arm.

'For God's sake, Instow, come with me,' he said in a voice I hardly recognised. 'This letter contains terrible news, and I must consult with you upon it.'

I followed him to a spot in the jungle some fifty yards or so from the hut. Here he turned and faced me.

'Read that letter,' he said, handing it to me, 'and tell me what you think of it.'

I seated myself on a fallen tree and did as I was ordered. It was from Olivia, and read as follows:

'The Citadel, *Tuesday Night.*

'My own dear Marie—I have, I fear, terrible news for you. If I do not explain my meaning as well as I should otherwise like to do, remember I am writing in the greatest possible haste and in terrible distress of mind.

To-night, after you had gone, Natalie was walking upon the battlements alone. Quite by chance she sat down for a little while upon the parapet near the window of General Roche's quarters. While there, she heard him in earnest conversation with a stranger, a Frenchman, who arrived in the citadel to-day under the pretence of seeking service under your Majesty's colours. From what she overheard, they were discussing the event which is to take place at midnight to-night. How I am to tell you of such treachery, such black double-dyed villainy, I do not know. One thing, however, is evident. Roche is the traitor Instow has always believed him to be, and not your faithful servant as you suppose. His plot is as follows: At half-past twelve o'clock to-night a messenger is to arrive, presumably from you, who will report that the army has received a terrible defeat, and that the king requires the instant services of as many of the garrison as can be despatched. Under pretence of complying with this demand, the majority of the troops, certainly all those who are faithful to your throne and person, will be marched out of the citadel into the surrounding country. A messenger will then be despatched to the French commander, who is now within fifty miles of the place, coming from the east with three thousand men, and before the troops can return the capital will be in the enemy's hands. Not knowing who may be in the plot, I have written this letter, and am now sending it to you by the Padre, who is the only person in the

citadel we can trust. He will ride to the death, if need be, to deliver it into your hands; and when you receive it, you will take such action as you may think necessary. If you could only come in person, you would turn the tables on them, and we should be saved. As it is, I shall not give in while there is a man in the fortress to stand by me. God be with you, my husband.—Your devoted wife, OLIVIA.'

'What is to be done?' asked the king when I had finished reading, and handed the letter back to him.

'We must think,' I answered; 'and that quickly too. What time was that letter despatched?'

'The Padre says he left at sunrise this morning.'

'Or in other words at five o'clock. He was here at three. What time is it now?'

'Just half-past.'

'Eight hours and a half to do the return journey. Can it be done, think you?'

'It must be done,' he answered vehemently. 'Come what may, I must be in the citadel by twelve o'clock. Du Berg must find us horses, and we must start at once. I presume you will come with me?'

'You may be sure of that.'

He held out his hand and gripped mine tightly in it.

'God bless you for a true friend,' he said. 'And now for boot and saddle, and the king to the rescue. The traitors shall see with whom they have to deal.'

Five minutes later Du Berg had been informed of what had taken place at the capital, and was making arrangements to despatch a column to intercept the force that was making for the citadel from the east, and a quarter of an hour after that the king and I were on the backs of the best horses in the camp, proceeding across country as fast as our animals could take us to the rescue of the city.

(*To be continued.*)

## ACCOUNTANCY AND ITS FUTURE.

By a Member of the Profession.

PERHAPS one of the most interesting and at the same time significant and pressing problems of the time is the constant and increasing difficulty which presents itself to parents desirous of finding a suitable and promising occupation for their sons; such an one as will, with steady application and perseverance and a reasonable amount of ability, at least yield an adequate remuneration in years to come.

It seems a fact, as curious as it is unfortunate, that too large a proportion of the rising generation whose fathers are in business entertain some antipathy to following the same occupation, and look as a rule towards the 'professions' for their future field of labour. How far this may be due to some mistaken idea as to the relative 'dignity of labour' we need not stop to inquire; but it is not seldom the case that parents themselves have often a mistaken ambition to see their sons educated to some one or other of the professions by reason of the erroneous impressions they hold of its prospects, and the social position which it opens out to those engaged in it.

Something of the same feeling has extended to almost every rank and class, and as a natural consequence the lapse of time has, under such circumstances, brought about a condition of things which has resulted in a cry of 'overcrowding' (and consequently 'over-competition') which, not loud at first, has rapidly grown in intensity each succeeding year. It is not surprising therefore to find that with an increasing knowledge of these facts, and the evident continued invasion of the professions by numbers of articled clerks, a greater amount of caution and courage is being shown by those who at one time would not have thought twice had an opening presented itself for any of their sons in any of the professions. Leaving out of consideration the army, navy, and the church, and devoting more particular attention to what may be termed the practising professions, it has been for many years increasingly plain that those of medicine and law are sadly overcrowded, and that the percentage who embark in practice, and ultimately, from sheer force of competition, retire defeated, is an alarming and a growing one. It may truly be said that unless the commencing practitioner, be he doctor, barrister, or lawyer, has at his disposal sufficient independent means to enable him to wait a very considerable period for an income in the shape of 'fees,' his chances of success are small, and by degrees are growing 'beautifully less.' Of the depressing position of those who of necessity give up the struggle it is not necessary to speak at any length; their number is considerable, and, drifting back as assistants or commencing in some new and precarious sphere, they lament the chance which led them to the profession of their choice, with perhaps the added consciousness that the best years of their lives have been wasted.

With such facts as these becoming more and better known, it is not surprising that attention is being increasingly directed to one of the professions which, though not claiming great antiquity, and yet being of great and increasing importance, is not as yet so sadly overstocked—namely, that of the accountant. If we venture to indicate in some degree the scope of the work included in the term 'accountancy,' and the future prospects of those entering it, it may probably be useful to parents seeking suitable openings for sons about to leave school and commence the battle of life.

Though the profession has but lately received its present organisation, it is not of course a new one. As a separate business it can hardly be said to be more than a century and a half old; the oldest example of the word in this sense given by the Philological Society's New English Dictionary dates from 1539: 'The said Books shall be examined with the Accomptants and particular Clerkes for the perfecting of the same.' There were 'Accomptants-generall' of various public

offices in the seventeenth century. The earliest specimen of the modern spelling 'accountant' given by Dr Murray is, oddly enough, from Tom D'Urfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719), where mention is made of

> A British accountant that's frolic and free,
> Who does wondrous feats by the Rule of Three.

'Accomptant' is the form used by Isaac Taylor in the middle of this century; and the first example of 'accountancy' given by the Dictionary is of 1854.

The extensive and unique experience which the practice of the old accountancy gave to its members, and the knowledge of the inner workings of every conceivable class of business which they acquired, marked them out as being eminently suitable for the duties of Trustees in Bankruptcy and Liquidators of public and private companies, and to-day their duties may practically, though not wholly, be classed under the two great heads of accounts and liquidations. The magnitude and variety of the work comprised in the different subdivisions of these two chief branches is unique, and give to the accountant's profession a distinction and importance which is fast being judicially recognised. As expert bookkeepers and accountants, auditors of private and public partnerships and companies, accountants to large trusts and corporations, trustees in bankruptcy and private arrangements, liquidators of companies, receivers, and arbitrators on matters of account, their services are in constant demand, and the qualifications demanded of a thoroughly capable practising accountant are as searching as they are varied; demanding, in addition to a thorough knowledge of the technicalities of the profession, a clear head, a keen perception of probabilities and possibilities, and a thorough knowledge of human nature.

How far the demand for accountancy services is progressing may to some extent be judged from the fact that in the course of the last thirty years the number of professional accountants in permanent practice has more than doubled; the membership of the Institute of Chartered Accountants alone, which in 1882 was eleven hundred and ninety-three, is now two thousand two hundred and forty-eight, whilst that of some of the other professional societies shows a similar increase. It was as a consequence of the growth of the profession, both in numbers and importance, that in 1880 a charter was granted incorporating under the before-mentioned title certain petitioning accountants and providing certain bylaws as to the qualifications to be required of future 'Chartered' accountants, and for the conduct of members of the profession. Since that time charters have been granted, under strict conditions, to several Scottish societies, and in England there has been incorporated the 'Society of Accountants and Auditors,' each and all of which exist, speaking generally, 'to raise the character of the profession and to secure for the community the existence of a class of persons well qualified to be employed in the responsible and difficult duties devolving on public accountants.' That they have, by their system of examinations and compulsory training for five years under articles, in the main fulfilled their object is undoubted, and to-day the profession stands higher in the esteem of the mercantile and general community than ever before.

And now let us look for a moment at the future of higher accountancy. It cannot be said to be overcrowded at the present time. Seldom, if ever, does the capable practitioner want for employment, and those now commencing practice, provided they are persevering and have a thorough acquaintance with their duties, find it a remunerative and promising opening for their talents. But is it likely to be so in years to come?

The immediate future gives every indication of a great increase in accountants' work, and much of it is due to the economic conditions under which commerce is carried on, resulting, as they have done in the past and promise to do still more in the future, in an ever-enlarging volume of trade, both inland and foreign. Taking this for granted, the stress of commerce and the regulations which the law of the land imposes on those engaged in it promise to bring the expert accountant into greater need than ever before. Absolutely impartial and accurate accounts, a perfectly true adjustment of profit and loss, a correct system of costs, and the preparation of fair and complete balance sheets by independent persons, are all becoming more generally recognised as necessities in mercantile houses which have in times past worked more by 'rule of thumb;' and such are, in increasing numbers, availing themselves of the services of those who by training and experience are in every way fitted to give valuable and material assistance. Of the remarkable extension of joint-stock enterprise and the consequent increasing appointment of independent professional auditors it is hardly necessary to speak; the field is an ever-widening one; whilst the services of accountants in such matters of account as executorships, trusts, and other spheres are being rapidly and surely extended.

So far as bankruptcy and liquidations are concerned, too, the outlook is promising. There is a growing tendency to entrust the administration of estates in process of being wound up to practised accountants, with their necessarily intimate acquaintance with the details of business, rather than to the red-tape officialism of the state departments; and if present indications are anything to judge by, it is more than probable that legislation in future will lean more in the direction of the extension of non-official trustees and liquidators than otherwise. But however that may be, certain it is that the skill and training of the accountant are becoming, and will continue to become, more and more recognised as necessities in mercantile work, whilst it is probably only a question of time when the practice of the profession will be restricted, as is the case with law and medicine, to such as have qualified by articles and examinations, and subsequent membership of one of the recognised societies.

Of the question of the monetary remuneration which usually falls to the share of a qualified practising accountant it is more difficult to speak, but it may reasonably be stated that it will at least be equal to that earned by the average member of the legal profession. But it should be borne in mind that in the accountant's profession the practice which obtains amongst lawyers of terminating relations with their articled clerks,

as soon as their term of service is completed, is not followed in any degree, and an accountant is generally glad to retain the services of one who has been with him during articles. As a consequence, there is an exceptional number of fully qualified professional accountants who continue their relations under their principals; and it may safely be said that the principal values the services of those who of necessity have acquired much confidential and private knowledge as to the position of his clients. As to the remuneration of these it is hardly possible even to give an approximate idea. Between the extremes of ability will be found every grade of remuneration, but such an assistant will probably commence at a salary of about £120 to £150, rising to two or three hundred pounds or even higher, according to ability.

## JUANITA.

### CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

On a warm, sleepy afternoon, the afternoon of an Indian summer, the train slowly wound its way through the Valley of the Thousand Springs. Ned was absorbed in conversation with his young wife. She had been asking many questions, chiefly about matters that had often puzzled her. Ned, a clever, well-read man himself, was only too glad to tell her what she wished to know, and he was struck with the clear, acute comments she made at times on the subject in hand; and he mentally smiled as he compared her with some feminine acquaintances at home, who posed as leaders in their own particular set, and who seemed to consider life was merely a routine of babbling generalities and inane vapourings, well-flavoured with the latest slang. His young mountain-beauty was natural and simple in all her ways, with a quiet dignity well suited to her perfect face and figure. Not but that there was a slumbering volcano behind that calm exterior, and Ned knew it, for this girl's warm nature, when once stirred, needed constant caressing and assurance of unchanging love from her husband.

At an exclamation from his wife, Ned looked forward and saw that the train had halted, and that the leaders were talking to the two scouts, who had fallen back with news. Hastily riding up, Dave told him that hostile Indians were reported on the adjacent bluffs a few miles ahead. A council was held, and it was decided to make camp at once. As this was to be a decoy-camp, or camp to beguile the wary hostiles, it was necessary to begin early while there was yet daylight. The animals were driven into a small space nearly surrounded by young cotton-wood and alder trees, the packs were unloaded and piled in a half-circle, making a serviceable breastwork to one lying on the ground full length. At the open side of this space, some fifty yards distant, the usual camp was made, lodges erected, a fire started, and a few ordinary articles of camp use scattered about. The canvas tent was laid flat on the grass behind the barricade for Nita's comfort. An early supper having been eaten, robes and blankets were laid round the fire with willow twigs and sage-brush roughly rolled in them to represent sleeping figures. At dusk the pack-animals were brought in and tied up behind the barricade for the night. The reason for this performance was the well-known habit of Indians to make a night-attack when possible, or rather at the first signs of dawn. The redskin believes he will be haunted by the ghosts of his victims if he slays them save in daylight, so he selects the hour of earliest dawn for his murderous attacks. Tindoy, who knew all the tricks of his race, told the party when they had lain down behind the barricade, rifles in hand, to sleep, as he would arouse them when the time came—for the old warrior was sleepless when danger threatened.

Slowly the night passed away; the great stars blazed forth in the glory only seen in high altitudes, a deep silence prevailing. Just at dawn the mournful howl of a coyote broke the stillness, answered by the low hooting of an owl. Tindoy's outstretched arm silently awoke the sleepers. He knew that the cries were Indian signals.

All of them, including Nita, lying full length behind the barricade, pointed their rifles to the front and waited. In a few minutes dark figures well defined against the coming dawn appeared; and then came an irregular fire of shots directed at the dummy figures lying round the expiring fire, a second volley being poured into the lodges. As no movement was made by the figures lying on the ground, the hostiles rushed in, scalping-knives in hand, with joyful howls, thinking they had massacred the party, and then a deadly hail of bullets from eight repeating rifles surprised them. Several fell killed or disabled, the remainder crawled rapidly to cover, when a desultory fire was exchanged for nearly an hour. Indians much dislike fighting a concealed enemy. Some well-directed shots from Dave's and Ned's guns emptied a few saddles—for the enemy had now re-mounted and were circling round the barricade as is their custom. About this time two mounted runners came at racing speed to the attacking party, their horses blown and covered with dust. Shouting loudly to the others, the whole party rode off at a sweeping gallop. Tindoy, who was watching and listening, said:

'They are gone. The white troops are coming this way driving all before them.'

This was good news, but bad was to follow. Almost the last shot fired by the enemy had struck old Dave, the bullet entering his neck, and penetrating to the heart. He lay on his back, conscious, but evidently dying. Nita, kneeling beside him, clasped his hands in both of hers, sobbing violently, while Ned moistened the old man's lips with water. The dying man with difficulty gasped out: 'My girl! Nita! be good to her,' and then he passed away, dying as he had lived in the heart of the eternal mountains. They buried him under a giant pine with a roughly-cut cross in the deep bark above him, piling up a great heap of stones over him to keep off the sneaking coyotes; and so they left him to his eternal rest, with the whispering winds as his requiem and the winter snows as a pall.

Erskine deeply regretted old Dave's tragic end. He had liked the stern old man for his straightforward honesty, and he felt sorry for

Nita's sake, for she was inconsolable at first. She had been a comrade as well as daughter to her father—had shared his pleasures and hardships—had so entered into his life and habits that she felt they must never part; and now he had left her, and lay calmly resting under the great trees. She reflected in her grief how utterly alone his death would have left her had there been no Ned to lean on and to comfort her, and she clung to her husband with increased affection, were that possible.

Dave's loss was also a serious one for another reason, and Erskine realised that the old man's prudent advice and readiness of resource in difficulties would be greatly missed. However, he had to make the best of his situation, and requesting Tindoy to continue as their guide, they started again on their march. They had not proceeded far before they were startled by a loud humming noise coming from a wide shallow gulch on their right, and the next moment they saw a multitude of mounted Indians with their squaws and equipage come madly rushing towards them, crying loudly to each other—the screaming squaws the loudest. In an instant the pack train was surrounded, and the mules swept along with the resistless horde. Ned found himself hemmed in by warriors, and Nita carried to the rear amongst the hideous squaws. It was all done in a moment, and Ned saw his valued mules scattered amongst the frenzied crowd of redskins, whose mournful cries and savage glances filled him with foreboding.

This band was the remnant of Chief Joseph's tribe, the fighting chief of the Nez Percés. They were fleeing from the white cavalry behind them, after having been badly worsted in a stubborn fight on the previous day. They numbered over a thousand in all, and were panic-stricken at the result of the last fight, when the whites, though much the smaller party, had given them a never-to-be-forgotten lesson in the famous battle of the Big Hole. They were heading for Wyoming, to hide in the rock fastnesses of the Wind River mountains. Ned vainly tried at times to edge his horse to the outside of the throng, whereupon scowling riders pointed to the front, pressing their horses against his and brandishing long knives above his head, so as to let him plainly understand he had to obey orders or lose his scalp. To his great relief, they halted at a stream, their horses blown and exhausted—for, as he learned later, they had been riding since early dawn. His pack mules were bleeding from the arrow pricks given by the Indians to keep the animals from falling behind; but he noticed with surprise and satisfaction that all were collected in one spot, and the packs unloaded in a heap together.

Ned was then led to a young pine tree, where he was ordered to sit down, two Indians binding him to the tree round the waist, but leaving his legs and arms free. They searched him, taking his arms away, and left a guard beside him. He could see nothing of Tindoy or Nita. Dread as to Nita's possible fate overpowered him. How long he sat there in his helpless despair he knew not, until recalled to his senses by feeling a hand on his shoulder. Looking up he saw a tall handsome Indian with eagle's feather in his hair standing before him. His bonds were cut and his guard vanished. Joseph, for it was he, told him in good English to stand up, and asked him who he was and who was the white woman. Ned briefly told his story, not mentioning, however, the Indian fight of the previous night; and he explained that the white woman was his wife, making much of the fact that both were subjects of the great White Queen, and were leaving the White Father's country for ever.

Ned knew the States Indians envied their brother tribes under the rule of Canada, where difficulties rarely occur, owing simply to the fact that treaties are respected and enforced by the Canadian government. Joseph asked many searching questions as to how long Ned had been in the west? who his wife was? and where he was going with his goods? Then telling him to follow, he led the way to a distant lodge, where, squatting on the ground inside, were Tindoy and his party of four Indians. Chief Joseph motioned to Ned to sit down, and thus addressed the party: 'Tindoy, Chief of the Banaks, I have talked with this white man. He says what you said about him. His tongue is not forked. He is not one of those accursed American children of the great White Father who, with lying tongues, first stole our country, promising to pay us for it and then broke their promise. They placed us on reservations, promising daily food for our wives and children and ourselves, and then through cheating agents tried to starve us, giving us tracts and hymn-books instead of flour.

'I know these white men want to wipe us out, to drive us from our land and country, where we have hunted and fished for ages; they want it all; they wish us dead.' Then fiercely to Tindoy, 'And if you, Tindoy, would only join me with your forces, we would drive these accursed whites from our midst yet.' This speech was given in Indian. Then turning to Ned, he said in English: 'You are free; your wife will be restored to you unharmed, also your pack train and treasure. I have no quarrel with the White Queen's people; I only wish she ruled this country also.' Tindoy then arose, and in impassioned language urged Joseph to surrender, pointing out the absolute hopelessness of his cause.

Joseph knew that Tindoy had been taken to the chief eastern cities at government expense, to see for himself the magnitude and power of the whites, so that he might tell his restless followers on his return. Joseph wavered for a moment; then his old hatred came back and he said: 'No! I shall remain with my people and fight to the end,' and left them. A few moments later an Indian appeared and silently motioning to them to follow him, led the way to the outskirts of the Indian camp, where to their surprise they saw their own lodges and Nita's tent erected, the packs lying close by, and all their mules and ponies grazing near them, a mounted Indian keeping them apart from the other herd. Rushing to the tent, Ned found his wife lying on a pile of robes crying bitterly. 'Nita, darling!' 'Dearest husband!' came like a duet together, and she clung to his embrace and would not release him for long.

When she found they were all free to proceed

unharmed on their journey, she laughed and cried and kissed Ned all together, and took a long time to quiet down. Ere long Tindoy came in and told them that Joseph's scouts had just reported the white troops to be following another trail in their pursuit. Joseph's party having divided into two during their retreat, their chief proposed resting next day where he now was, to let the horses recover themselves. Tindoy suggested that they do the same and wait until the Indians had all gone, lest some might join them in hopes of plunder. There was no danger of the troops disturbing them, as their course led them several miles to the north of where Joseph rested, and Ned, mindful of the pricking his poor mules had sustained in the late *mêlée*, agreed to wait until the Nez Percés left them.

The next day passed quietly, Ned and Nita prudently keeping within their tent most of the time. Next morning Nita stole out to the front, leaving her husband sleeping. Looking round in amazement, she found that not a trace of Indians was to be seen; warriors, squaws and papooses, horses, lodges, and all had vanished silently in the mists of morning. She quickly counted their own animals; not one was missing, and meanwhile she saw Tindoy riding slowly back to camp. He had accompanied Joseph a little distance, urging him at the last moment to send in offers of surrender; but Joseph, although respecting his kinsman's sagacity and advice, was resolute in his determination not to give in to the hated whites, and he went his way with his plucky band to endure countless hardships and privations until forced by hunger at the last to surrender.

In a few days they emerged from the last mountain pass they had to cross, and involuntarily drew rein at the scene below them, where stretched a great fertile valley green with waving crops of grain, hemmed in on every side by savage mountains. In the far distance an inland sea reflected the sunshine like a huge mirror from its motionless surface. They were gazing at the Great Salt Lake, for they were now on the outposts of Mormondom.

They were on their way to the land of constant flowers and sunshine, the land of ease and indolence and dreamy indifference to the future, to the native land of Nita's mother, sunny Mexico. Many thoughts revolved in Erskine's mind as they descended their last hill. He was face to face with the fact that a new era in his life was now in view, and as he glanced at his wife's calm face — for Nita had lately assumed a most dignified and matronly air — he reflected that the burden now lay on him to make all things easy and pleasant for her in her gradual ascent to the heights of what we are pleased to term Society. Just then Nita placed her hand on his arm and with a wistful look in her dark eyes said:

'Ned, will you do something to please me—will you'—pausing, 'will you let us be married in the church down there,' pointing below as she spoke. She blushed crimson as she continued, 'I know, dear, that we are legally married according to the law of the country; but Ned, darling, it is my whim—a woman's wish—will you, Ned?'

Her husband smiling said:

'Yes, of course, Nita, if you wish it. As a matter of fact we are married as legally as though the ceremony had been done by a bishop, but if it will gratify you, in a church it shall be performed.'

Arriving at the busy frontier town, they rode first to the bank, where Erskine explained to the astonished manager how he had come by all his treasure. The gold was transferred to the safe, and then they proceeded to the hotel, where they proposed resting a few days before moving southwards. That same afternoon Ned called on the local minister, one of the fearless pioneers of the Church, who had dared to build his little church of logs in the very face of the Mormon zealots, who would gladly have made a bonfire of it, with the minister inside, had they dared.

The good man, on hearing Ned's story, approved his desire for a second ceremony, and they were quickly and quietly married once more, and Nita signed her name with a gratified smile, as though she had at last secured her adored husband beyond all question. And then the taciturn, faithful Tindoy left them. He sternly refused the gold offered him by Ned. Gold, he said, was his country's curse, bringing the white men to it; but he accepted Erskine's pearl-handled revolver with pride, and his men were given a goodly store of cartridges, highly valued by all Indians.

The old chief stood erect, his blanket carelessly thrown back from his right shoulder. 'Good-bye, brother, sister. Tindoy is glad you are safe'—thus he spoke with impressive earnestness to Ned. 'If you see the White Father, tell him to send us agents whose tongues are not forked, and whose hearts are not black. If our treaties were respected as the great White Queen's are, there would be no war,' and then with a hearty farewell, he vaulted on his horse and was seen no more.

## INDIAN WRESTLING.

By H. N. M.

India is indeed the home of wrestling. The science is there regarded as a fine art, patronised by the aristocracy of the land, and highly popular with the masses. The champion wrestlers enjoy a reputation as great and wide-spread as the most celebrated bull-fighters of the Spanish ring: idolised by the people, their names are on every one's tongue.

Indian wrestlers, or *puhlwans*, as they are called, belong to a hereditary class. They are a special breed of men who have practised the art, and lived by it, for generations. One occasionally hears of an outsider who may be possessed of abnormally developed muscles adopting the profession; but such is a rare exception, for the wrestler is generally trained from his infancy in exercises of a severe nature and diversified form, which have been handed down from his ancestors as the result of centuries of experience and actual practice. The efficacy of these old codes of training cannot be doubted when one sees their result in the finished *puhlwan*, as he stands erect and proud

in the arena, his masses of knotted muscles glistening with all the polish of satin.

We ourselves are so passionately devoted to athletics in every form, that it would be interesting to have the opinions of our experts upon the advantages of the native systems of training. We should undoubtedly be able to pick up some useful wrinkles from the recipes of our Aryan confrères.

The style of wrestling adopted in India is catch-as-you-can. But the conditions are such that matches with European wrestlers are rarely brought off. Some time ago an English wrestler, said to be the champion of the world in certain styles, met the private wrestler of a leading rajah, a great patron of the sport. The match came off in a large tent, and was witnessed by over three thousand spectators. The opponents faced each other, and tried for a few moments to grip each other by the back of the neck. It was done so quickly that it was hard to see how it came about; but, suddenly, the English champion was seen on his hands and knees on the ground, his opponent standing over him with one leg on either side of his body. The native then entwined his arms around the body of the Englishman, and though the latter weighed about seventeen stone, lifted him up from the ground, and seemed to test his weight. Meanwhile, the Englishman tried to manœuvre for an advantage by twining his legs round those of his opponent, but he was no match for his dark opponent in either science or agility. The native then slipped his hands within the small drawers worn by the Englishman, and at this, the latter raised his hands and seemed to be expostulating with the judges. He had no sooner done so, however, than he was lifted up and sent revolving some ten feet away, like a ninepin, and he was again pounced on, and laid quietly on the flat of his back before he had time to gather his senses. Whether it was fair wrestling or not it is hard to say, but the fact remains that the four judges, two being British officers, at once gave a unanimous decision in favour of the native.

The oriental possesses one advantage in that his body is oiled; but this is done not so much to make him slippery as to benefit his muscles, for the oil is rubbed into the skin till its existence is scarcely perceptible. Their agility and suppleness is little short of marvellous, and it is a common sight to see a man weighing seventeen or eighteen stone turn a double somersault or walk erect on his hands, just as a preliminary, to take the kinks out of his joints. The most eminent wrestlers in India are kept in the employment of the great rajahs and princes. Though their actual pay may not be very large, they receive valuable gifts on winning their bouts. Amongst the sporting rajahs themselves the greatest rivalry exists over the prowess of their pet champions. Thus, wagers of thousands of pounds are frequently laid between two princes, each backing his own nominees. It would be derogatory to the dignity of an eastern potentate to appropriate the stakes won to his own use, so these perquisites fall to the actual victors in the contests.

A wrestler starts his professional career, as a rule, when about twenty years of age, and retires at about forty. Sometimes, however, he leaves the ring almost before his prime, and this takes place when he has won some great and signal victory. As soon as he has thus gained some distinctive championship he avoids all possibility of his coveted laurels being snatched from him, by prompt retirement. It was reported that the young wrestler who threw the Englishman decided that that should be his last appearance in the ring; and he now solaces himself on the thought that he is the champion wrestler of the whole wide-wide world. They say that he has amassed about £80,000, and that he lives a quiet uneventful life upon the estate presented to him by his employer for his last great victory.

## SHIP-BREAKING.

Of all the developments of this scientific age, the progress of modern shipbuilding is perhaps the most phenomenal. Vessels of high efficiency and most approved type can now be built at a price thought altogether impossible a few years ago. The modern steamer is of better design, has improved engines, and burns less coal than her predecessor of ten and twenty years ago; and, what is equally important, steel is much cheaper than it was, and hence the up-to-date vessel costs less to build and less to work than the older craft of our merchant fleets. Thus owners possessed of old and obsolete ships find it impossible to compete with the present creations of the builders' skill, and hence they must replace their old boats by new ones or go to the wall by stress of competition. What is to be done with these displaced vessels, many, in fact the bulk, of which are still, so far as staunchness goes, fit for many years' work were competition less keen? Some go to the foreigner, others to the ship-breaker—the nautical knacker, as he may be called.

Let us suppose that a shipowner has determined to get rid of certain of his vessels. Due announcement of such intention is given, and on a certain date the vessel is put up to auction, and disposed of to the highest bidder. Such sales are always attended by the breakers-up or their agents, ever on the lookout for a bargain; and many are the bargains they make. The price they pay for the craft they buy is, of course, a variable quantity, but that usually obtaining is from a pound to twenty-five or even thirty shillings per ton register. That mammoth mistake the *Great Eastern* brought £16,100 when sold to be broken up, and brought more than modest fortunes to several parties concerned in her first demolition. The non-professional eye may detect little difference between two steamers of approximate size in which the breakers-up are 'interested.' Not so however the parties concerned. They can gauge to a nicety the amount of copper and brass work about a vessel, and the quantity of these materials is always a factor in determining the price paid. Then too the size of the vessel's plates must be considered. The larger these are the less rivets there will be to cut through, and the greater the quantity of undrilled iron and steel obtain-

able. Hence the vessel with the larger plates will require less labour, and will besides give better material, and thus turn out a better investment. Of course it frequently happens that the shipowner prefers to break up his own vessel, and then, instead of selling her, he engages a professional breaker-up to dismantle and demolish his ship for a certain contract price. When, however, the final sentence has been pronounced, little time is lost in commencing operations. The vessel is towed at high-water, usually of a spring-tide, to some flat and more or less deserted beach, such as most of our larger estuaries can boast. She is taken as high up the beach as is possible, and then securely anchored. Then the work of dismantling begins. Cabin fittings, &c., are first disposed of, frequently by auction. Then the funnel, ventilators, screw, and masts, except those which may be needed to assist the breaking up of the vessel, are removed. By this the craft is considerably lightened, and she is now warped farther up the beach, and finally anchored; the position of her three or four anchors being marked by upright posts, warning small craft to keep clear of so dangerous a vicinity.

There is something inexpressibly pathetic in the sight of a vessel so moored, for it is impossible to see a craft which once

Walked the waters like a thing of life

in the hands of the modern wrecker without conjuring up pictures of the many storms she has successfully encountered, the crews or passengers who once trod her now deserted decks; and more dominant still perhaps is the potent commentary such a spectacle furnishes upon the mutability of human affairs, for the craft in question, useless though she may now be, represented when built the latest development of the builder's art.

Viewed by day, the scene on board a large vessel in process of being broken up is striking and animated. Sturdy workmen, perhaps to the number of a hundred, are busy wielding enormous sledges in their work of demolition or in performing other of the hundred and one operations incidental to such a business. The decks, if of wood, are torn up, thrown overboard, and formed along with other woodwork into huge rafts which at high-water are floated to land and there stacked until sold. The rivets binding the huge steel plates to the ribs of the ship are cut through, and the plates placed in positions convenient for removal. At high-tide lighters and small steamcraft come alongside, and after loading their metal freight promptly depart unless they wish to be left aground when the tide falls. All is bustle and animation, but amid the chaos of wreckage there is method and order. For the breaking up of an iron or steel vessel is now reduced, if not to an exact science, at least to something very nearly approaching it. When the various superstructures are removed the engines have to be broken up, and this is perhaps the most difficult part of the wrecker's work. The more delicate part of the machinery is, of course, amenable to the mighty sledge, but the heavier masses have to be otherwise dealt with. One method which the writer saw employed upon a three thousand ton ship in course of demolition is exceedingly primitive. One of the masts had been left standing, and to this there was attached a strong gaff provided with a pulley. The auxiliary engines, which worked a winch, had not been interfered with, and the steam thus obtained was employed to hoist by means of a stout wire-rope a heavy mass of steel weighing nineteen hundredweight to the end of the gaff. When in this position, vertical to the engine-room, and distant above it some thirty or thirty-five feet, the cannon-ball-like mass of metal was released to shatter and fracture the machinery and castings upon which it fell. The noise produced by the crashes of the aerolite may be readily imagined. And the work was not unattended with danger, great care having to be taken by those who manipulated the 'smasher,' to keep out of the way of the flying metal splinters. After each descent the fragments were hoisted out of the way, and all made ready for another fall of the 'bomb,' as the boss of the gang facetiously termed it.

With the close of the working-day, however, all this is changed. The vessel is deserted, save by the night-watchman, who keeps watch and ward over the disappearing hulk. The necessity for such vigilance is obvious when it is considered that there may be large quantities of valuable copper or brass, to say nothing of other 'unconsidered trifles' which a pirate dealer might attempt to remove by water under cover of darkness.

The watcher is always attended by a dog, frequently two, of the terrier species, as well to guard the ship from human depredation as to protect his master from an invasion of rats. It is usually believed that these vermin abandon a sinking ship even before the fact that she is going down is realised by her human freight. But the rodent's instinct seems clearly at fault so far as a vessel sold to be broken up is concerned. In many such vessels the rats simply swarm. It is usually the custom, when a craft is finally moored *in situ* for demolition, to detach a plate near her keel. This admits the water to the lower levels of the vessel, and consequently prevents her lifting with the rising tide. While this gives the vessel a better 'lay' it considerably circumscribes the domain of the rats; and at high-water, to the uncanny swish and surge of the water in the hidden recesses of the vessel is added the squealing and pattering of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of 'these passengers that pay no fare.' It must be remembered, too, that there is little food on board for these mischievous rodents, and their hunger makes them dangerously bold. The watchman in the boat already alluded to had a most pitiful tale to tell of how while he dozed over his fire in the galley, and his 'tarrier' was ratting 'forrud,' his supper was stolen from his very elbow not once but twice on successive nights, and of it and the enveloping handkerchief he could not find the slightest trace. Even when his modest refection was enclosed in a basket, the ravenous rats frequently disturbed his snatches of sleep by savage gnawings to obtain ingress to the edibles within. Time, however, brings its revenges, and the

watchman will at length see the vessel so far cut down as to be covered at high-water, and then the rats must quit the rapidly-disappearing boat. Persons who have witnessed the exodus which then takes place describe it as a sight never to be forgotten. By scores the rats make for the shore, which may be half-a-mile or so away. There is no shilly-shallying, no waste of energy spent in swimming round their former home. They make straight for the beach, and while many of them are drowned *en route*, others, as contiguous householders bear witness, thrive amazingly amid the new conditions of life which there await them.

Sailing vessels do not often come within the province of the breaker-up. They are not 'improved' from off the active list as are steam-craft. Losses, too, among this section of our merchant fleets are of more frequent occurrence. When such vessels naturally come to be withdrawn from the active list they usually take a new lease of life as a coal or store hulk, and thus it comes to pass that they escape the attentions of the ship-breaker.

Though steam-vessels usually furnish a considerable profit to the professional wrecker, the fraternity like best to secure a good old composite man-of-war. In a Government vessel the material employed may always be expected to be of the best, and yields to the breaker-up a rich harvest of valuable copper bolting and yellow metal sheathing. These plums, however, are keenly sought after, and insure a spirited bidding when they come under the hammer.

Such, in brief, are some of the more interesting features of ship-breaking, a business which the rapid evolution of economical steam-craft has rendered quite a necessary feature of modern shipping economics.

## A MODERN ALCESTIS.

### CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

NEXT day I went out and looked at various lodgings. Those I liked best were in a quiet little street near to the Marble Arch. It was called Old Quaint Street; and the woman who let the rooms had lost money, and cried very much when she told me about it; and the white curtains were stiff and smoky and grimy; and the passage smelt of cookery: but what were all these minor details when weighed against a principle?

I did not quite like to actually engage the rooms. Some of the timid dependence on other people's sanction still clung to me. I said I would let her know.

When I returned home I found that Captain Despard had called during my absence, and had had a long interview with my father. I do not know what they had said; but when I came home father met me quite cheerfully, and even looked a little amused.

'Well, May,' he said, 'have you found comfortable quarters?'

'Not luxurious,' I admitted, 'because, you see, I have only a hundred a year of my own, and I shall really require it all for my dress; and so that leaves very little over.'

'It does indeed,' father agreed. 'Next to none, I should say. And are you not going any longer to honour me by drawing your allowance?'

There was a touch of laughter in my father's voice that stiffened me into instant dignity.

'I have some sense of rectitude,' I said. 'I shall live entirely on what is strictly my own. Please don't think I blame you, papa, or feel that you have ever been consciously unkind to me. On the contrary, I see, looking back, that, according to your lights, you have been a most indulgent parent.'

'Thank you, my dear,' said my father meekly, 'and may I come and see you in your lodgings?'

'Oh *yes*, papa!'

'And I shall be able to bring you news of the world you will have left behind.'

'Left behind?'

'Yes—of all your friends, and of what is going on.'

I looked puzzled.

'Because you may feel yourself a little shut out, you see,' continued father.

'Oh, I don't think so!' I replied cheerfully.

'Well, you don't anticipate being able to entertain much, do you?' asked father, smiling.

'No, of course not!' said I, with a mental picture of my parlour in Old Quaint Street still vividly before my eyes.

'And you can hardly go to all your parties, my dear, and return alone to your lodgings.'

'Oh—no,' I assented doubtfully, with another mental vision of a beautiful new ball-dress that had been sent home only yesterday.

'You have thought of all this?' asked father.

'I had not quite realised it,' I answered honestly.

'I fancy you have not realised many things yet, my child,' said father.

'Oh, I did not expect to have nothing to give up!' I responded cheerfully. 'A pioneer does not tread on rose leaves! Do you suppose I shall miss all my engagements more than I shall miss *you*, daddie?'

'I know that I shall miss my little daughter!'

I felt my lips quivering, but I managed to ask: 'What shall you do, papa?—I mean who will'——

'Oh, I shall ask your Aunt Jane to come and look after me while you are away.'

Now my Aunt Jane I thoroughly detest. I know it is wrong; but I can't help it. She does interfere so! Ever since I came home from school, five years ago, it has been a continual struggle to show her that I prefer to manage things in my own way, and consider myself capable of doing so unaided. Many is the tussle I have had with her, and she usually has had to retire discomfited, with a sniff and a muttered allusion to her young days. And now to think that *she* would come and be mistress in my house, and order my servants, and—oh! this was the last straw. But I made up my mind to endure it. One can endure anything for the sake of a principle.

I went to my lodgings at the end of that week. I will draw a veil over my parting with my home. I went round and looked at all the dear rooms, and at the books in the library, and at each of my beloved things. I

went last into my own little boudoir with its pink hangings, and unlocked my box of treasures, and burned a quantity of old letters. It struck me as curiously like what Alcestis had done. I remembered that she had gone round her house and said good-bye to everything. I think at the last moment I would have given it up but for the remembrance of that quizzical look of father's, and of what Captain Despard would say. I nerved myself with thoughts of this. I had a farewell interview with my old nurse, Tabby. She has been with us ever since I can remember. She was strangely unfeeling.

'I'm sorry indeed that you've quarrelled with your pa about the young captain, Miss May. Pas is arbitary. But just you keep true, missie, and he'll come round, as sure as they does in the play.'

So *that* was the version in the servants' hall! Well, I could not explain, so I let it be. It was perhaps unjust to father.

I got into my cab and drove away. I took twelve boxes and cases in all, besides several little pieces of furniture and pictures, and odds and ends. My biggest dress box would not go in at the door, and had to be unpacked out in the street, and sent back empty. I could so easily have got into it and been taken safely home again!

It took me several days to unpack and then repack—because there was not room for anything. Then I 'did up' my sitting-room, and put my books and pictures about, and filled the vases with cut flowers, and made the place look—well, better. But it *was* lonely in the evenings! I went out in the afternoons and paid several calls on several bosom-friends. I explained to them about Alcestis, and how wrong it was for women to submit as they did. They all laughed at me, and I was glad to be able to prove to them that I was in earnest, by telling them about the lodgings. That made them open their eyes; but they were more concerned with their own affairs than with mine, and soon ran on with their chatter. How trivial it all was!—the flower-show—the so-and-so's dance—Meta's engagement. I sat and listened. A week ago I should have joined in readily enough. A week ago I was certainly intending to fulfil every one of the engagements they were discussing—except, of course, the matrimonial ones. How interested they all seemed in matrimony!—as if marriage were the most important thing in the world, except dress. I went home feeling rather 'out of it,' as father had expressed it.

Then came a spell of wet weather, and I spent my days at the window watching the street below, and the tops of the umbrellas of the passers by, and listening to the continual whirr of the machine of the little dressmaker who lived above me, and to the strumming of the poor girl who lived down-stairs with her widowed mother, and gave music lessons. These days were decidedly dull and conducive to pessimism; but I learnt to talk to myself a good deal. 'In order to carry out your high ideals,' I said sternly, 'you have to learn to forego frivolous society and the pleasures that have hitherto proved sufficient for you. So be it. Life contains other pleasures—higher ones. You must seek these.'

So I went to Mudie's, and came home laden with recent novels.

Father appeared one evening. He explained that Aunt Jane was very conscientious, but not a stimulating companion; and so he had walked to see how I was getting on. He smoked a cigar, at my request, and he talked a good deal about Britain's attitude towards the opium question; but he gave me no account of all Aunt Jane must have been doing in the house—and he never even mentioned Captain Despard's name.

When he got up to go, he looked round my room as if he had suddenly seen it for the first time.

'So this is where you live?' he asked.

'Yes,' I said.

He shrugged his shoulders and kissed me.

I ceased to pay calls. What was the use of going and listening to people whose lives were so different from my life? I even stopped attending our usual church; it would look so weak to sit in the family pew. I went on visiting my district, though. The poor have such simple ways of looking at things. It never occurs to them to question existing facts. The great problems of life that confront us do not seem to trouble them. There was one poor woman in my district whose husband was out of work, and the way that woman sobbed when she told me of how he came home to her, night after night, footsore and disheartened, after having tramped miles in answer to some advertisement only to find that some other applicant had been chosen. I saw the husband once. He looked a nice, well-built, honest lad. The wife tried to seem cheerful when he came in, and poked up the little bit of fire, and began to spread out some wretched apology for a meal. I went away and drove round to every one I could think of, including the Charity Organisation, to ask for work for that man. But the courtesy of this century cannot stand the strain if you interfere in either business matters or with sport; and I got no help for him. Finally I went to my father's chambers.

'Tut, tut!' he said. 'Why should you be undertaking this man's taste of Hades for him?'

'Oh yes, of course, the whole system is wrong!' I cried. 'But meanwhile these people are unhappy! Think of the poor wife, father! She says he has always been so kind, and worked so hard for her, and now she is afraid his courage will break down. And she is ill herself.'

'No doubt. She should have been as sensible as you, my dear, and declined the part of Alcestis.'

I went away dejected. But that evening I got a note from father. 'Have sent a clerk round to see your protégées and find it all as you say. Have given him work and sixteen shillings a week. Will you reward me by coming to the theatre to-morrow night. Do you regard the Haymarket as a form of Hades?'

Dear father! How good he was! And what a treat the theatre would be! And how happy that poor little wife would feel by now! I ran up-stairs to shake out one of my crushed evening dresses that I had not worn for so

long, and I laid out my opera-cloak and fan and gloves, and felt quite light-hearted.

Father fetched me. The play had begun when we arrived. When we were sitting in our box father handed me his opera-glasses. The very first thing I saw, before I raised the glasses to my eyes, was Captain Despard sitting with a group of people in the stalls. I hastily levelled my glasses to the stage, and became absorbed in the play. Captain Despard did not look once in my direction; he seemed engrossed in conversation with the lady next him. There were two of his fellow-officers with him, and an elderly man, and three ladies. Captain Despard talked mostly to a dark-haired girl on his right, who was quite pretty. He put on her cloak for her when they came away. I caught sight of them all in the hall as we came out; but Jack was rushing about trying to get some one's carriage, and did not see us. We had to wait quite a long time for ours.

'Well, did you enjoy it?' father asked.

And I told him it had been delightful.

Father left me at my door. How cold and squalid my little room looked when I got back! And that fire was out again! I wondered if Jack had gone to supper anywhere with them.

The following day an irresistible desire came over me to see my own dear home again. It was now almost two months since I had left it. Two months!—two whole months of living by myself and for myself. How miserably lonely old age must be to one who has not managed to form ties in youth—ties that neither fading beauty nor flagging spirits and failing health will loosen. Yes, love is what we ought to earn and to hoard in youth; it is better provision for old age than is any balance at the banker's. I would go and see Aunt Jane—poor Aunt Jane! Perhaps I had wronged her. She had not much to live for; it was exceedingly natural that she should be disagreeable.

How familiar it all looked when James flung open the front door! The rush of warm air from the spacious hall, the big doors with their carved wooden handles, the soft carpet on the broad, shallow staircase—how familiar it all was!—and yet how strange. I felt as if I had been away a life-time. And now I was in the the dear old drawing-room again, with the screens and pictures, and the piano, and the easy chairs, and the blazing fire, and—and *all* my flower-vases empty! Not a flower in the room!

Aunt Jane received me with her customary duplex kiss.

'I am glad you have come, though you have been a long time making up your mind to do it. However, I can well understand your reluctance.'

'Now don't scold me, Aunt Jane.'

'Well, in *my* opinion, it is just a good scolding you want. But as I have promised—I mean, well—let us change the subject.'

But I was too occupied in covertly looking round at everything to heed what she said. There were but few changes, little things I could easily alter—but of course they would never be altered.

Aunt Jane gave me some tea. She was using the wrong set—the little Dresden one that I thought too small for comfort.

Then some other callers came—friends of Aunt Jane's—and seemed to take her position quite for granted, and hardly noticed me. I went away soon after, and was sorry I had gone at all.

When I reached my lodgings that fire was out again, and the place looked horrid. I felt too tired and depressed even to ring and have the fire re-lit. The bell would summon only Alice, with smudged face and cap askew. Still, it was stupid of me to sit down and cry; and it was more stupid of me, after I had cried for one hour by the clock, to bathe my eyes and go for a walk in the gathering dusk, in order to let the cool air cure my headache. Did all reformers feel as wretched as I felt that afternoon? I hurried along one of the broad walks of the Park, with the lights of Park Lane dancing behind its railings, and felt that I *could* not go back to that wretched, hateful little room. I bought some flowers from a woman who was standing with a basket at a street corner. You can always have a touch of mystic refinement when you can possess flowers. The woman had a baby in her arms, and a child clinging to her skirt.

'Are they both yours?' I asked involuntarily. She seemed little more than a girl.

'This one is, miss,' she answered, smiling down at the sticky infant in the shawl; 'but that'—glancing coldly at the little shivering child—'is a neighbour's. She left it.'

'Left it?'

'Some ladies got her a place, and she pays me to keep it.'

I put some money into the little child's cold hand, and she looked up at me with big, wondering, grieved eyes.

I hurried on to a deserted corner of the Park. It was now raining fast, and the path was deserted. I did not put up my umbrella, for I had forgotten it. I did not mind getting wet: I did not mind catching cold. There was no one who would care. I sat down on a seat under a tree, and watched the rain gathering into little pools at my feet.

Some one emerged out of the mist and walked slowly past me, and then suddenly stopped, turned, and came quickly back. I glanced up—it was Jack Despard.

'May!' he exclaimed; and I knew in a moment that it was all right.

Jack had a big umbrella, and he sat down by me and held it over us both.

'What is the matter, darling?' he said.

'Nothing,' I answered, turning my face away; 'it is the rain.' And then, because I was nervous, I said the one thing I did not mean to say. 'I saw you at the theatre last night.'

'Yes; and I saw you.'

'Did you? I thought you didn't.'

'You never looked at me.'

Well, that was fair; and after a moment we both laughed.

'Do you know it is eight weeks and four days since we met?' he asked.

'Really?' I answered airily.

'And how long is it to be till we meet again?'

I did not answer, but I felt his hand take mine, and I left it.

'Is it to go on like this?' he asked.

Still I did not answer.

'Is it to go on like this?' he repeated.

'No, dear,' I murmured.

I don't know what made me say 'dear;' but it sounded quite natural at the moment. Only—I did not quite foresee the immediate consequences.

'Perhaps Alcestis liked going there for him,' I whispered presently.

'But he was a brute to let her!' answered Jack.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Sir Joseph Lister, who, through his great discovery of what is known as antiseptic surgery, has been the means of saving tens of thousands of human lives, naturally included a review of his work in his recent presidential address to the British Association at Liverpool. He recalled the time when a surgeon did not fear evil consequences from a badly fractured limb half as much as he did the putrefactive changes which would probably occur in the wound itself. And so much was this the case that Mr Syme—whom Sir Joseph Lister described as 'the safest surgeon of his time'—was inclined to think that it would be better, on the whole, if all compound fractures of the leg were subjected to amputation, without any attempt to save the limb. Soon after this, carbolic acid, at that time a chemical curiosity, was found to have a deodorising effect upon sewage, and Sir Joseph determined to try the effect of the same agent upon wounded flesh. The experiment was entirely successful, and surgery was at once placed upon an entirely new footing, making operations for the alleviation of human suffering possible which in previous times would never have had a chance of success. Sir Joseph Lister also dealt in his address with the jubilee of anæsthesia, and with the most recent advances in surgical practice made possible by the employment of the Röntgen rays. The British Association will meet next year at Toronto, in 1898 at Bournemouth, in 1899 at Dublin, while the last year of the century will probably find it at Glasgow.

Every one knows how common it is in country districts to see horseshoes nailed against the doors of barns and cottages, as a harbinger of good-luck. This old custom has lately come under notice in a paper on the 'Folklore of the Horseshoe,' read by Dr Robert Laurence before the American Folk-Lore Society. He believes that the custom of nailing up horseshoes originated in the rites of the Passover, the blood sprinkled on the doorposts and the lintel at the time of the great Jewish feast marking the chief points of an arch, which is reproduced in the form of the horseshoe. It is also possible that the custom is also traceable to the idea that the horse brings luck, for in legendary lore the animal has often been credited with supernatural gifts.

There is a greater demand now for the product of the india-rubber tree than has ever been known, the tires of the ubiquitous bicycle and other vehicles alone consuming an immense quantity. Everything regarding the substance is therefore of real interest to many, and Sir Henry Derring's recent report on the rubber industry as carried on in Mexico will find many readers. The methods of its collection in Nicaragua, and the profitable nature of the industry, are fully discussed in the article, 'Out with the India-rubber Gatherers,' on a previous page.

A newer source of india-rubber is Lagos—an industry which is considered, according to the *Kew Bulletin*, one of the most remarkable instances of rapid development that has taken place in recent years in any British colony. A plant growing wild, *Kickxia Africana*, was found, two or three years back, to yield a valuable rubber, and this substance is now in great commercial demand. The beginning of the industry was marked in January last year by the exportation of twenty-one thousand pounds of this rubber, valued at £1200. From a recent return communicated to Kew by the government of Lagos, the total exports of the material for the year 1895 amounted to more than five million pounds (two thousand two hundred and sixty-three tons), with a value of nearly £270,000. The collection and preparation of the rubber is effected by native labour. Only a year or two back a rubber industry was started with the same success at the Gold Coast, and it is now second only in importance to that of palm oil. Sir Harry Johnston, in his latest report on the British Central Africa Protectorate, is in hopes that this industry will be greatly developed there in the future. Rubber is there produced from three species of Landolphia, one or more species of Ficus, and by a shrub recently discovered and named *Tabernæmontana elegans*.

Scenic representations at theatres are becoming more and more realistic, and stage erections, or 'sets' as they are technically called, are consequently of a most elaborate character, often involving a very long wait between the acts for their preparation. At the Court Theatre at Munich this difficulty has been met by a device which will probably become common in theatres so soon as its advantages are sufficiently known. The stage there consists of a huge circular platform which can be rotated by electrical mechanism. On this stage four separate set scenes can be built up, each occupying a quarter of the circle, so that when the time comes for changing the scene, the stage is caused to give a quarter revolution and a new spectacle is brought before the audience in the short period of eleven seconds. As the house is darkened during the actual change, the means employed to bring it about are not visible. It may be mentioned that at Drury Lane Theatre, London, arrangements have been made by which the entire stage can be raised or lowered by means of a hydraulic lift—an innovation which will give scope for scenic effects never before possible.

It is said that a new kind of roofing material is being produced at a mill in Christiania, Norway, in the shape of imitation slates, which are made of compressed wood-pulp and rendered waterproof by a secret process. The new slates are black, not easily broken, of light weight, and are cheap. In short, they possess every advantage of the best slates now in use.

In an article in *Symon's Meteorological Magazine* some curious particulars are given concerning the running dry on various occasions of the river Thames between the years 1114 and 1716. This

was, of course, long anterior to the establishment of the many locks on the river, which would render such an event impossible now. In the first year named: 'There was so great an ebb everywhere in one day as no man remembered before, so that men went through the Thames, both riding and walking, east of London Bridge.' In 1158, in consequence of an earthquake, 'the river of Thames,' according to *Stow's Annals*, 1615, 'was dryed uppe, that all London might walke over the same dryshod.' In 1591 the river was again so dry that a man could ride over it on horseback near London Bridge. In 1687 a great storm of wind blew down the valley of the Thames and kept the waters back so that its bed was dry, a thing which happened again on 14th September 1716. On this last occasion the river 'was driven to so low an ebb,' says the *Weekly Packet*, 'that both above and below the bridge people passed and repassed on the sands, which lay so clearly bare to view that a silver tankard, a silver-hilted sword, a gold ring, a guinea, and several other things were taken up that had been lost there.'

Paper has been put to a variety of uses, but its most curious employment is foreshadowed in the recent patenting of a blotting-paper towel. The idea is that a person on stepping out of his morning bath, instead of rubbing himself dry in the orthodox manner, should envelop his body in a towel made of blotting-paper, which will, without trouble, and in a few seconds, absorb all the moisture upon his skin. The idea is ingenious, but it does away with that wholesome friction which many believe to be so beneficial to the skin.

In the year 1849 some quarrymen discovered at Monsummano, near Lucca in Italy, certain caves which are so hot and moist that they can be used as Turkish baths, and attention is now being directed to the place as a health-resort. The place was visited by Garibaldi and Kossuth for relief from rheumatic affections, it having been found by the inhabitants that the caves were beneficial for such complaints. The caves occur in a porous rock, and the air, saturated with moisture, attains a temperature of eighty-eight degrees Fahrenheit.

There is a scheme on foot for the establishment in London of an immense terrestrial globe, eighty-four feet in diameter, which will show the various countries and seas on the earth's surface on a scale of about eight miles to an inch. The globe would be enclosed in a cylindrical building with a spiral gallery all round its interior, the edge of which would conform to the contour of the model world. This would slowly revolve on its axis, so that every part of it would be open to inspection. It may be remembered that a globe of half this diameter was exhibited at Paris in 1889, and that a few decades back London had a globe as one of its permanent attractions. This used to stand in Leicester Square, a quarter of the metropolis which is now almost monopolised by gigantic music halls. It is very doubtful whether the establishment of such a globe in London at the present day would pay its enormous expenses, for the taste of modern holiday-makers does not lean towards such a grave study as that of geography.

Ever since it was shown that the diamond was only a somewhat rare form of carbon, and possessed the same chemical composition as a bit of plebeian charcoal or coke, attempts have been made to make the gem artificially, so that it might be produced in greater profusion than it is from the grudging laboratory of nature. M. Moissan, the eminent French chemist, has attacked the problem in a fresh way. He dissolves carbon in molten iron in the intense heat of the electric furnace, afterwards cooling the product under pressure, when the carbon separates in the crystallised form. Thus he produces true diamonds; but they are minute, and are by no means clear and beautiful like the brilliants so prized by jewellers. They are, moreover, costly to make, so that possessors of diamonds need have no fear of a reduction in the value of their holdings by reason of artificial competition with Kimberley. But with the artificial production of rubies it is different, for these gems can now be made of sufficient size to be used in jewellery. Many methods have been suggested for the accomplishment of this end, one of the best consisting in submitting to a high temperature a mixture of alumina, potassium carbonate, and calcium fluoride.

A little-known industry is the manufacture in Italy of the citrate of lime, from which the citric acid of commerce is made. The process adopted is as follows: Spoilt lemons, or those of such inferior quality that they are not good enough for export, are deprived of their juice, which is mixed at a temperature of eighty degrees with sufficient washed chalk, or whiting, to form a paste. The acid of the juice combines with the lime, and the bags in which the mixture is placed are subjected to heavy pressure to get rid of the useless, extraneous moisture. Next, the white paste is spread out in drying chambers until it crumbles to powder, and in this form it represents citrate of lime. The compound is subsequently treated with dilute sulphuric acid, and after filtering, the liquid is exposed in shallow trays to crystallise by spontaneous evaporation. An ounce of citric acid produced in this way is equivalent to about a pint of lemon juice.

A railway of unique form will probably be opened to public use before these lines appear in print. It is known as 'The Brighton and Rottingdean Sea-shore Electric Tramroad,' and will doubtless form an extra attraction to a favourite seaside resort. The railroad is laid on the foreshore, which here consists of hard chalk, and its average distance from the cliffs is about two hundred yards: it is just three miles in length. At low-tide the rails, four in number, can be plainly seen, bolted on solid concrete blocks, mortised into the chalk rock, but at high-tide they will be covered by fifteen feet of sea, but will be still available for use. There is but one car, but it is of special construction, and will carry about two hundred passengers. It is somewhat like an ordinary street tramcar, and at the same time like the deck of a yacht. It is supported on four massive tubular legs twenty-four feet above the rails, so as to allow for the rise and fall of the tide, and it carries two electric motors, which are actuated by means of an overhead cable running the entire length of the rails.

These motors actuate the wheels by means of shafting passing through the hollow legs of the car, each leg terminating in a big foot which constitutes a bogie carriage with four wheels. The system will offer all the benefits of a short sea voyage, without that distressing penalty which so many have to pay.

We have all been taught that brown bread, containing the bran of the wheat, is more nourishing than white, which in the refined process of milling now in vogue loses much that it would be desirable to retain. Mons. A. Girard, at a recent meeting of the Paris Academy, combats this view, and declares that the more delicate article is in every way quite as nutritious as the coarser. Another article of faith with regard to white bread is that it does not contain the necessary amount of phosphoric acid to keep the human organism in good health. M. Girard meets this objection by observing that bread is not the sole staff of life, and that if it were, the difference in the amount of acid furnished by the two sorts is unimportant. Eggs, milk, cheese, and potatoes and vegetables generally supply between them far more phosphoric acid than we get from bread, either white or brown. Physiologists say that to preserve health a man would require 3·29 grains of the acid daily. M. Girard asserts that by analysis of the food of labourers in some of the poorest districts of France, he has found as a rule quite double that amount to be consumed.

When all our tramcars, at present drawn by horses, are replaced by mechanical carriages, a large number of cumbrous vehicles will be rendered idle, and the companies will be confronted with the question, 'What shall we do with them?' Perhaps they will take a hint from what occurred not long ago in Connecticut, when horse traction on the street lines was largely superseded by another system in the various cities of that state. Some one suggested that the obsolete horse-cars might be utilised as summer cottages, hunters' camps, lodges, &c., and the idea was taken up with such readiness that now none of the old cars are to be had. Some campers-out have utilised three or four cars, using them as temporary country-houses, by planting them so as to form four sides of a square, with a canvas top stretched over the enclosed space.

In June last an expedition started with the object of exploring Central Australia. It is not generally known that there is an unexplored region in that vast island continent six times the area of England. The great difficulty of pushing into this *terra incognita* has always been its waterless character. The new expedition, under the command of Mr L. A. Wells, is provided with camels, and equipped with all necessaries.

The most powerful lighthouse in the world is now in course of erection at Penmark Point on the western coast of France, about forty miles south of the place where the *Drummond Castle* was wrecked a few months ago. The tower will have a height of sixty-three mètres, and in clear weather the light will be visible for a distance of a hundred kilomètres. The light will not be of the ordinary revolving kind, but will be governed by new apparatus, and will be emitted in flashes lasting the tenth-part of a second. This principle is based on the observation that lightning, which has a much shorter duration, makes a distinct impression upon the retina. The flashes will occur every five seconds. The Penmark lighthouse will cost £24,000.

In connection with the publication of Mr Garner's new book on Monkeys and Chimpanzees, and researches into monkey language, and 'Monkeyana' on a previous page, it is worth recalling that the late Sir Richard Burton has a prior claim to the discovery of the monkey-tongue, and had formed a vocabulary of no less than sixty 'words,' or twenty more than Mr Garner professes to have classified.

Burton whilst in India was seized with a fit of misanthropy, and preferred the society of monkeys to that of men. Lady Burton tells us that he collected forty monkeys of all kinds, and lived in daily companionship with them. One was his doctor, another his chaplain, another his secretary, and so on. They sat at meals with him, and were gravely waited upon by his native servants. It was then that he made his study of the monkey language, but unfortunately his carefully-compiled vocabulary was destroyed in the fire at Grindlay's repository.

## A SONG IN LATE AUTUMN.

The blackbirds call from laurel cover,
Their sweet spring songs forgotten now,
And those old days are all passed over,
The lover's kiss, the lover's vow.
But oh, sweetheart, though storms may shatter
And blow the barren branches bare,
Though all the sweet flowers fall and scatter,
'Tis not as though they never were:

For every flower that summer cherished,
By wood or meadow, vale or hill,
Though long ago it drooped and perished,
In memory's garden blossoms still:
Buds of all seasons blow together,
Blooms gathered in from every part,
There comes no frost nor wintry weather
Within the garden of the heart.

And one fair figure ever lingers,
A goddess in that garden green,
With roses in her slender fingers,
And crowned with roses, like a queen.
A limpid pool no frost can harden
Reflects her face, so fair to see,
She is the queen of all the garden,
And oh! true-hearted, thou art she!

S. Cornish Watkins.

## *** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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# THE HEDGLEY-HASKINS LAWSUIT.

By A. M. BELDING.

## CHAPTER I.

It is possible that there are persons living within a hundred miles of the locality who have never heard of Plunkett Settlement. It is there, nevertheless, in the interior of a fine New Brunswick county, some twenty odd miles from railway communication, and, therefore, not in the regular route either of business or tourist travel.

It is also possible that the people of Plunkett Settlement are to a certain degree behind the times in their manner of life, and a little out of touch with the smart ideas and fashions of more favoured communities. But hearts beat there as elsewhere, and the people are actuated in the main, it must be confessed, by motives and feelings very similar to those that sway the great centres of population.

When Farmer Hedgley of Plunkett Settlement rose from the dinner-table one fine autumn afternoon, and announced that he would go out to the back field and fix up a break or two in the pasture fence, it was with no expectation of the thrilling event about to take place. He had eaten a hearty dinner, and was in the frame of mind naturally induced by so gratifying an experience. Axe on shoulder, and humming a verse of an old, familiar hymn, he set off across the fields.

The back field lay beyond the crest of a hill, and extended to a belt of woods on the rear of the farm. Arrived at the crest, Mr Hedgley paused and looked back, to view with pardonable complacency the thrifty acres his father's hand in former years and his own more recently had reclaimed from the Canadian wilderness. Having concluded his survey in that direction, Farmer Hedgley turned and looked toward the woods. An expression of sudden and great surprise crossed his features, and he shaded his eyes with his hat for a second look along the fence he had come to repair, and which separated his own land from that of his neighbour Farmer Haskins. And as he gazed, the expression of astonishment merged into one of visible wrath; for there, before his very eyes, was a man busily engaged in moving the line fence—the portion of it nearest the wood—farther back on his (Hedgley's) property. And a close scrutiny disclosed the fact that the industrious person was no other than Farmer Haskins himself. With great strides Mr Hedgley covered the intervening distance, and while yet some way off raised his voice to a high pitch and shouted:

'Here! What are you at, there?'

Farmer Haskins looked up, but the question was so obviously superfluous under the circumstances that he made no reply whatever. Mr Hedgley ran up to him, dropping his axe, and seized one end of the fence pole his neighbour was about to remove.

It should perhaps be explained that for many years there had been a difference of opinion between Mr Hedgley and Mr Haskins as to the exact location of the line between their respective properties. When Mr Hedgley cleared the field on which they now stood, his location of the fence was regarded by Haskins as an encroachment; but no active protest resulted, and the fence remained. Another dispute having since arisen, Mr Haskins had engaged a surveyor, whose report was found to sustain his view. He thereupon requested Mr Hedgley to pay half the cost of the survey and move his fence—or he would even be content with the latter action on Mr Hedgley's part. But Mr Hedgley promptly and decisively refused, a fact that may be accepted as an explanation of Mr Haskins's industry on this particular afternoon.

The two men, each with a firm grip of the fence pole, glared at each other.

'You drop that fence rail!' cried Hedgley.

'You git off my land!' retorted Haskins.

Mr Hedgley gave a tremendous jerk, and went over backwards. But he was rewarded, for the fence pole went with him. He scrambled to his feet and shook his fist savagely at his neighbour.

'You put that fence back where you found it,' he wrathfully declared, 'or I'll have the law of you as sure as your name's Jim Haskins.'

'You kin have all the law between here and Halifax,' fiercely retorted Mr Haskins; 'but that fence stays where it is.'

'I'll show you whether it will or not,' roared Hedgley, and made a rush for the panels that had been removed.

'Don't you tetch it,' warned Haskins. 'Don't you lay a finger on it, Hedgley.'

Mr Haskins was a tall and burly man, and strong enough to tie Mr Hedgley, who was scarcely of medium height, and much the lighter of the two. The latter paused.

'If you lay a hand to that fence, I'll break your back,' cried Haskins, advancing.

'All right—all right,' said Hedgley, falling back and retreating to his axe; 'all right, Haskins. I'll show you whether you'll break my back or not. You got hold of the wrong man, Haskins. There's law in this country. You'll smart for this. You needn't think I'm a coward or a thief neither.

'Who's a thief?' thundered Haskins. 'Don't you throw out any of your dirty hints at me, Hedgley. If you want the law you kin crack on as fast as you like. I'm ready. But don't you throw out none of your talk about thieves, or I'll give you something to go to law fur. Now mind that.'

'All right, Haskins—all right. We'll see what you'll do before the week's out.' With which gloomy threat Mr Hedgley shouldered his axe, and without another glance at Haskins went straight home.

### CHAPTER II.

Mr W. G. White, barrister-at-law, &c., sat in his office at Berton Village reading the morning papers. He had a snug practice in the village and county at large. It was said of him that he had actually been known to try and persuade people not to go into the court with cases that might and ought to be settled outside. An odd reputation for a lawyer, but the fact must be stated. Berton Village was on the railway, and some twenty-five miles from Plunkett Settlement, of which it was the entrepôt.

A knock at the lawyer's door on this particular morning was promptly answered, and heralded the entry of a man who sidled in as if rather doubtful of his personal safety in a lawyer's office. The visitor removed his hat, and seated himself in a stooping posture on the edge of the chair offered him, holding his hat between his knees. He wore a rough tweed coat and waistcoat, and homespun trousers tucked into heavy boots.

'You're Lawyer White?' he queried, bringing his eyes back to that gentleman's face after a cautious survey of the room.

'Yes, sir,' said the lawyer cheerfully. 'What can I do for you this morning? Anything in the way of business?'

'Well, yes. I have got a little somethin' I want to talk over. My name's Hedgley. I live out back here in Plunkett Settlement.'

'Ah,' said the lawyer, rising and offering his hand. 'I thought I knew your face. Well, Mr Hedgley, what's the trouble?'

'My next neighbour,' began Mr Hedgley, 'is Jim Haskins. His land jines mine to the east'ard. There's a dispute about the line. There was an old survey, and I built the back fence along that line, do you see. But here lately Jim Haskins he went and got a new survey, and fetched the line over on me for quite a piece on the rear.'

'Yes,' assented the lawyer.

'Yes, sir,' said Mr Hedgley, 'he went and got that survey, and now he's gone and shifted the pasture fence over to what he calls the line. I went out t'other day and ordered him to quit. He told me to git out of that or he'd break my back. Them's his words, and I'll swear to it. I told him I'd sue him, and he told me to crack on as fast as I liked. Now I'm gon to crack on and find out if he kin take my land and then threaten to break my back for nothin'.'

The recital of his wrongs restored Mr Hedgley's confidence in himself, if for a moment he had seemed to have lost it, and he delivered the concluding sentence in an exceedingly valorous tone.

'Is this an old dispute,' queried the lawyer, 'or has it only come up lately?'

'Oh, we've been bickerin' about it off and on for years, but nothin' ever come of it till here last winter, when I went to cut some timber on the rear of my place and cut over to the old line. Then Haskins got mad, and swore he'd have it surveyed—and so he did. And now he's shifted the fence, and when I tried to stop him, he threatened to break my back, and told me to crack on. Now, I'm gon to crack on.'

'Did the new survey start at the same place as the old one?' asked the lawyer.

'Jist the same place exactly—yes, sir. And it run along the old line for quite a piece. Then it struck off a little, and kep' that way to the rear of the lots. The old stake at the rear is tore up, but I know where it was.'

'Who was the last surveyor?'

'Old man Lake.'

'A good man, Mr Hedgley. He doesn't often make mistakes,' said the lawyer. 'I've heard him give evidence in a good many land suits. Does the new survey take off a very wide strip of what you claim as your land?'

'It ain't the land,' said Mr Hedgley. 'I wouldn't a been so pa'tickler, only he told me to crack on, and threatened to break my back. Now I'm gon to crack on.' Mr Hedgley said this with the emphasis of a fixed resolve.

'How much land would you lose,' asked the lawyer, 'if his survey were accepted as the right one?'

'Well, I dunno. Half an acre, maybe. But it ain't the land. He told me to crack on.'

'In what direction does the line run?' interrupted the lawyer.

'Due north and south from a post in the medder at the foot of the hill below the road,' lucidly responded Mr Hedgley. 'I never done

him an ill turn in his life, and I never believed in neighbours fightin'. But he told me to crack on, and by hages I'm gon to. And I want you to take holt of it for me.'

'How much is the land worth, suppose you did lose it? Have you thought of that?'

'No, I hain't thought of nothin'. He told me to crack on.'

'Well, but, my dear man, it doesn't signify what he told you. As I understand the case, it is simply a question as to the true location of a line due north and south from a given point. And it only involves a very small strip of land out in the woods anyhow. You want to consider what this thing will cost you if you take it into court. We lawyers, as a rule, don't object to business being thrown in our way, but if you take my candid advice, and I won't charge you for it, you'll make another effort to settle. You're not a rich man, Mr Hedgley, although I know you've got a snug place out there. A lawsuit will cost you both a good deal more than ten times the value of the land in dispute, and will leave you bad friends into the bargain. The game, my dear sir, isn't worth the candle. Have you tried to settle?'

'It ain't no use to talk about settlin'. He's no business with my land, and he ain't a gon to git it,' emphatically declared Mr Hedgley.

'I thought you said a moment ago you didn't care about the land.'

Mr Hedgley scratched his head, and looked a little foolish; but before he could offer any further observations about cracking on, there came another knock at the door. When it was opened, in walked no other than the defendant, Jim Haskins himself. He had seen his neighbour depart that morning from the precincts of Plunkett Settlement, and rightly conjectured that the latter was after legal advice. He resolved to follow, perhaps with a vague idea that if opportunity offered, he would carry out his threat of making a fracture in the spine of Mr Hedgley.

'Ha! you're here, are you?' said Haskins to Hedgley.

'So are you, for that matter,' said Hedgley to Haskins.

'After law, I s'pose?' said Haskins, half in query, half in assertion.

'Jist that,' rejoined Hedgley with emphasis; and turning to the lawyer, and nodding his head sideways at the new-comer, remarked: 'That's him—Haskins. Smellin' round to see what he kin hear, I guess.'

'I don't hear by seein', or smellin' either,' retorted Haskins. 'I leave that for them that don't know any better.'

And he glared hard at Hedgley, as if implying that that gentleman had a vicious habit of listening with his nostrils.

'Mr Haskins,' said the lawyer, 'sit down. You are the very man I wanted to see.'

Mr Haskins sat down, still holding Hedgley with his eye.

'Now,' pursued the lawyer, 'you two neighbours are in a fair way to have a big quarrel over a very little thing. The law is my profession, and I don't often talk against my pocket, but I want to see you two men settle this matter peaceably. You can do it without any great loss to either of you, you'll do it cheaper, and you'll feel better. Now, don't you think so yourselves, honestly?'

'He told me to crack on, and threatened to break my back,' said Hedgley obstinately.

'I told you to crack on,' thundered Haskins. 'Who began the row? Who went over the line first? Who swore he wouldn't settle it? Who swore he'd sue? Hey, Hedgley, hey?'

As Haskins hurled these questions at the other, he leaned toward him and shook a very large fist under his nose. Feeling then better satisfied with himself, he sat very erect, placed his hands on his knees, palms downward, still holding Hedgley with his eye.

'You'd no right to my land, and you hain't a gon to git it either,' growled Hedgley sullenly.

'Your land! your land!' yelled Haskins. 'Who in blazes wants your land? It's no good anyhow. A grasshopper 'ud shed tears lookin' for a place to hide on it.—I tell you, squire,' turning to the lawyer, 'I've been tryin' for five years to git this here thing settled. Time and time agin I offered to pay half the cost of a new survey, and he wouldn't agree to it. Now I've had it surveyed, and I'll hold to that survey. And he kin crack on jist if he wants to. That's me, every day in the week.'

The speaker bestowed a withering look on Hedgley, who returned the same with interest.

'Gentlemen,' said the lawyer, 'keep your temper. Nothing was ever made better by getting angry over it. Just think for a moment what all this may lead to.'

'You kin advise him if you want to,' said Haskins. 'He came to you for it. I intended to see you myself, but it's all right. It's all right. There's more lawyers than one in the town. You kin advise him and welcome. I don't know anybody needs it more.'

These observations were followed by another ominous exchange of glances, and a clinching of fists on the part of Hedgley.

'No,' the lawyer said, 'I want to advise you both. As you perhaps know, I've had to do with a good many land cases in court, and I know what it costs. It means ten and twenty dollar bills to go on singing to the tune you men have started. You are both out of temper now. Let that pass. Let us talk the whole matter over quietly together. Be neighbourly. Let me help you. What do you say? It seems to me a very absurd thing that two old neighbours should go to law about so small a matter. Of course I don't fully understand the case yet. You both say you are right, and of course you both think so. But it seems to me you can come to terms outside of the court-room. Shall we try?'

'I've always wanted it settled quietly,' said Haskins, softening a little. 'And since you put it so, squire, I don't mind talkin' it all over. Mebbe we kin come to terms.'

'You hear that, Mr Hedgley?' said the lawyer. 'What do you say, now? Are you willing to talk it over in a friendly way? Let's all be good-natured.'

'Well,' said Hedgley, 'I'd a been good-natured, ony he threatened to break'——

'Well, there, there,' interrupted the lawyer, 'we say a great many things in ill-temper. Let that go.'

'Oh, I'll talk it over,' said Hedgley. 'I'm

willin' to have it settled quietly. I'm a peaceable man, and I don't want no quarrel with nobody. Haskins and me's been neighbours all our lives, most, and we never had no trouble to speak of, ony this dispute about the line. Yes—I'm willin' to settle it quietly, if we kin come to terms.'

'Now that's what I call handsome,' declared the lawyer, rubbing his hands and smiling. 'If you both stick to that way of thinking, we'll settle this affair so easily that you'll both want to give me a fee—and a big one. But I am a peacemaker this time, and I won't take it.'

Then they all smiled, the lawyer in a genial fashion, Hedgley and Haskins a little dubiously. The atmosphere was decidedly clearer.

'Now,' pursued the lawyer, after a little pause, 'which of you is going to make the best-natured proposal looking toward a settlement here and now? That's the point. Who will be the first to come half-way and a little more for the sake of peace and good neighbourhood?'

'Well,' said Hedgley, 'if he'll agree to leave the line where it was'——

'No, he won't!' interrupted Haskins. 'No, sir!'

'Well, then, there's no use talkin',' declared Hedgley. 'The land's mine, and I won't be chiselled out of it by nobody.'

'Who's tryin' to chisel you out of it?' bellowed Haskins, more furious than ever. 'Drat ye! For two pins I'd shake the gizzard outen ye!'

'Ye can't do it!' yelled Hedgley, jumping up, evidently resolved to die if need be in defence of that mysterious portion of his anatomy. 'Ye can't do it! Ye haint the man, Haskins!'

'Come! Come!' cried the lawyer sternly. 'No more of that from either of you.'

'All right, squire—it's all right,' said Haskins. 'No offence to you, squire—but, oh Jerushy.'

'Don't ye!' roared Hedgley. 'Don't oh Jerushy me, Haskins!'

'Gentlemen,' broke in the lawyer—'if you are gentlemen—have some sense. It would only be serving you right if I drove the pair of you into the street. Shame on you both!'

The belligerents fell back; still, however, glaring furiously at each other.

The lawyer proceeded to give them a piece of his mind.

'You men,' he said, 'are old enough to have more sense—old enough to advise me in the matter of behaviour—and here you have acted like spoiled children. You are old neighbours, and I suppose you both have children. A fine example you set them. If they should hate each other, quarrel with each other, and act generally in a spiteful and hateful manner, whose fault would it be? You'll go to law about a strip of land that isn't worth five dollars in the first place, and you'll spend ten times or twenty times as much in costs of lawsuits. Now that's sensible, isn't it? Of course you can put the case through if you want to. Mr Hedgley has asked my advice. If he still desires it, all right—that's my business, gentlemen. But I would rather see you settle it quietly. It's clear enough that you can't both win the case in court. But you can do as you like.'

The force of these remarks was not altogether lost on Haskins, whose temper was easily cooled; but anything he might have said of a pacific nature was thrust back by Mr Hedgley's observations.

'If the land's mine,' said Mr Hedgley, 'I want it. If it isn't, the law'll show it. That's all I've got to say.'

'All right,' said Haskins with great cheerfulness, 'you kin crack on.—I'm sorry I disturbed you, squire. You must excuse me. Good-day.'

Haskins thereupon seized his hat and strode out.

Before Mr Hedgley left it was understood that action for damages on account of trespass was to be entered forthwith against his neighbour. He had not greatly relished the lawyer's plain speaking, but the latter had a high reputation in cases of this kind, and Mr Hedgley had a shrewd eye on the main chance. He pocketed his resentment and agreed to pay his fee.

The next day it was known to all the people of Plunkett Settlement that Hedgley and Haskins had had a row, and that Hedgley had sued Haskins for trespass. And people took sides, as people will, and there was much profound discussion of the whole subject.

Lawyer White, after his latest client had gone, resumed his seat and his paper with this remark to himself; 'Another pair of idiots will have heavy costs to pay by-and-by, and when they have settled the bills they will say that the lawyers are the curse of the country.'

## OUR IRON INDUSTRY.

By W. T. Jeans,
Author of *Creators of the Age of Steel.*

There appears to be a good deal of uncertainty or perplexity in the public mind at present as to the exact position of our iron and steel industry. Hitherto this industry has been regarded as the backbone of our manufacturing power, and for many years during the present century it was believed that our supremacy in metallurgy rested upon mineral possessions which nature had bountifully bestowed upon this country, and to a large extent withheld from others. As the century, which has been described as the iron age of England's greatness, is drawing to a close, that supremacy is being questioned.

This is not, however, the first time that our metallurgical prosperity has been under a cloud and has emerged from it with renewed vigour. When this century opened a similar cloud darkened its infantine prospects. In 1810 it was officially reported that the trade of Birmingham, Sheffield, and other centres of iron-making was quite at a standstill, and that there were no orders for execution there except a few for home consumption. A similar condition of collapse has been attributed to the trade over and over again as the century rolled on, but on each occasion this has turned out to be the darkest hour before the dawn of a fresh period of prosperity. There is good reason for believing that we are likely to experience a similar disillusion on the present occasion.

Generally speaking, each period of depression has also become a period of transition either in the methods of production or the incidence of distribution. It is therefore worth while to

survey the salient features of the trade and see whether there is solid ground for hope instead of despair as to the future ; remembering the dictum of Hallam that a calm, comprehensive study of (industrial) history, not in such scraps or fragments as the partisans of our ephemeral literature obtrude upon us, is the best antidote to extravagant apprehensions.

In the beginning of this century it was the invention of Henry Cort for refining iron by puddling that made this country independent of Russia and Sweden for supplies of iron, but it was not till 1830 that our iron trade assumed the dimensions of a great industry. In 1828, Neilson, an engineer at the Glasgow Gas Works, discovered at a smith's forge that a hot blast was superior to a cold blast in making iron, and in the course of the next quarter of a century our production of iron increased threefold. In the contemporary literature of that period it was avowed that this rapid increase was in part caused by the economy introduced through the use of the hot blast in smelting, and that that process, which had materially lowered the cost of iron, had led to its employment for many new purposes.

After this period of expansion the production of iron was, comparatively speaking, stationary for nearly ten years, and then came the great invention of Sir Henry Bessemer for the conversion of iron into steel by simply blowing air into the molten metal in a large, egg-shaped vessel called a converter. By this means the superfluous carbon in the iron was consumed, but the phosphorus, another superfluous and deleterious element, remained. It was therefore found that only iron free from phosphorus could be converted into steel, and as England had an exceptional supply of ore of that quality the steel trade flourished here more than elsewhere. In the quarter of a century that followed the invention of the Bessemer converter, the production of iron in this country was doubled, but during the last ten years of that period it remained almost stationary.

At the end of that period came the basic process, by which phosphorus could be eliminated from the molten iron in the Bessemer converter and in the open hearth—another process for converting iron into steel that had meanwhile been coming into use. The elimination of phosphorus was effected by lining the converter with bricks made of magnesian limestone burned till as hard as flint. The phosphorus, of which there is only a very small percentage in the iron, likes this material and adheres to it in the converter, whence the molten liquid, after a blow of cold air, flows, freed from carbon and phosphorus. The discovery of this improvement, the work of three metallurgists, enabled all iron-producing countries to make steel, as almost any quality of ore or iron can now be used for that purpose.

Such being the case, every cloud on the horizon is now regarded as an omen of our lost supremacy. But that is a short-sighted view. This country was the greatest iron producer in the world before the dawn of the age of steel. Each of the epoch-making inventions we have mentioned tended materially to reduce the cost of production ; and, curiously enough, now that most countries are put upon a footing of equality as regards the possibility of producing steel, attention is again being directed to the most efficient and economic means of producing iron. The chief factor in this problem is the construction of the blast-furnace, and in respect of blast-furnace practice England is still in the van of progress. It is well known that in the shipping trade success now largely depends upon the adoption of the latest improvements in shipbuilding as giving increased speed and economy of fuel in proportion to the locomotive power used. So it is with the blast-furnace. In 1880, when the basic process was regarded as likely to revolutionise the steel trade, Sir William Siemens said that a ton of fuel ought to smelt a ton of iron, and eminent iron manufacturers treated that view as the theory of a visionary ; but it is now becoming an accomplished fact. Not only has the rate of production increased, but the consumption of fuel has decreased. It was then believed in the trade that the quantity of coke required to smelt a ton of iron would continue to be 23 cwt., and the average production of the blast-furnace then was between 500 and 600 tons a week. Now, the present British practice, says Mr E. W. Richards, one of the greatest authorities on the subject, averages, from ores containing 50 per cent. of iron, 1000 tons of iron a week, with a strong tendency to increase, and the coke consumed varies from 18½ cwt. to 20 cwt. per ton of iron. The invention of firebrick stoves and their adoption instead of cast-iron pipe stoves, effected a saving of 2½ cwt. of coke, as well as made possible an increased rate of production. Improvements in the shape and size of the blast-furnace are continually being made for the purpose of promoting these objects, but the details of these improvements are too technical for popular description. Moreover, different districts and different ores require different types of furnace ; and one of the secrets of success in the iron trade is to know the best type of furnace that in a particular district or under special conditions will yield the best results. Practical skill and inventive ingenuity here find ample field for profitable exercise.

In this power of constructing the costly apparatus that produces the cheapest iron, this country has always been pre-eminent. All the great inventions that have cheapened the price of iron have been made by Englishmen ; and with the exception of Neilson's discovery of the hot blast, which Dr Ure said was accidental, they have all been the result of researches intentionally made to effect the end in view. Why, then, should not this country, which has hitherto been the birthplace of metallurgical improvements, continue to hold that distinction? The incentive to improvement is as great as ever. The history of the iron trade is one long and striking illustration of the old adage that necessity is the mother of invention.

Our adaptability to changing conditions is marvellous. In 1881, in referring to the probable effect of the basic process, the then President of the Iron and Steel Institute said that when that process became a proved success, 'We may expect to have secured a great national gain, and the importation of expensive ores will probably cease.' He added : 'It is quite possible that even now the export of hematite ores from foreign

ports is nearly at its maximum, and therefore any further expansion of the steel trade must be sought for in the smelting of those ores which up to this period have not been thought suitable.' Since that was said our imports of foreign ores have been doubled, and during the present year about one-third of the total iron production of this country is being made from Spanish ores.

A good deal of stress is commonly laid upon differences in wages, in hours of labour, and cost of transport in different countries; but national comparisons based upon these details are generally misleading. In like manner, attention is now and then directed to the fact that in recent years production has not increased by leaps and bounds. But even from this point of view our progress, though not uniform, has on the whole been maintained. In the quarter of a century that followed Neilson's discovery of the hot blast, our iron production increased by about three million tons a year. In the next quarter of a century, beginning with the advent of the Bessemer process, the annual production of iron again increased by about three millions; and there is every reason to believe that during the current quarter of a century, beginning with the basic process, the production will show an increase of over three million tons a year.

Again, we occasionally hear of great progress made by other countries in our markets, and this naturally causes alarm. For instance, Lord George Hamilton, in submitting the Indian budget to the House of Commons in August last, said: 'There are two forms in which steel and iron are imported into India—in the shape of rails or railway material, and in bars or bulk. This country practically monopolises the imports of railway material, but I think this is rather due to the fact that the policy of the Government is to give some preference to home production. But when we come to steel and iron in bulk there is a remarkable shrinkage in British imports into India. Twelve years ago we had 97 per cent. of the total imports of iron and steel into India, but according to the last returns our percentage has shrunk to 56 per cent., while Belgium has risen during these years from 2½ per cent. to 39 per cent. These figures are those of iron and steel in bulk. Now,' he added, 'I think there are some people who maintain that foreign competition is a bogey, but here there is clear and distinct evidence that in regard to a manufacture of which we had a practical monopoly, we are gradually being ousted.'

That is one of the most alarming statements ever made on this subject. What are the facts? To begin with, the average total imports of iron and steel into India only amount to about one-thirtieth part of our total exports of these articles, and if we did not send another ton of iron to India it would not appreciably affect the iron trade of this country. Then, again, the exports from Belgium to India reached their maximum in 1893–94—the year in which the great coal strike in this country temporarily crippled the iron trade by greatly increasing the cost and restricting the supply of fuel—a year when, in consequence, our total exports of iron were the lowest recorded for many years. Since then our production of iron has increased by more than a million tons a year, and our total exports this year are at the rate of a million more, while the production of Belgium and Germany has, comparatively speaking, been almost stationary in these years.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

By Guy Boothby.

### CHAPTER X.—THE CONSPIRATORS BAFFLED.

After one has arrived at a certain stage of weariness there comes a time when one grows careless as to fatigue, if not almost unconscious of it. It was so in our case. During the previous twenty-four hours we had ridden eighty miles at express speed, had been engaged in a battle lasting upwards of six hours, and, as if that were not enough, were now starting back on a similar journey to that from which we felt we had only just arrived. For the first eight or ten miles we were so buoyed up by the excitement of the enterprise upon which we were embarking, that we had scarce a thought for anything save the necessity of speed. Then the dull monotony of the ride settled upon us, in which the reiterated sameness of the jungle scenery, and the steady, almost mechanical movements of our horses, played such a part that it appeared as if we were destined to continue in the same employment throughout eternity. That we should reach the capital in time to be of any use to the garrison struck us as being quite as improbable as that there could be a termination put to our anxiety. Like the idea of death to a young man in the full tide of his health and strength, both contingencies seemed so remote as to require no consideration, and yet it was towards both that every stride was carrying us.

The horse upon which the king was mounted was a dark bay with black points, standing upwards of sixteen hands. Mine was a black, half a hand shorter, but boasting, if possible, a little more breeding. Both were magnificent animals, born and bred in the king's stables, and trained under his own personal supervision. Fortunately for us they were in the very pink of condition, and having been born in the country, were stronger than any imported animals could have been. On this occasion their strength and endurance would be tested to the uttermost, and what would become of us if either should prove unworthy of the trust reposed in him I dared not think. Upon their swiftness depended a king's throne, a nation's independence, a young child's future, and his parents' lifelong happiness; surely load enough for two uncomprehending beasts.

The sun was beyond his meridian as we left the camp, he was lying on the tree-tops like a ball of fire when we forded the Ki-yin River, and told each other that the first twenty-five miles of our journey were accomplished. Ahead of us a yawning gulf of fifty miles still lay and looked as if it could never be overcome.

Crossing the river, the waters of which showed blood-red in the glorious sunset, we climbed the opposite bank and then pulled our horses up

for a few moments' rest within a *tope* of palms that grew beside a ruined temple. With the exception of a horde of monkeys in the trees overhead, and a couple of crocodiles basking upon the mud a hundred yards or so farther down the bank, we were the only living creatures to be seen. The evening breeze rustled the jungle foliage and moaned among the ruins of the temple which stood up gaunt and lonesome amid the bush and which must have been old when England was young. It was not a cheering sound by any manner of means, and neither of us were sorry when it was time to tighten our girths again and continue our ride. As we settled ourselves in our saddles, and took up our reins, I stole a glance at the king. To judge from his face, his heart might have been holding all the accumulated sorrow of the world. He looked wretchedly ill, and I could not help thinking that if he reached the end of the journey it would be as much as he could possibly accomplish. Even that appeared impossible.

The sun sank lower and lower behind the trees, and as he disappeared the shadows lengthened upon the ground. Still our horses preserved their even pace, and side by side we sped along, now dodging the boughs of trees and masses of overhanging creeper, now avoiding a treacherous pool, now disturbing a brace of jackals at their evening meal, anon swinging out into open glades where the frightened deer gave one glance at us and then disappeared like lightning flashes into the surrounding forest. Once, slinking through the undergrowth, we espied a tiger making his way to his favourite hunting ground. He was not twenty paces from us, and as we passed he drew back his lips, and uttered that peculiar coughing sound that only a tiger makes when he feels that fate is against his hunting, and he will probably go supperless to bed. A moment later we had left him to his solitude, and were speeding on as if to meet the rising moon.

The pale goddess of the night was sailing high in a cloudless sky as we climbed the low range that marked the half-way line of our journey. Over our heads rose the bluff outline of the hill, with every peak, every rock, and every feather-topped palm standing out in silhouette against the steel-gray sky. Behind us the jungle stretched like a dark sea, broken here and there with a touch of silver, where the moon's rays caught the still water of some pool or river. A night bird called from among the rocks, otherwise the landscape was as still and silent as a place of the dead.

Reaching the spot we had been aiming for, a small plateau situated almost at the summit of the hill, we pulled our horses up, and descending from our saddles, unloosed our girths, and slipped the bits from their mouths. A small pool lay among the rocks to our right, and our tired animals, which, as may be imagined, were thirsty after their long journey, became impatient to get to it. But heated as they were, it would have been the wildest folly possible to have permitted such a thing, so we contented ourselves with rubbing them down with handfuls of grass, and then, having secured them to a tree, threw ourselves upon the ground and stretched our tired limbs.

'It is just eight o'clock,' said the king, who had consulted his watch, 'and we have still forty miles before us. Can we do it, think you? Will the horses hold out?'

'They must,' I answered. 'They are generous creatures, and we must ride them to the death if need be.'

Unable to remain still for many minutes at a time, the king rose, and crossing the little open space, stood with his elbows resting upon a rock, gazing down at the moon-lit plain. Feeling that it would be the wisest course to leave him to his own thoughts, I did not disturb him, but contented myself by attending to the horses with what strength I could muster for the work. Finding that they had in a great measure recovered their coolness, I led them to the pool and allowed them to swallow a dozen mouthfuls of water each. This done, I permitted them to feed for a moment upon the luscious green grass that surrounded the pool, and then led them back to their tree, and once more made them fast. After that I drew from my holster the flask, which I had taken the precaution to fill before leaving the camp, and also the biscuits I had placed there. Approaching the king, I poured him out a cupful of brandy and water, and to be certain that he took it I watched him drink it. The biscuit he refused point-blank, asserting that to attempt to make him eat anything in his present state would inevitably be to choke him. As soon as I had finished my own meal, the time we had arranged to allow ourselves for rest was at an end, and we unhitched our horses, and having girthed them up, swung ourselves into the saddles. Then for the first time since we had set out, I really discovered how tired and stiff I was. To move caused me the most exquisite torture, and to lift my weight into the saddle nearly brought a cry from my lips. The horses, however, seemed much refreshed by the spell, and made their way up the hillside in a very different fashion to that in which they had approached the pool. Reaching the top, we began our descent, and in somewhat less than half-an-hour were moving swiftly across the plain on the other side of which the capital was situated.

You must try to imagine for yourself, my dear Forsyth, my feelings during the ride that followed. For some time a peculiar waking nightmare possessed me. One moment I imagined myself back in England, and strangely enough, in my place in the Lords, during a debate on the question of the independence of the Médangs; at another I was on my yacht's deck, speeding across the Gulf of Siam to the king's assistance. Then I would seem to wake to the reality of my position, and with a word or two of encouragement to the king, would urge my horse to greater efforts. Long before the first twenty miles of the second half of our journey had been accomplished our animals were showing unmistakable signs of fatigue. It was plain that they were less careful of their footing than before, reeled somewhat in their gait, and on one occasion my poor beast stumbled upon a tree root and came within an

ace of hurling me headlong in the centre of the track. Knowing that it would mean the complete shattering of all our hopes if we rode them out to the bitter end, I called upon the king to stop. At first he did not hear me, but on my repeating my cry he pulled up, and turning in his saddle faced me.

'What is it?' he cried huskily. 'Why do you stop? For heaven's sake, man, remember how much depends upon our speed.'

'I do remember,' I answered, as I sprang to the ground. 'And I also know that if we do not rest our horses we shall not reach our destination. My animal is almost done, and yours is not much better. We must give them a quarter of an hour at any hazard.'

'A quarter of an hour?' he cried, in a voice that went to my heart, so full of pain was it. 'Do you know what a quarter of an hour may mean? It may mean death to every hope I have in life, and destruction to all I hold dear in the world.'

'To ride that animal another mile will mean worse even than that,' I answered with brutal candour. 'To give them a chance to recover themselves a little may mean your salvation. Come, my friend, descend from your saddle, and let me look at your beast.'

With that he dismounted, and instantly fell full length upon the ground, his legs being no longer equal to the task of sustaining his weight. I gave him another drink from my flask, and when I had taken one myself, proceeded to look after the horses. First I removed the saddle of the animal the king had been riding, and then, holding him by the bridle, allowed him to roll upon the soft grass. When he had done so, and after he had shaken himself, he scrambled to his feet again. I then allowed my own beast to follow his example, which he did without waste of time. After that I rubbed them both down with some dry grass as before, and resaddled them. This work finished, I rinsed their mouths with brandy and water from my flask, and then informed the king that I thought we might proceed again. With the word his strength seemed to come back to him like magic; he sprang to his feet without the assistance which I stood ready to give, and reached his saddle. Having seen him safely there, I mounted my own beast, and we then recommenced our ride.

Even after this long interval, the agonies of the next hour and a half seem as fresh to me as when I was enduring them. Slowly, and to the accompaniment of pains that racked me with every stride my horse took, the miles drifted by, until we were not more than ten miles distant from the capital. Small as was the distance compared with what we had already overcome, yet it seemed as if we should never be able to accomplish it. The horses no longer moved with any spring, but with a strained action that now grew more jerky and more uncertain with each succeeding mile. Already the jungle was thinning out, and signs that we were approaching the city were becoming more and more apparent. In another half hour at most, if only Providence would support our tired beasts, we felt we ought to be seeing the gray peak of the castle rise before us. Then the town once behind us, nothing but the steep path to the citadel would remain between us and those we wished to reach. But would Providence uphold our horses for that length of time? That was the question which caused us such untold anguish.

## THE BALMORAL OF SPAIN.

The history of the famous palace of La Granja, set among the pine woods on the northern slopes of the jagged Guadarrama Sierras, is eccentric and thoroughly Spanish. His Majesty Philip V., much oppressed by religious and state cares, was, while hunting in these glorious woods, struck one day by the quietude and extreme isolation of a certain farmstead, then in the possession of some monks of the neighbouring town of Segovia. He decided to build a little hermitage for himself in the same retreat. Later, he bought the monastic farmstead, and there and then conceived the idea of a palace in these solitudes. Word was issued, and the prodigious task of clearing primeval trees, levelling rocks, and subjugating wanton waters began. The king's French origin made him anxious to have a Versailles in Spain; and, with a truly royal indifference to cost, he decided that his palace in the mountains should resemble the French palace of his forefathers as much as possible. In twenty years, more or less, the deed was done. La Granja (it is a pleasant satire to call it by the homely name of 'Grange'), still embosomed in woods, overhung by mountains, and eternally resonant of waterfalls, is a princely house of stone, with a façade more than one hundred and fifty yards long, enchanting gardens, and scores of fountains. It stands nearly four thousand feet above the sea. A few millions sterling of its expense were repudiated by the king's successor—and very rightly said that king's astute advisers. But the crown kept the palace nevertheless, and for a hundred and fifty years it has been a favourite summer resort of the Spanish court.

It is a glorious spot in the dogdays. No wonder in these days the little town that crouches at the feet of the palace has grown considerably, and now assumes to offer its attractions to the tourists of Madrid. There are hotels open only in the season, and there is talk of a railway. This latter will, no doubt, eventually be made, for there are no difficulties of gradient between La Granja and Segovia, only six miles distant; but Spanish public works are tardy in execution. At present you may get to the palace only by driving, cycling, riding, or on foot.

My approach to it was not of the sensational kind. I crossed the Puerta or pass of the Guadarrama from the south, a couple of thousand feet or more higher than the palace, with superb pine woods all about me, and the snow-touched summits of the mountains clear against the blue sky above. The air here was very welcome after the heat of Madrid; so, too, was the solitude. Now and then, in the

long zig-zags through the woods, I met an ox-cart drowsily climbing the ascent—with ear-cracking creaks—or a picturesque person on a mule; else I had the murmurous waters to myself. Memorable, indeed, were the peeps into the deep ravines between the mountains and the distant views of red and yellow Old Castile, which stretches its bleak and barren undulations a hundred miles northward in the direction of Burgos. The woods abounded with violets, and in places the rutted road was fringed for scores of yards with bushes of yellow broom in abundant flower. Butterflies flashed to and fro, some of a huge size. The humming of bees mingled with the remote, slow, tinkling of the bullocks' bells above or below me. Pines, pines, pines, nothing but pines, and so it continued until the road became level, and with little introduction I found myself among the houses of La Granja.

In Madrid and thereabouts for weeks the sun had been scorching everything it could set its rays on. Here all was green and humid. The trees by the broad pleasure walks that radiated from the gilded palace gates were in luxuriant though not full leaf. A seducing trout-stream frolicked among boulders east and west, with patches of shaded grass on its banks that tempted to repose. In the gardens on the north side of the palace—at all times open to the public—flowers were plentiful, and stone seats under limes and magnolias. Men were, nevertheless, watering the rich turf between the beds. The air was cool and sweet, and one had but to look at the faces of the half-a-dozen or so strollers among the palms and pines to realise that, if Philip V. had sought health instead of retirement he did well to spend a few millions at La Granja.

The town is not much. It has no antiquities, and one is rather glad of it. Its houses are of the usual third-rate kind: tall and white in the chief streets, low and dark in what may be called its slums. There is, of course, a market-place, in which contented old ladies sit in the shade all day, for the most part asleep; while the flies examine their cheeses and fruit, and the chickens make trial of their store. Bread appeared to be the main thing in demand here; and very rightly, methinks, for Spanish bread is seldom aught but good. The church bell rings at intervals near them, but does not distract those serene market-women; and lean dogs prowl about their feet, nosing their goods, ready at a moment's notice to thrust tail between legs and run off yelping in anticipation of the vengeance to come. The men of the town seem even less busy than the women. They too cling to the shade wherever it may be found. The rolling and puffing of cigarettes appears to be their engrossing occupation as they loll against the house walls. In the two or three cafés, however, there is the more furious pastime of dominoes, love of which possesses so many mild Spanish souls.

One does not expect to find tall chimneys and factories in a place like La Granja, nor are they there; but the little town is not without one very special article of industry. It makes glass and notable looking-glasses. I realise this only when I have been accepted as a guest at the one hotel that chances to be open. It is difficult not to exclaim at the lavish mirrors in the dining-room (well protected against the flies), and the still more extensive mural glasses in the vast chamber that is given me for the night. My bedroom is, indeed, almost bewildering, there is so illusive an air of population about it. But the loquacious lady of the house explains everything: it is her duty and joy to patronise the local products, which are generally, she says, much admired by her guests; and so I too praise them, though they do show me up as an abominably heated and dusty biped, and assure her that with their aid I shall be ready for the noontide meal sooner than if they were not. His Majesty Charles III., it appears, established this mirror factory here. The kings of France had done the same thing at Versailles: this seemed a good enough reason to the sapient Spanish monarch for taking artisans into the pine woods of La Granja. Conceivably, at first, the industry was designed for the sole supply of glass to the adjacent palace; but it has grown out of that, and now has a national repute. One meets La Granja mirrors in other palaces of Spain and also in general use.

My landlady asks me if I like 'sardines,' and I reply with indifference. If she wishes me to eat sardines, I tell her, I will do so without a murmur; but it turns out she means 'jardines,' a very different matter—'Do I wish to see the royal gardens?' in fact. The Spanish 'j' is a most beguiling letter, with as little in common with our 'j' as it is possible to imagine. Of course I desire to see what Philip V., poor melancholic man, got from the Guadarrama Sierras in exchange for the nation's millions. And so my landlady's little boy—a very intelligent child—is sent post-haste with my card to the royal administrator of the palace, to obtain the necessary permission to see all that is to be seen at La Granja. Meanwhile, I breakfast on Highland trout and beefsteak, and drink the very fair white wine of the place. In spite of the mirrors that surround me (with disappointed flies clamorous about the tissue that protects their gilding), it is like eating in the dark; for, with the Spaniard's terror of the noonday sun, my landlady has closed the shutters, so that only a faint wisp of light falls through a chink upon the table. There are pictures on the walls, and the gloom seems so unfair to them that, grasping my opportunity, I bare them to the sunshine. But they are of the bad tragic kind, and I decide after all that the room looks best in the dark. The man with an imagination carries furniture with him wherever he goes.

The royal palace, on the other hand, proves anything but dark. It abounds in windows, for which Philip V. may receive a certain amount of credit. Though sad-hearted, he was not of so sombre a turn as his great predecessor, the second Philip, whose apartments (or rather dens) at the Escurial depress quite as much as the written records of his last days. For the rest, the palace is pretty much what one expects. There are scores of rooms upholstered in every shade of silk and satin, from daffodil yellow to carnation red, mirrors and

glass chandeliers innumerable; clocks also innumerable; prodigious frescoes on ceilings and walls, for the most part prodigiously bad as works of art, though resplendent for their colours. I was much impressed by the clocks. Monarchs have their hobbies, like private persons with limited incomes; and one of these Spanish sovereigns is said to have had a mania for clocks. Among the hundreds of others were two courtly old things with the name French of Cornhill upon them. It may have been fancy, but they seemed to stand with an air of contempt for the gilt timepieces under glass, which a hundred years ago were their rivals. On this day, however, they were all equally dumb.

There are pictures enough in the palace, and also statues. But these too are all fourth or fifth-rate, or copies. The real treasures of art of La Granja have long ago been carried to Madrid. One does not care very much for the Bourbon portraits, which are the main objects of interest on the palace walls. As individuals, these royal personages were singularly ill-looking. One perceives it here as well as in the National Gallery of Madrid. The marvel is that they did not themselves notice the fact and forbear multiplying presentments of themselves. Even the palace lackey smiles as he introduces their defunct majesties to the stranger; and yet you would suppose he must have got used to them.

It is far better outside in the gardens, with the mountain summits towering above the tree-tops. I am not even seduced to moralising indoors by the tale of the historic and other events which have occurred in the palace. The table upon which Queen Christina, in 1836, here signed the Constitution of 1812, under pressure from a troop of common soldiers, is shown with a certain reverence. I am told too that the impudent Godoy here settled the compact which led to the Peninsular War and the death of so many brave men. But the voices of the waters in the woods are better than these dead events, better even than the bloated tombs of King Philip V. and his wife in the palace church, with their portraits once more in relief against the marble. The rest of Spain's kings and queens for centuries lie in the rich but solemn vault at the Escurial. Philip V. would have none of the Escurial. He thought to establish a brighter Pantheon here. But his influence in this matter was confined to himself and his wife.

The gardens and the natural woods are *the* thing at La Granja. These merge into one another. It is infinitely better than at Versailles, where Nature seems ever to play a secondary part. And how enormously the advantage is increased by the close presence of the noble mountains, with their forests and gray bare summits, snow-spotted, backing the royal demesne south, east, and west. Standing on the terrace of the palace, one listens for the grunt of a wild boar; nor would it be strange to see a stag moving down one of these leafy avenues, fresh from his native solitudes.

Still, there is no forgetting the artificiality of the palace, at first. From the façade, miles of walks proceed with cold precision. You go a hundred yards and come to a huge fountain of tritons or nymphs or gods and goddesses. Hence you see other fountains, just as vast, in all directions; and isolated statues among the trees, those of marble hooded with wooden shelters, those of baser material left to weather as they may. On this common day all the fountains are silent, save for the babble as the waters flow in and out of their marble basins. But on festivals they still rise among the trees, shooting a hundred feet and more into the air and with a complex cross-play of jets that say much for the ingenuity of Messrs Fremin, Thierri, Dumandre, Pitué, and the others who in respective generations have devoted their genius to La Granja. One goes among these fountains slightly predisposed to mock them as intruders in this nook of Nature. But they are not to be contemned. They really do dignify the place. I am told that royal princes have for many a year bathed in one or other of these delightful marble tanks with the living water in them. It is more than credible.

But, having at length shaken off my attendant, I give myself up to the woods, which are the best feature of La Granja. I am free to roam in the royal plantations where I please, and lose myself in Nature's plantation beyond if I please. This however seems impossible, so numerous are the thready paths, all converging upon the palace below. Still, some of them are almost wiped out a mile or more from the town; and here I can climb among big granite boulders, mossed and brambled, and fancy I am where man never yet set foot—the last white statue peeping round a tree-trunk is at least half-a-mile distant. And the blue pigeons cooing in the oaks and pines overhead seem in no terror of gunshot. The voice of the waters is still with me, and here and there the clear streams may be seen rushing among the grass and brambles. But these are quite untrammelled. They are straight from their rocky sources in the Guadarrama; cool and sweet to the palate.

It is said that more than seven thousand trees have been planted in avenues at La Granja. Of these, limes, elms, and the Indian chestnut are the most conspicuous. The lime especially seems to enjoy the moist though cool uplands. Its leafage in May is good to see. But away from the area of the plantation-gardener one is among oaks and pines, and farther still pines only; and this is better than even the fresh, methodical green of the perfumed limes. The woods are tricked out with forget-me-nots, hyacinths, cowslips, and many another English wild-flower. The brambles grip each other and make walls from tree to tree. The gold of the broom gleams ever among the verdure. And the blue sky of Spain domes all.

Philip V. did better even than, in all probability, he believed in making a nest for his royal self at La Granja.

I spent all the hours of an afternoon in these charming woods: now regaining the statues, and smoking a cigarette at the feet of a Venus or a Daphne; and now meandering afresh towards the mountains. With the approach of evening the coolness becomes marked. But it is not so pronounced that the ladies of La Granja, who have the *entrée* of the gardens, care

to wear on their heads more than the mantilla. Their graceful black forms (I allude to their dresses) contrast strongly with the white statues. Perhaps they are as beautiful as these marble prototypes of beauty, perhaps they are not. The time and place envelop them in a certain mist of romance.

The stars usher in yet one more charm for La Granja. The snow of the Guadarrama shines against the heavens, like a motionless moonlit cloud, and the running waters talk on under the moon even more loudly than in the full glare of the day.

## 'WANTED, FOUR GOOD ROCK-DRILLERS.'

### A JOHANNESBURG STORY.

'WANTED, four good rock-drillers at Henrietta mine; permanent work for competent men. Apply between three and five P.M. at Grand National Hotel.'

The Grand National is perhaps the best known of all the Johannesburg hotels, which fact is probably owing to its central position, having a long frontage in Rissik Street, which leads from the Park Railway Station into the central part of the town. It also possesses the largest vestibule of any Johannesburg hotel, which patrons find useful for making appointments.

On the afternoon of the day on which the above advertisement appeared, Mr Leonard Winstanley, the sub-manager, was seated in the smoking-room waiting to see what answers it would bring forth. He was not very sanguine, for it was the autumn of '95, and the mines were working well, competent workmen were scarce, and he anticipated only partial success would reward his two hours' vigil. Soon after three, however, a black waiter came to inform him that a man was waiting to see him in the vestibule. The sub-manager promptly rose, and, following the waiter, was conducted to a spruce, dapper little man standing in the vestibule, who held in his hand a copy of the *Johannesburg Standard*, in which the advertisement had appeared. The man touched his cap, and explained that he had come in answer to the advertisement.

'What experience have you had rock-drilling?'

'I have been over twelve months at it, sir, at the Simner and Jack.'

'And why have you left?'

'Had a row with the mining manager, sir. You will find me quite competent if you give me a trial. The usual wages I suppose?'

'Yes. Can you start to-morrow? I leave here at nine o'clock.'

'Right, sir. Do you want any other men?'

'I do. Do you know of any?'

'Well, sir, as it 'appens, I can find you three good men.'

'Then by all means bring them here at once.'

'I couldn't well do that. Bill Budgen is lodging in Jeppe Town, and Sam Colwin in Bloemfontein, and as for Joe Higgins I don't know where 'e's living, but I'm sure to find him to-night at the Pirates' bar in Commissioner Street. I think I can guarantee we shall all four be here to-morrow morning.'

Mr Winstanley hesitated a moment. He ought to see the men before engaging them, and he must return to-morrow morning. To hunt up these men would take the rest of the day, and this man could do that as well as he. Life on a mine is very slow, it is a little world of its own; there were far more agreeable ways of spending this brief holiday, there were several friends to call on, a dinner invitation, and the Empire to finish with.

'What is your name?' he asked.

'Henry Smith, sir.'

'Very well, Smith, I will rely on you. You are sure that these three men have all had previous experience?'

Mr Smith was both positive and eloquent on the point, so finally Mr Winstanley cut him short, and dismissing him, prepared to make the most of his holiday.

According to his orders a carriage was waiting outside the hotel next morning at nine o'clock. The Henrietta, as every one knows, is ten miles distant from Johannesburg over the veldt, and is a prosperous dividend-paying mine. The four rock-drillers were standing by the carriage when the sub-manager emerged from the vestibule. One of them was small and spruce like Smith, the other two broad-shouldered, burly men, of powerful build. Mr Winstanley surveyed them with satisfaction. 'Evergreen,' he said to himself, referring to his chief, 'will be pleased with these men.'

He handed in his handbag, got into the trap, the four men following, and they started. Soon they left the town behind, and followed a rough road over the veldt. The scenery round Johannesburg is by no means pretty, the absence of trees giving it a bare look; the grass, too, is generally scanty, and the undulating plain is barren of all points of interest. More than half the distance had been traversed; the sub-manager sitting silently by the driver, the men in the rear conversing in whispers among themselves. Suddenly Smith said: 'I guess we had better turn off here;' so saying, he came forward, and jerking the reins out of the driver's hands, turned the horses' heads to the right. Mr Winstanley uttered an exclamation, and rose to his feet, but the two big men behind laid violent hands on him, and each gripping a wrist, forced him down again. Almost speechless with astonishment and rage, he tried to demand an explanation.

'Just sit quiet, sir, a minute,' said Smith soothingly; 'I'll explain it all directly.' He drove over the veldt—it was a rough drive, there being no road, and the cart jolted over big stones; presently they came to a queer little natural amphitheatre or hollow in the ground. The veldt sloped down all round, leaving a few square yards of perfectly flat surface in the middle. By this he drew rein, and getting out, gave the reins again to the driver. Mr Winstanley, freed from the restraining grasp of his captors, followed, and then the other men, these latter proceeding to take from the trap a bundle of iron posts and some rope and other bundles. Mr Smith handed the driver two sovereigns.

'Just you sit still,' he said, 'and when you've driven us back you shall have three more.'

Then he turned to Mr Winstanley.

'Now, sir, let me 'ave the honour to introduce you to Jim Rivers, the heavy-weight champion of New South Wales, and the other gents is Pat

Murphy, champion of America, and his trainer Joe Cohen. I'm Jim's trainer myself.'

'What, the prize-fighters,' cried Mr Winstanley; 'but what does all this mean? I have engaged you all as rock-drillers.'

Mr Smith grinned. 'I guess you won't get any rock-drilling out of us at a pound a day. Why, Jim and Pat can both earn their fifty quid a week at the 'alls. No, sir, this is how it is. We've been playing a little "roodegar" on you, as the French say. As you know, since the Ryan-Goddard fight, prize-fighting in public has been stopped by order of the police, and we wanted a quiet little mill with Pat, the genuine sort, to see which is the better man, 'cause Pat just beat Busby as we're trying to match with Jim 'ere, and we're so watched and followed that we just pretended to engage ourselves to you to get out of the town without bein' noticed, and Pat fights best in the open; and there you are, you see.'

Mr Winstanley did not understand all this; but the fact that he had been taken in became very obvious, and his language as he fully recognised this fact became 'frequent, and painful, and free.'

'Now what's the good of cussin',' protested Smith; 'you're going to see as pretty a fight as ever was, and I'm goin' to ask you, sir, to act as timekeeper.'

Mr Winstanley sadly recognised his fate, and relapsed into silence, and gloomily watched the men erect the ring and strip for action; he even accepted the watch Smith handed him, and listened to his instructions as to when to call time. 'In for a penny, in for a pound,' he soliloquised. 'I can't get away, and I may only get knocked about if I refuse. But I'll not rest till I see that scoundrel Smith in the dock.' His wish was gratified even sooner than he anticipated.

Meantime the men were ready and in the ring, and at a given signal the fight began. The first few rounds were very slow, the men exercising the utmost caution, then as they warmed to their work the pace got quicker. It was very pretty fighting, for both men fought with the utmost fairness, neither clinching nor attempting to foul. In spite of himself the sub-manager began to get interested, and followed the fight with the closest attention.

With equal interest the driver on his box looked on, and as for the two seconds they never took their eyes off their men.

The fight had been in progress over half an hour, neither man having gained any advantage, both 'going strong,' as Mr Smith expressed it, when the inevitable interruption occurred. The sound of wheels near at hand made the principals pause and the engrossed spectators turn their heads. But it was too late. A big wagonette was close by, and a posse of policemen were even now descending from it. Flight was impossible, and next moment the prize-fighters, their seconds, and the unfortunate timekeeper were under arrest, and found themselves the prisoners of no less a person than Van Dorlop, the chief inspector. This gentleman was in high feather at the capture.

'You were not quite clever enough, mine good friends. Did you think you could trick me? I had my eye on you the whole time, but your plan was rather clever, Mr Winstanley? I fear it will also be rather expensive. I didn't know this was in your line.'

Mr Winstanley had a slight acquaintance with the chief inspector, and drawing him aside hastily told his tale.

'I assure you,' he concluded, 'it was I who was taken in; ask any of the men if it was not so. Do allow me to return to the Henrietta in the carriage, for the driver is equally innocent.'

The chief inspector smiled in reply.

'My friend, I fear I cannot let you go. Do you—what is your phrase—"see any colour in my eye?" No, that story will not wash itself. You must return with your fellow-prisoners, and accompany them to the police-station.'

Vainly did the unhappy man loudly protest, and ineffectually appeal to his former companions to corroborate his story; sunk in dismal dejection at their capture, they heeded not his complaints.

'Twenty quid apiece this 'ere little job will cost us,' mournfully said Mr Smith as he ascended the wagonette, 'and no good done neither. An' they call this a sportin' country.'

Mr Winstanley was given the place of honour next the chief inspector, and the wagonette returned; sad were his reflections on the journey. He would have to send a mounted messenger to Mr Evergreen to come and bail him out. He had lost his rock-drillers, but that was a minor point. His position was very disagreeable. If his story was believed he looked a fool; if not, his reputation as a business man was seriously damaged. A sub-manager sent to fetch workmen, and instead participating in a prize-fight, and ending the day in the police-station—anything sounded better than that.

There was also a disagreeable notoriety about the end of the drive which added to his discomfort, and assured him unmistakably that his share in the boxing fiasco could not be hidden. News of the interrupted prize-fight had got about, and of the capture of the participants. The streets were thronged with people awaiting them, who cheered derisively when they appeared. With shame and disgust Mr Winstanley saw himself recognised by various acquaintances, whose interest and amusement in the spectacle was heightened by sight of him sitting beside the chief inspector.

But the crowning drop in his cup of misery was to come. With a start of horror he saw himself recognised by Mrs O'Brian and her charming daughter Eva—Miss Eva, in whose eyes he was very anxious to stand well, and with whom (for she was accounted literary) he had only the previous afternoon been discussing Browning and Ibsen.

But help was at hand; there was no need to send to the Henrietta for Mr Evergreen. Two friends who had seen him in the wagonette came to offer to bail him out, and even this was unnecessary, for when the law-courts were reached the case was taken at once. Mr Smith and his friends, for contravening the law relating to prize-fighting in public, were severely reprimanded, but let off with a small fine on promising not to repeat the offence. About Mr Winstanley's guilt there was some doubt, but Smith having given evidence of his innocence,

and the others corroborating, there was 'laughter in court,' and finally he was discharged with a very unnecessary caution, and on his promising (which he did with great earnestness) never to do it again, and allowed to leave the court accompanied by his hilarious friends. But he got away from them as soon as possible, and not having the courage to call on Mrs O'Brian personally, took a carriage for the mine, promising himself to write and explain when he got there, which he did, and I fancy he is pardoned. But over his interview with Mr Evergreen we had better draw a veil!

That latter gentleman comes to Johannesburg now when workmen are wanted for the mine.

## MY SCRAP-BOOK.

WHENEVER at a loss for something to read, I turn to my scrap-book, throughout whose pages are dotted a curious medley of odds and ends picked up from time to time, during many years, that have struck me as possessing either interest or power to amuse. On the title-page, compared by Vicesimus Knox to the portal of an edifice, I have copied from Evening III. of his Lucubrations: 'The mind is nourished by variety of food, the *farrago libelli*, like the body by a commixture of fish, flesh, fowl and vegetable,' a fair index of its miscellaneous contents.

Page 1 opens with a number of curious selections from the Hatch, Match, and Despatch columns of our Dailies, which cannot be quoted for obvious reasons. Among the examples of 'pious sentiments missing their mark' is one, said to come from the North-western Provinces of India, which, though by no means new, is good enough to bear repetition.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
THE REV. ———,
WHO, AFTER TWENTY YEARS' UNREMITTING LABOUR AS A MISSIONARY, WAS ACCIDENTALLY SHOT BY HIS KHIDMATGAR.
'*Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*'

Turning over, I come to what I call my 'Page of Snobs,' people who hark back two or three generations to introduce into a notice some titled ancestor. One such, of a Copper Wedding, appeared a few years back in *The Morning Post;* upon which some wag, thinking to teach the copper-bridegroom a lesson by means of a little harmless cynicism, sent in the following notice, which the same paper accepted and published, in solemn earnest, on the day following:

BRAZEN WEDDING.

POYNTZ-D'ARGENT—CHAMPIGNON—On November 9, 1888, at St Wombat's, Stony Stratford, by the Rev. Peter Brooke Poyntz-d'Argent, father of the bridegroom, and privately owing to affliction in bride's family, the Rev. Maximus Cadwallader Poyntz-d'Argent, B.A., Brasenose, and some time curate-in-charge of Cabbidge, Beds, to Rosy Gillian, only surviving child of Vane Champignon, Esq., of Champignon, Beds, and granddaughter of the late Sir De Horsey Champignon, Kt. of Muckross, and maternal great grandniece of the late Honourable Caroline A. W. Skeggs.

The way in which Maximus Cad is introduced is neat; nor are cabbage beds and the allusion to the mushroom without point.

Then follow several news-cuttings on the vexed question of The Divining Rod, succeeded in their turn by a number of jokes that have tickled me, from which these two or three are culled at random.

The commanding officer of a corps was much troubled about the persistent untidiness of one of his men. Reprimand and punishment were unavailing. The man was incorrigible, and remained as dirty as ever. A brilliant idea struck the colonel—Why not march him up and down the ranks, and shame him into decency?—It was done. The untidy warrior, who hailed from the Emerald Isle, was ordered to exhibit himself, and to march up and down the entire regiment, and the men were told to have a good look at him. At the close of the exhibition, the unabashed Pat halted, saluted the colonel, and said, in the hearing of the whole corps, with the utmost coolness: 'Dhirtiest rigimint I iver inspected, sorr!'

The teller of the next tale was walking beside a railway line with a man who was very hard of hearing. A train was approaching, and as it rounded a curve, the whistle gave one of those ear-destroying shrieks which seem to pierce the very heavens. A smile broke over the deaf man's face. 'Hark!' he said, 'there's the first cuckoo I have heard this year.'

The volume would be unworthy of its title did it not contain a few good epigrams, apt quotations, misreadings, and some curious specimens of the art of advertising, which divide between them the next half dozen pages, and give place to a bundle of authentic children's sayings, one of which I cannot refrain from quoting: A mite of four, whose birthday falls on 24th December, when he duly receives his presents, saw his small sister one Xmas morning laden with seasonable gifts, while only a few and trifling fell to his share. On it being explained to him that he had received his the day before, the poor little fellow pulled, oh such a pitiful lip, and, bursting into tears, exclaimed: 'Oh mother! why did you born me so near Christmas?'

As good as any of the repartees is that of the famous Dr Busby, head-master of Westminster two centuries ago, to the celebrated Father Petre, who had been under him as a pupil, and was one of the perverts of James II.'s time. Busby asked him why he had changed his faith. The quondam pupil replied that 'the Lord had need of him.' 'I have read the Scriptures pretty diligently,' said Busby, 'and never read that the Lord had need of anything but once, and then it was of an ass.' This same reference from the Bible was quoted (in the *Standard*, 4th February 1889) a few years since at the end of an 'In Memoriam' notice.

A number of simple recipes are worth having, such as the frosting of glass by painting it with Epsom salts dissolved in beer; and of tests, e.g. of water for organic pollution, by dissolving in it a lump of sugar, corking the bottle tightly, and standing it in the light for a couple of days, when, if no milky cloud appear, it may be considered free; or of arsenical paper-hangings, by touching the beautiful but dangerous green with common spirit of hartshorn or ammonia, a sure test for arsenic, turning it blue.

The next few sheets are devoted to Literary

Curiosities after the style of Poe's Valentine, and furnish examples of curious forms of mental recreation, to anagrams, palindromes, optical illusions, curiosities of figures *et hoc genus omne*, as well as to arithmetical puzzles, of which this subtraction sum seems to perplex people most:

| | Poles | Yds. | Ft. | In. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| From | 4 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| Take | 3 | 5 | 2 | 11 |

As it stands, this seems a sufficiently puzzling calculation. But it is enormously simplified by stating the lower line in another equivalent form—making it, namely, 4, 0, 1, 5.

The last entry under the heading 'Strange Coincidences' is the one brought to notice in the columns of *The Daily Telegraph* during last March, when the excitement concerning the Transvaal raid was at its height. In a case heard before Judge French at Shoreditch County Court the name of the plaintiff was Jameson, while two of the witnesses for the defence were named Willoughby and Rhodes.

The subject of cricket occupies the closing pages, accounts of matches interlarded with many an amusing anecdote, a couple of which must wind up this rambling sketch of my precious scrap-book, the half of whose treasures have not been touched upon. Volapük, Luminous Paint, Snails as Diet, Origins, Marks on China, Smoky Chimneys, Fairy Rings, Parrot Stories, besides endless notes on matters scientific, are fair samples of the other heterogeneous ingredients of this literary hotch-potch.

'On August 11, 1879,' wrote Arundo, 'I was bowling for Somerset *v.* Gloucestershire, at Clifton, and with a straight ball struck Dr E. M. Grace, who was batting, on the pads. The appeal for l.b.w. was given in my favour. "What!" exclaimed the doctor with real or feigned surprise, "did you say I was out, umpire?" "Hout, sir," replied that official, one of the best umpires in England. Then turning to me, he added, *sotto voce*, with grave impressiveness, "and I never seen a *houter*."'

A certain cricketer, being conscious of his inability, just before his innings, to conduct his performance creditably to his club, owing to his temporary infirmity causing him to see things in a treble light, was, however, persuaded by a comrade to go in and take his luck, and be sure to strike at the middle ball, and all would be well. The first ball unfortunately got him out. When his friend upbraided him for not following his instructions, he explained 'It would have been all right, only I hit the middle ball with the outside bat.'

I may add an incident that this recalls to mind. It befell while I was playing whist at the Murree Club (we did not spell it Mari in those days) in India, one night nineteen years ago. One of our adversaries (A——) had dined not wisely but too well, and during the first hand his partner (B——) had been simply yelling for trumps. At its close he very naturally asked A—— if he had not noticed his constant call for trumps:

A——: 'Of course, I did.'

B——: 'Then may I ask why you didn't lead them?'

A——: 'I had a very good reason.'

B——: 'May I ask what your reason was?'

A——: 'Because, if you had given me heaven, I couldn't have told you what trumps were.'

## ARTISTIC GLASSWORK.

THE subject of glass and glass-making is one that is of great interest to all mankind, for by its use so many and varied discoveries have been made, and so much comfort given to all persons in all ages; and, as an old writer has aptly put it: 'By its means we are enabled to enjoy the light of heaven and at the same time to exclude the wind and rain, to enjoy beautiful forms of vessels for domestic use, and provide subsidiary means for comfort in seeing and reading;' thus was the first maker of glass employed though without his knowledge or expectation.

There is a kind of glass called native, natural, or volcanic glass—namely, the mineral obsidian, which is found in the vicinity of volcanoes, and was used by the Egyptians and Romans for the making of small artistic vessels; in later times the Mexicans have made use of it. Artificial glass—the glass of commerce—is made by the fusing together of certain silicates of potash with either soda, lime, lead, or other constituents according as ordinary, crystal, crown, or other glass is required. The vitreous material, when taken from the earthen pots, is capable of being drawn out, cast, or blown; the object so formed has next to be slowly cooled, or annealed as it is called, in order to render it less liable to be broken. Some glass is polished, such as crown glass.

The art of glass-making is one of so early a date that its first history is absolutely lost; perhaps the earliest mention there is in connection with it is the tale told by Pliny, in which he states that certain sailors, returning from Egypt with a cargo of soda, were wrecked near Mount Carmel, and that, when cooking their food upon the sandy soil, glass was formed by the action of heat upon the alkali and the sand.

This legend would lead one to suppose that to the Egyptians or Phœnicians must be assigned the invention of glass-making. It was undoubtedly in Egypt that the earliest known piece of glass was manufactured, consisting of a glass bead found some years ago near Thebes, and now to be seen in the British Museum. It is in the form of a lion's head, having certain hieroglyphics beneath, which have been deciphered as constituting the name of the monarch Nuantef IV. of the eleventh dynasty about 2423-2380 B.C. At Beni-Hassan are certain monuments supposed to have been erected 2000 years B.C., and upon one are to be seen representations of Egyptians in the act of taking molten glass from a furnace and blowing it into a vase-shaped object. Another early piece of glass to which an approximate date can be assigned is also a bead bearing the name of Queen Hasheps or Hatasu, sister and co-regent of Thothmes II. and III. of the fifteenth dynasty (*circa* 1450 B.C.); it bears an inscription stating that she was 'beloved of the goddess Ather resident in Uas' or Western Thebes. An important glass object is a little ewer about five inches in height, now in the British Museum, which bears

upon it in hieroglyphics the name of Thothmes III., who lived about 1464 B.C. (the same monarch who caused to be carved the obelisk now to be seen on the Thames Embankment); the ewer is of a light turquoise blue with ornament in dead gold upon a blue ground.

During the excavations made by Sir Henry Layard at Nineveh some very fine specimens of glass were discovered, ranging in dates from the ninth to the first century B.C. The most important specimen, found in the north-west palace, was a small vase of transparent greenish glass, having on one side a lion engraved, and upon the opposite side a line of cuneiform characters giving the name of Sargon, who was king of Assyria in 722 B.C.; this vase was blown in one solid piece and then shaped and hollowed out by a turning machine, the marks of which are still visible. Sargon is mentioned as a contemporary in Isaiah's prophecies. In the twentieth chapter the shameful captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia is prefigured; and to specify the year in which the prophecy takes place it is stated that it was 'in the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon, king of Assyria, sent him.' Among other objects found was a glass lens having opposite convex and plane surfaces, the properties of which could scarcely have been unknown to the Assyrians; it may be regarded as one of the most ancient if not the earliest specimen of a magnifying glass.

Many beautiful little glass vessels have been found in tombs in the countries bordering upon the Mediterranean. For years such objects were thought to have been of Greek manufacture, but it is now considered almost certain that they were made in Phœnicia at the celebrated works at Sidon between the fifth and first centuries B.C. They are distinguished by a deep transparent blue colour, the surface being ornamented by bands of colour, forming zigzag lines, generally of white, turquoise, and yellow. These little vessels were very highly valued by the Greeks and Etruscans, the former of whom do not appear to have largely manufactured glass previous to our era, although small pieces were occasionally used for architectural purposes.

The making of glass would seem to have been introduced into Rome by Egyptian workmen, and in a few years reached a point of perfection which has scarcely been equalled in modern times. The Roman emperors took a great pride in it, and soon an enormous value was set upon choice specimens, it being mentioned by a writer of the time that two vases were sold for the great sum of £49,200 modern money. Almost every variety of glass was made in Rome, and amongst others, a kind of interlacing of bands of threads, both white and coloured, known as mosaic glass, beautiful specimens of which are to be seen in large museums; another kind was that made in moulds, objects such as dried dates, masks of men, fir cones, &c., being represented. But perhaps the most important branch of the art in Rome was that in which a layer of glass of one colour was placed over another, portions of which were carved away, leaving a pattern of one coloured glass upon the lower different coloured layer, such, for example, as is seen in the celebrated Portland Vase. This vase was found in 1644, in a sarcophagus near Rome, supposed to be that of the Emperor Severus (35 A.D.) and his mother. It measures ten inches in height, and bears a design, probably representing the awakening of the soul in the regions of the dead; at present it is to be seen in the British Museum, after having been smashed in 1845 by a madman, and afterwards carefully put together again. In 1786, Wedgwood made copies of it in his own peculiar ware, specimens of which are to be seen in most museums in the kingdom.

In the fourth and following centuries etched gold-leaf was placed between layers of glass, and was largely used for marking the places where the dead were laid in the Catacombs.

Glass was used for windows by the Romans, as also mica and alabaster; the making of glass for such purposes was continued throughout the dark and middle ages; allusions are made to it by Lactantius in the fourth century, St Jerome in the fifth, and Gregory of Tours in the sixth.

Very little is known concerning the manufacture of glass in the Byzantine Empire after the decline of Rome, but it is considered probable that workers of glass brought their materials and arts from Rome to Byzantium. The art was but little carried on in those countries under Mohammedan rule previous to 1000 A.D. In the eleventh century certain factories were at work in Syria and Egypt; and in the twelfth century at Antioch and New Tyre (*Sûr*) glass-making was practised. In the thirteenth century the workmen had learned how to apply enamel colours and gilding to glass, this special branch culminating in the beautiful enamelled lamps so much sought after at the present time. Damascus in the fourteenth century was noted for its glass, and many objects were brought into our country by travellers; one such now in existence being the goblet known as the 'Luck of Edenhall,' beautifully ornamented in enamel colours, with oriental design. In 1402 Damascus was sacked by Timour Beg, and the glass-workers taken away. This, together with the fact that the Venetian glass was becoming known, brought about the decay of Damascus glass.

Venice for many years was the chief seat of the manufacture in Europe, and Venetian glass is well known to all art collectors. It is thought probable that the making of it was carried on during the early centuries on a small scale, and that the determination to cover the interior of St Marks with mosaic had a great effect in stimulating its manufacture. The first knowledge of any known artist in glass is obtained from a document in the Venetian archives of date 1090. Constantinople was taken by the Venetians in 1204, and among the many art objects dispersed were specimens of glass, many of which found their way to Venice, and so stimulated the art in that city. Various are the kinds of glass which the Venetians made, and very beautiful are the forms which emanated from their glass factories; so important were the makers of glass that the state conferred upon them the highest privileges possible. Venetian glass has been divided into six classes—namely, those objects which are made of one-coloured or plain thin glass, such as the well-known wine glasses; then those which are formed of coloured glass, painted with enamel colours and

then gilded, forming perhaps, some of the earliest shaped pieces of glass made about 1450—1520; a third class consists of mosaic glass; in a fourth are placed the opaque glasses; to a fifth class are assigned those 'crackled' glasses, formed by the sudden cooling and reheating of objects whilst in course of manufacture; and lastly are classed the peculiar lace glass and filigree glasses. So important was the glass manufacture that very stringent regulations were enforced by the state to prevent the secrets being carried to other countries, one, it is said, enacted that if a workman left a factory, and took the secrets of glass-making with him, he was at first asked to return; if he refused to do so, his nearest relations were imprisoned; if, notwithstanding this, he still would not return, an emissary was sent to find and secretly kill him. Yet with all these severe penalties, certain of the workmen left Venice and carried their art with them into Germany, France, and England.

In Germany the art had been carried on previous to the sixteenth century; at this period and during the next two centuries a peculiar kind of beer-drinking cylindrical vessels known as 'Wiederkomms' were made, generally of plain glass ornamented in enamel colours with the arms of the Emperor and Electors of Germany, with the Imperial Eagle, or with designs dealing with domestic subjects. The art of cutting glass was brought to great perfection in Bohemia toward the end of the seventeenth century, and at Potsdam in 1679 a peculiar kind of ruby glass, invented by Künckell, was manufactured.

Very few pieces of French glass now in existence can be attributed to an earlier date than the sixteenth century. But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the art advanced, and in the time of Louis XVI. very delicate ornamentation was made on glass by means of wheel engraving, the usual pattern consisting of monograms and initial letters interlaced in the midst of an escutcheon.

Many small portions of glass have been found in various parts of the United Kingdom, bearing a great resemblance to the old Roman glass, and it has been conjectured that such was imported into England. At Woodnesborough in Kent a large number of elongated glasses were dug up; they are said to have given rise to the word 'tumbler' as applied to drinking glasses, for, from their having rounded bases, when stood upon a table they were tumblers in a true sense; they are considered to be of Anglo-Saxon origin, and many are to be seen in the British Museum. The earliest evidence there is of the making of glass in England is in 1447, when John Prudde of Westminster in agreeing to make the windows for the Beauchamp Chapel, Warwick, promises that he will 'use no glasse of England.' Sussex from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century was noted for its glass. Stow in his chronicle says that the first making of Venice glass began in England at Crutched Friars in London about the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by Jacob Vessaline, an Italian. In the seventeenth century lead was used in the glass manufacture, and the glass so made was known in England as 'flint' glass. At Lambeth in 1673 the Duke of Buckingham started glass-works. In 1736 English glass-making had so improved that it was considered to be superior to Bohemian. At Bristol in the latter end of the last century a factory was started and became noted for its vases and beakers.

The first glass in Scotland was made at Wemyss and afterwards at Prestonpans and Leith. Many goblets are met with which have engraved upon them a rose with two smaller rose-buds emblematic of James II. and the old and young Pretender; some also bear the portrait of Charles Edward in tartan dress encircled by a wreath of laurel: such glasses were probably made in Scotland. Many beautiful specimens of glass have been made in India, Persia, and China, the Persian glass sprinklers of various colours being specially noteworthy. The small snuff-bottles made by the Chinese are not only beautiful but very interesting, for they recall the old methods of the Romans of using two or three layers of glass of various colours, and cutting away certain parts to form some device or pattern.

At the present time specimens of old Venetian glass are being copied in some few instances with great success, though it is to be feared that much of the modern glass is commonplace in form, doubtless owing to manufacturers having to sell at a cheap rate. Yet it is gratifying to know that where time has been allowed to skilled workmen for the manufacture of certain specimens, a high standard of excellence has been the result, approaching the Venetian work of the best period. Copies of the old Mosque lamps and other ancient patterns are being made in Paris and Italy at the present time, and it behoves all those interested in buying old glass to be somewhat careful as to their purchases.

## THREE PICTURES OF A LIFE.

### DAWN.

Playmate of dreams and flowers and all things bright,
Oh little child—whose hands
Have found a treasure in the cuckoo-lands—
Thy fair-haired comrades of the earlier light,
Missing thee from their bowers,
Have come to seek thee in thy realm of flowers.

### NOON-DAY.

Maytide and morningtide have passed away.
Roses and lilies rare
Have chased the kingcups and the cowslips fair
From meadows where the child no more can play;
And stronger hands have grasped
That dearest blossom which his fingers clasped.

### DUSK.

Slow to his side the lingering river creeps,
Whispering into his ear
Strange stories of the far and of the near.
The clustering flowers are dead—wan Autumn weeps;
And all life's better part
Lies buried in the dreamland of his heart.

Arthur L. Salmon.

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## BIBLE PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTING.

Voltaire's famous prediction that in a hundred years the Bible would be totally unknown has proved as ludicrously wrong as that other noted saying of his — that although it took twelve men to establish Christianity, it would require only one to overthrow it. More than a century has elapsed since Voltaire's time, and so far from being an unknown book, the Bible is now circulating over the whole world in numbers and in forms such as in the days of the Ferney Philosopher nobody had ever dreamed of. Voltaire died in 1778. Within about the first quarter of the next century, during which the circulation of the Bible was to dwindle and die out altogether, there was established in London the British and Foreign Bible Society, which alone since its institution has circulated, according to last year's accounts, over one hundred and forty-seven million Bibles, or Testaments, or portions of them, and is still pouring them out all over the earth at the rate of about four millions a year, or thirteen thousand copies for every working day, more than a quarter of a century after the date at which the sceptical Frenchman prophesied that the book would be wholly extinct.

Nobody seems to know even approximately what is the total output of Bibles at the present time. There are reckoned to be about seventy centres of production and distribution, but what is the extent of their work there are no means of ascertaining. Of distributing associations there are four principal ones—the British and Foreign Bible Society, the American Bible Society, the Scotch, and the Dutch. Of these the London Society is by far the largest. It is managed by a committee of thirty-six laymen, six of whom are foreigners resident in or near London. Of the remaining thirty, half are members of the Church of England, and the other half are representatives of other Christian communions. It has a gross income of about a quarter of a million of money. The societies affiliated with it in various parts of the world—collecting funds and aiding in the circulation of its sacred books—number over seven thousand. It has its own agents, depôts, and colporteurs all over Europe, and throughout India, China, and other countries. Of colporteurs alone it employs nearly six hundred in various parts of the world, and it has between four and five hundred Bible-women engaged in bringing the Bible and a knowledge of the Bible to the women of the Eastern world. It issues its publications in over three hundred different languages, and there are at the present time not far short of a thousand men, missionaries and others, engaged in making other translations, or improving existing ones.

This society has been the pioneer in the work, and is by far the largest in its operations. The American, Scotch, and Dutch have followed in its wake, though the American not only distributes the Scriptures, but 'manufactures' its books. The British and Foreign Bible Society does no printing in English, except what is done for the blind in raised type. All its issues in English are printed by the presses at Oxford and Cambridge, and by the Queen's printers.

The copyright in the Holy Scriptures is vested in the crown, and in England there are only the three authorised printers of them just named. Oxford and Cambridge have, by royal charter, the right of printing the Bible, and the Queen's printers are licensed to print the sacred books during Her Majesty's pleasure, a license which may at any time be withdrawn by an Order in Council. In Scotland anybody is at liberty to print Bibles, but no edition may be lawfully published unless it has been read and licensed for publication.

All this, however, refers only to the 'authorised' version of the Scriptures. The expenses attending the recent revision of the sacred books were very heavy—something like £20,000, and the Queen's printers, who were invited to contribute a share, preferred not to do so. The two great universities alone, therefore, have proprietary rights in the revised version of the Bible,

and all editions of it emanate from the Oxford and Cambridge presses. It is a remarkable fact that although the revised Scriptures have now been before the public for fifteen years, the old or authorised version is still the one in general use. The revised Bible was produced at immense cost, and by the highest scholarship of the day, and no competent judge is likely to dispute that it is a more accurate, and upon the whole, a better translation than the authorised version. Yet the Oxford Press still annually prints at least five times as many of the old version as it does of the new, and Cambridge does practically the same. One of the chief reasons for this is that the great society we have been describing—the British and Foreign—has hitherto declined to circulate the revised version. It is a fundamental rule of the society to issue nothing but the authorised version of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, and though this rule was of course framed when the authorised version was the best, that rule remains unrepealed, though attempts have been made to get it amended so far as to permit of the distribution of the new translation to those who prefer it. The slow acceptance of the new version is after all, however, only a repetition of what was experienced when the authorised version itself first appeared. People still clung to the old translation to which they had been accustomed, and it took two or three generations to bring the newer one into popular favour.

Among the Bible printing establishments of the world the Clarendon Press at Oxford holds the position corresponding to that of the British and Foreign Society among distributing agencies. It is by far the largest of its kind in existence. The Clarendon Press is a remarkable institution in many ways, especially if we include with it the various branch establishments connected with it. It is itself a large wholesale publishing establishment, having extensive premises in London, and branch depôts in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and New York, and it has its travellers in all parts of the kingdom. The Clarendon Press not only prints, but it casts all its own type, does its own stereotyping and electrotyping, makes its own printing-ink and its own paper. It also carries on a large establishment for the binding of the volumes it prints. In one way and another it has about a thousand people regularly engaged in the production of books, of which Bibles form by far the greater proportion.

The paper-making for Oxford Bibles is a specially important and interesting part of the work. At Wolvercote, a mile or two out of Oxford, the university has a large mill for the supply of its own requirements. A good deal of the paper they turn out here is made out of old ships' sails, the materials of which, after battling with storms in all quarters of the world, come here for the purpose of being made into paper, printed in almost every language under heaven, and bound up into volumes to be again scattered far and wide into all the uttermost ends of the earth. This Wolvercote paper-mill has much to do with the great reputation that Oxford has acquired in the production of Bibles and other devotional books. Twenty years ago and more the management here hit on a valuable invention in paper-making, and ever since their 'India paper' has been the envy and the puzzle of manufacturers all over the kingdom. There are said to be only three persons living who know the secret of its make; and though the process has never been legally protected, and all the world is free to imitate the extremely thin but thoroughly opaque and wonderfully strong and durable paper of the best Oxford Bibles if they only knew how, all the world has hitherto quite failed to do so. It is as thin as tissue, but perfectly opaque, and so strong that a strip of it three inches wide has proved to be capable of sustaining a quarter of a hundredweight. Over one hundred and sixty works and editions are now printed on this paper. This special advantage has very largely helped Oxford to retain the leading position which it originally gained by being nearly the first if not quite the first printer of books in the kingdom, and by the prestige of its name. A very extensive and most interesting establishment is this, the chief source of our sacred books in their material embodiment — spacious, well-ordered, dignified, and in some respects a trifle conservative. Some of its machines are of a somewhat antiquated type, but they print and send up to the London depôt from four to seven tons of printed sheets every day, and the smartness with which they can, if required, turn out their books, was illustrated at the time of the Caxton quincentenary a few years ago. A meeting was to be held in honour of Caxton at South Kensington, and at two o'clock on the morning of the day the printing of a hundred Bibles was commenced at the Clarendon Press. By two o'clock in the afternoon a complete copy was handed up on to the platform at the meeting. It was a book of over one thousand pages, and it had been printed, dried, pressed, sent up to the bindery in London, and there collated, sewn, rolled, and bound. Its edges had been gilt, and the cover embossed with the university arms, and it had travelled seventy miles all within the twelve hours. They have modernised a good deal of their machinery since then, and if they were attempting a similar feat again, it is said that there would be ample time to make the paper as well as the book.

Of Bibles alone this one establishment turns out at the present time over a million a year, in addition to large numbers of New Testaments and portions of Scripture, and both the university of Cambridge and Messrs Eyre and Spottiswoode, the Queen's printers, also print very largely. From all three sources the printed matter is to a large extent sent to the British and Foreign Bible Society in sheets, the society having them bound up by their own bookbinders, this item alone costing the society from £2000 to £3000 a month. The university has, however, an extensive 'bindery' in London, and its own large publishing house in Paternoster Row, the university publisher being Mr Henry Frowde, whose name has been printed more frequently and circulated more widely, probably, than that of any other man who ever lived. Cambridge University also has a publishing press in the same locality, while the Bibles issued by the Queen's printers are published from their extensive premises in East Harding Street. As it has already

been said, there are other less productive sources of the sacred books; and it seems a probable computation that somewhere about a century and a quarter after Voltaire's prediction the world's Bibles are multiplying at the rate of from three to four millions a year at the very least.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER X. (*continued*).

THE jungle once done with, a long strip of open land cultivated here and there in small blocks lay before us. Then came another small strip of forest, and after that the suburbs, if I may so call them, of the city. Though I could not of course see them, I knew that our spurs were red with blood; indeed, my legs ached with the repeated blows I had been compelled of late to give my poor brute's sides. No longer did they gallop with heads erect, but they held their noses almost to the ground, thereby spoiling the pace and doubling their chances of a fall.

'It cannot be done,' cried the king, as if his soul were being torn from him. 'They are dead-beat, and another mile will be as much as they can manage.'

'Courage, my friend,' I shouted back. 'We will not say die until we're beaten. At most we have not more than five miles to do.'

'Five miles!' he cried. 'You might as well say five hundred.'

I did not answer, and in silence we continued our ride. The moon was behind a cloud, as indeed our fortunes seemed to be. But presently she emerged again, and as she did so we caught a glimpse of the citadel rock, rising dark and forlorn from out of the plain before us. The king saw it as soon as I did, and I heard him mutter hoarsely, 'Thank God! thank God!' Almost at the same instant his horse stumbled, and went down crash upon the ground, throwing its rider from the saddle as a catapult hurls a stone. I pulled up instantly, and jumping from my saddle ran to his assistance, only to discover that he was quite unconscious. Almost raving at the untowardness of our fate, I bathed his forehead and his lips with spirit, chafed his hands, and endeavoured by every means known to me to bring him back to life, but without success. He lay as he had fallen, his eyes closed, and his white haggard face turned up to the moonlight.

Well-nigh beside myself with despair, I pulled out my watch and examined the face. It was exactly a quarter past eleven. If we did not reach the castle in three-quarters of an hour, we should be too late to prevent the mutiny and to save those we loved. What on earth was to be done? I racked my brains without arriving at a conclusion.

Suddenly an idea occurred to me. Somewhat less than a mile farther on was the house of the Chowmung, or head-man of the village, just beyond the city boundary. If I could only manage to get the king as far as that, I might leave him there in safe quarters, while I pushed on to the citadel, and took the affair of the rescue into my own hands. But how I was to get him even such a short distance I could not for the life of me see. His own horse was dead-lame, and even if he were *not*, he was hopelessly worn out, so that I might dismiss him from my mind at once. My own animal was in well-nigh as bad a condition, and even if *he* had been fresher, he could never have borne the weight of two such men after his journey of eighty miles. There was only one way out of the difficulty. I must leave the king where he was, and hurry on to the Chowmung's house and inform him of what had happened. He would then send for the king while I hastened on to the citadel.

No sooner had I arranged all this in my mind than I hastened to act upon it. Drawing the king's body a little off the road, I made him as comfortable as circumstances would permit, beneath a tree, and then, mounting my horse, urged him forward at his best pace towards the residence of the Chowmung in question. It was not long before I reached it, and still less time elapsed before I had the man I was in search of out in the cool night air listening to my tale. He was most concerned, and assured me that that very instant he and his son would hasten with a buffalo-cart to the place in question. Once they had found their prince I knew he would be as safe as in his own castle. Under the present circumstances perhaps safer.

As soon, therefore, as I had assured myself that he intended to do what he promised, I urged my weary horse forward again, and in less than ten minutes was toiling up the main street towards the citadel path. That once reached, I realised that it was no use my asking more of my generous beast, which now stood still, shaking like an aspen leaf. I sprang off, and taking my revolver from my holster, and placing it in my pocket, left my steed to take care of himself, and hastened up the steep path. By the time I reached the top I was more dead than alive.

Once at the gates, I paused for a moment to recover my breath, and then endeavoured to understand in what manner I should proceed next. For every reason it was necessary that I should act with the greatest caution. One fatal step might ruin everything and every one, and then God help those whom we had come in such haste to save.

Advancing to the great gate, I was about to beat upon it with my sword, when a large pebble (I have it in my possession now) fell from the battlements above, and struck me upon the helmet. I looked up instantly, to find a man leaning over the coping, making frantic signals to me. Before I could realise his

intentions, a rope descended, and fell within my reach. It was plain from this that I was to be drawn up by way of the wall, without troubling the guard at the gate. One thing, however, puzzled me, and made me feel a little anxious. Who was I supposed to be? If they thought me the messenger from the French, I should fall into the traitor's hands nicely; but on the other hand, I questioned how should I be better if I knocked at the gate, for I could not suppose that Roche would be foolish enough to allow any but his own partisans to be on duty on such an important night. So having discussed the question with myself in this fashion, I made up my mind as to what was the best thing to do, and then tied the rope securely under my arms. That done, I took a good grip upon it above my head, and having given a little jerk as a signal to begin to pull, was next moment lifted off my feet and dragged up the face of the wall.

By the time I reached the top, I had had about enough of it. My weight on the end of the long rope caused me to swing round and round like a teetotum, and once or twice I came perilously near breaking my head against the wall. However, all is well that ends well, and in a very short time I found myself being dragged over the coping by eager hands. 'Now,' thought I to myself, 'I shall discover who I am supposed to be, and then my fate will be decided for me.'

As soon as I had recovered my breath I sprang to my feet and faced the men who had pulled me up. I say the men, for the reason that there were two of them. To my joy, however, I discovered they were friends, not foes. One was the old steward of the palace, an Italian named Polacci, as faithful a fellow as ever lived, while the other was a Malay servant named A-Mat, whose devotion to the king's person was proverbial throughout the country. How it was that Roche had allowed them both to remain at large I shall never be able to understand.

'Thank Heaven, my lord, you have come,' whispered Polacci as soon as he had discovered my identity; 'but where is His Majesty? The queen expected you both.'

'Your king has met with an accident upon the road,' I answered, 'but he is safe with friends. Now let us consider what is to be done. What is the time?'

'Just twelve o'clock, my lord. The palace clock struck only a few minutes since.'

'And where is General Roche?'

'In his quarters, I believe, my lord, with the Frenchman who arrived last night.'

As if, however, to show that we must not take anything for granted, just as he spoke we heard footsteps on the stone stairs to the right of where we stood. Polacci was the first to appreciate their meaning.

'Quick, my lord,' he whispered. 'One of those footsteps is the general's. We must hide ourselves, or all is lost.'

With a strength I could scarcely have believed his meagre frame to have possessed, he dragged me in the direction of a large buttress which stood out from the wall some six or eight feet. There, in the shadow, the three of us crouched, keeping as close to the wall as it was possible for us to do.

As Polacci had said, one of the new arrivals was Roche, the other was a man whom I then thought I had never seen before, but whom I rightly set down in my own mind as the Frenchman of whom we had been told. It was evident they were taking a last walk round the walls in order to see that everything was in readiness for their scheme. How little they guessed who was near them, only awaiting his opportunity to upset all their plans. Closer and closer they came to where we crouched, until they were only a few feet away. Fortunately they were approaching from the other side of the buttress, otherwise they could scarcely have failed to see us.

'Ah, I wish I had your confidence, friend Gaspard,' Roche's companion was saying. 'You are so certain that all will go well. But what if the men should discover that the king is not dead, and what if His Majesty should put in an appearance before you have got them out of the castle? How would you fare then?'

'It is no use considering either alternative,' said Roche confidently. 'The men will not find out their mistake until I have them safely cornered, and His Majesty, bless his royal heart, is at this moment tucked up in his blankets upwards of a hundred miles away, so I have no fear of him.'

'Ah!' said the other with a sigh of envy, 'what a man you are to be sure! If I had your powers I might do anything.'

'If I were such a craven cur as you, I should do nothing,' retorted Roche with a sneer that cut like a knife.

'There is nothing, my friend, to be gained by calling one's fellow-workers names,' said his companion.

'I am best judge of that, and you'd better leave it to me,' answered Roche. 'Now let us hasten round and see that all is right. After that we'll return to my quarters and prepare for the messenger who will be here in twenty minutes or so.'

'I am at your disposal, *cher ami*,' said the other, and they resumed their walk.

When we had given them time to get well out of hearing we crept from our hiding-place and were about to make for the steps leading down to the palace when I paused and turned to Polacci.

'Polacci,' I said, 'at any cost the king must be brought here and at once. Who can I send to fetch him?'

'If your lordship will trust me, I will go at once,' he said.

'I would rather trust you than any man, but how can you get out?'

'You must lower me over the wall,' he answered. 'Then I will hasten with all speed to the residence of the Chowmung and bring His Majesty hither.'

'Come along then, let us lower you,' I replied. 'There is no time to lose. But first give me the key so that I may get into the palace when you are gone.'

He did as I wished. The rope by which they had dragged me up was then fastened under his shoulders and made secure. That

having been done, old man as he was, he scrambled over the edge of the wall with as little fear as a boy would show in climbing for a sparrow's nest.

'Lower away gently, my lord,' he whispered; and we did as he desired.

Once he was at the bottom the rope was drawn up, and after that, with A-Mat at my heels, I made for the palace steps.

As it turned out I need not, however, have asked for the key, for when I reached the door leading into the Fountain Courtyard I found it opened and Olivia standing within, with Natalie beside her, waiting to receive me.

'Instow? Oh thank God,' she cried, and threw herself into my arms. 'But where is Marie? Why is he not with you?'

'He will be here soon,' I answered, as I shook hands with the princess; for I was resolved on no account to tell her that the king had met with an accident, at least not until I was obliged. 'Now let me come in and prepare for what is before me. No one must see me until the proper moment.'

'No one will see you,' she said. 'But you must have food first. Natalie and I have prepared everything for you. We knew you would come as soon as you received my letter by the brave Padre.'

She led me as she spoke into her own boudoir. There I found a meal spread out upon the table. I ate what I could, and taking some more with me, hurried to the king's study, which overlooked the courtyard.

Ten minutes passed, and no sign came of the messenger Roche was expecting. The clock upon the wall chimed a quarter to one and still he did not put in an appearance. I began to grow anxious. Could anything have gone wrong with him, or had he arrived while I was in Olivia's boudoir?

Just as I was beginning to reproach myself for having delayed my coming to the room where I now was, I heard a thundering at the gate, and a moment or two later a horseman galloped under the arch and into the square. Passing the palace at full speed he drew up before General Roche's door and dismounted just as the latter came rushing forth to inquire what the matter was.

Five minutes later a bugle-call rang out, and before a man could have counted a hundred the soldiers were pouring from the barracks in all stages of undress.

When they had fallen in, Roche came from his quarters, and mounting the coping of the well in the centre, proceeded to address them. He told them that a despatch had just arrived from the front in which General Du Berg stated that the army had been beaten back with terrible loss, and that the king had met his death upon the field. A deep groan burst from the ranks at this dire intelligence, which speedily changed into a roar when the governor of the citadel informed them that they were to march at once against the foe in order to avenge him. He bade them return to their quarters in order to prepare themselves for the campaign. In a quarter of an hour they would leave the citadel.

This quarter of an hour's grace was a greater boon than I had anticipated, and I thanked God for it with all my heart and soul. By the time the bugle sounded again, I should have made my preparations, and would be ready for anything that might happen.

## THE DISTRICT MESSENGER SYSTEM OF LONDON.

### ITS PRACTICE AND ROMANCE.

In the *Times* of 29th January 1891 there appeared a notice of a new undertaking which had just been started in London, and which, owing to the novelty of its operations, was creating considerable interest among Londoners. This was the 'District Messenger System,' which the *Times* described thus: 'A very useful institution, and one which bids fair to become exceedingly popular in our midst, has recently been introduced into this country from the United States, where it has for some years past been flourishing.'

In spite of the dislike of the English people to new institutions and new systems; in spite of their professed objection to American innovations; in spite of all and every obstacle, it can now fairly be said that the 'District Messenger System' is firmly rooted on the rock, and grows daily in popular favour among all classes. With its seventeen offices scattered about the various districts of London, its thousands of miles of wire, its hundreds of messengers despatched daily on thousands of different errands, its careful and elaborate organisation, it stands as a monument of what energy and perseverance will do. On the other side of the Atlantic the system has been in operation for over twenty years, and has financially been most successful, paying large dividends. It has been said that this is a service which never sleeps. When once a subscriber's house has been attached to the district office, he is at once in electrical communication with it all the day long—all the night long—all Sunday—all the year round. The system never ceases to be at the instant beck and call of the subscribers, week-day or Sunday, bank-holiday or Christmas-day; it is all the same to the cheery little Mercury, in the blue and white uniform, with the glittering badge and springy step; he hastens to learn your bidding, and perform it. It may be to deliver a couple of pheasants in the adjoining street, or to start off at once for the north of Scotland; nothing surprises him—he starts off at once on his errand.

Let us glance briefly at the system as seen at work in one of the district offices, for possibly some who read this may be unaware of the existence of the institution, London hitherto having been the only city in Europe where it has been introduced. Let us conduct our visitor to the office in Piccadilly, with which are connected some nine hundred clubs, hotels, theatres, restaurants, private houses, and shops.

This office serves as a centre for about half a mile radius. To each office is allocated a chief superintendent with two assistants. The chief superintendent is of course responsible for the whole conduct of the office and its general management. These three superintendents work in three shifts of eight hours each. To this office are further attached some eighty messengers, all neatly uniformed, and each with a distinctive number. The most rigid discipline is observed, and a system of fines is in vogue; or as may be imagined, at a rather slack time when most of the boys happened to be in, riot and confusion would ensue.

From this office are sent out a number of circuits comprising about one hundred boxes each. If any person signifies his wish to become connected with the company's office, the company's workmen proceed to tap the main wire and introduce the branch into the customer's premises. This can be done in the most unobtrusive manner either back or front, and involves no structural alterations or disturbance. The wire is then connected with a small metal box, like a small clock. On the dial of this are the words Messenger, Cab, Police, Fire, Doctor, together with a revolving pointer, and a lever. According to your requirement you move the pointer and pull the little lever, and your message speeds on its way to the office. Arriving instantaneously at the office, it signifies its arrival by making a loud clicking noise and repeatedly sounding a bell. All this disturbance conveys nothing to the mind of the general public; but to the superintendent in charge of the office it announces the number of the customer who requires the services of a messenger. He accordingly reads out the number as the message, with many a click and much sounding of bells, unfolds itself. As he gives out the number, a senior messenger, or sergeant as he is called, goes to a little nest of drawers, each drawer being numbered, and pulling out the one with the number indicated, hands it to the superintendent, who, taking from it a slip of paper with the owner's name and address printed, writes on it the hour at which the call is received. Meanwhile a messenger has risen from his seat and is standing at the counter ready, and promptly becomes, instead of a 'blue boy within,' a 'blue boy without,' as he speeds along to learn the requirements of his temporary master.

In the meantime the sergeant has booked the messenger's number, the time of his departure, and the name of his employer. Upon his return will be also booked the time he returned, the time he was away, where he was sent to, any expenses he incurred, and what his duties were. Thus a complete check is always in force and can always be referred back to if desired. Should the police signal be given, a boy is instantly despatched for the nearest policeman, whom he takes with him to the house. In the event of the fire-signal coming in, two messengers are despatched with an extincteur, while a third alarms the fire-brigade. The messengers have been the means of extinguishing several small fires before the arrival of the brigade, which might easily have assumed much more serious dimensions. Quite recently, indeed, the newly established office in Park Street, Grosvenor Square, received two distinct fire-calls from Park Street within five minutes. In each case the fire was extinguished before the arrival of the engines which the boys had summoned.

In case of sudden illness in the dead of night, what a relief it is to be able to summon your own doctor without any one leaving the house! Otherwise there would be great delay. A servant would have to be aroused, would have to dress, and thus a precious quarter of an hour would be lost. On the 'doctor' call being given, a boy goes straight for him, brings him to the house and waits in case he has to go for medicine or any other purpose. On the night of Sir Edward Hamley's death the 'doctor' call was given, and within ten minutes of the call being received, the messenger was back in the office, having conducted the doctor to the patient's bedside; but alas! it was too late, the distinguished soldier had breathed his last.

There is one other very important function which the company performs. At large institutions it is usual to have a watchman by night; but who knows whether the watchman goes his rounds honestly and conscientiously every night? If he does not, it is clear that the building and its contents would be just as safe without him. Or again, it is possible for the best and most faithful of watchmen to be overpowered by drowsiness, or illness, or robbers. The difficulty is, then, to watch the watchman! This the company undertakes to do in the following simple manner. Call-boxes are placed in various parts of the building, say, four of them. Every hour or half-hour a watchman goes the round and signifies to the office that all is well at each point. Should the call not come in at the appointed hour, a messenger is despatched to see what is the matter. Or should the watchman find anything wrong, he can summon aid by switching on the police or fire signal. Where this service has been introduced, it has been the habit to send in to the owner in the morning a paper in which is recorded the exact time at which the watchman went his rounds.

Having thus treated of the practice of the District Messenger Company, let us glance at its more amusing and even romantic side.

To narrate all the different uses to which messengers are put would be a very long and tedious task, but some are I think sufficiently peculiar to be of interest. Upon one occasion a man presented himself at one of the offices with a smart young lady of some seventeen summers. 'Can you help me out of a difficulty,' said he to the superintendent. 'I have to go shopping, and I can't take my daughter all over the place with me, nor have I time to take her back myself. Can you let me have a trustworthy youth to take her back to her school at Highgate?' 'Certainly, sir!' said the superintendent; and after thinking a moment, called out 'No. 352.' No. 352 came forward looking rather shy and uncomfortable, and developing a little extra colour as he did so. But the end of it was that No. 352 and the young lady got on the top of a bus, and

were seen to start off for Highgate chatting away most amicably together.

At the same office a few days later a gentleman presented himself with three small children. He also wanted to get rid of his encumbrances while he went shopping. The children had a decided penchant for Olympia, but he could not take them. The result was that a trustworthy youth was despatched with the children, and they, messenger and all, did 'Venice in London' thoroughly, and enjoyed themselves hugely, untrammelled as they were by any parental restraint.

One day the Charing Cross office was honoured by the presence of royalty. Quietly and unpretentiously there came in His Majesty the King of the Keeling Islands. I am informed after exhaustive inquiry that His Majesty's dominions comprise several coral atolls, far out in the Indian Ocean and midway between Calcutta and Melbourne. Being on a friendly visit to his sister sovereign, Queen Victoria, he naturally inspected the District Messenger System, no doubt with a view to introducing it in his own country. So gratified was His Majesty at what he saw, that he was graciously pleased to issue his royal commands that a messenger should go into the City of London and purchase thirty shillings' worth of penny and twopenny toys for distribution among his subjects on his return to the Keeling Islands. His instructions were faithfully carried out, a messenger being occupied for two days in the streets and toyshops making a careful selection.

Long-distance journeys are constantly taken at the shortest notice. On one occasion one of our most eminent statesmen sent a boy up to the north of Scotland with some important papers. Upon another, one of the most trustworthy lads in the service was despatched to Brighton with a large sum of money in notes. Journeys have on several occasions been taken to Manchester and Liverpool, and to Sheffield, Clitheroe, Grantham, Leicester, Chester, Winchester, Southampton, Eastbourne, and Birmingham, and even to Antwerp. Some of their daily duties are as follows: Taking a blind gentleman out walking, taking dogs out, acting as footmen on cabs, &c., taking children to school, conveying luncheon to races, waiting at table, general domestic service, shopping at the stores, meeting people at railway stations, leaving cards, and in short for every conceivable purpose, including that of fielding lawn-tennis balls, for which purpose H.R.H. the Duke of Saxe-Coburg has employed them.

At the Victoria Street office one evening an officer in the Guards came hurriedly in inquiring whether he could have a boy to go down to Pirbright with a pony, and to act as a groom for a month. A suitable lad was found, immediately went off, and gave great satisfaction.

One of those ladies who haunt the Law Courts also invariably employs a lad from the Chancery Lane office. He has to act generally as her aide-de-camp. He follows her about the courts all day, carries her bag, and takes notes for her in court.

One instance must be given of the care with which the call-boxes must be treated, or disastrous results may ensue. In the early days of the company's operations a certain M.P. was very desirous of having a call-box installed in his house. Accordingly the wiremen came one morning and set to work. The member of that august assembly was very anxious to have it installed that day if possible, as he was entertaining some friends to dinner and was very desirous of showing it to them. The foreman promised to do what he could. He said that anyhow he would fit up the call-box, but he was afraid it would scarcely be possible to attach it to the office that day. Accordingly after dinner, when the harassed legislator and his friends were all on excellent terms with themselves, they were conducted by their host to see this scientific novelty in the hall. He, carefully explaining to them first that it was because it was unconnected that he could show them the working of all the signals, proceeded to turn the pointer on to 'Messenger,' and then pulled the small lever. A clock-work buzzing resulted. 'There!' said the triumphant member, 'that would bring me a messenger in five minutes, if it was connected, and now see, "Cab."' The same operation was repeated with the 'Police' and 'Fire' signals to the delight of the audience, who were really interested. 'Most ingenious contrivance,' said one. 'Lucky it's not connected,' said another. The words were scarcely out of his mouth before there was a thundering knock at the front door and a loud peal at the bell. Before the door was opened a loud clattering was heard outside, and the genial features of the host began to wear an anxious look. This considerably increased when the door was opened and disclosed two messengers and a hansom. But this was only the first instalment. Another minute, and the hurried pattering of footsteps was heard as two more boys arrived breathless with the extincteur, and were immediately followed by a policeman. And then last, but anything but least, arrived the fire-engine, throbbing and smoking as it galloped up to the door. Needless to say, all the guests were delighted at this unexpected practical proof of the efficiency of the new invention, and were profuse in their thanks to their host, whom they left in a very limp condition, after his efforts to explain matters in succession to the messengers, cabmen, police, and firemen, who all seemed to be rather sore about it.

Quite recently a departure, in several respects entirely new, has been made by the company. In America it has long been the practice of the Messenger Companies to take orders for fuel. The London Company now does the same, and has also undertaken agencies for Pickford & Company, for Pitt & Scott the continental carriers, and for several other institutions. Two of these are of sufficient importance to the general public to deserve a separate mention.

If you require one of the Coupé Company's neat carriages, you can now obtain one almost immediately by means of a District Messenger boy. It is not only infinitely easier, and in every way a more satisfactory way of transmitting a Coupé order, but it has the additional

merit of costing nothing. The other great feature to which allusion has been made is the agency for the sale of theatre tickets. There surely never was any institution better adapted for this purpose than the Messenger Company, with its numerous branches, its extensive telephone system, and its large number of subscribers.

There is one other feature the directors contemplate shortly introducing with the idea of doing away with the nuisance of the irrepressible cab runner. It has often been suggested that a luggage porter at each office would be a great addition to the district. A trustworthy man would then be always secured by the timorous householder, instead of the wild, uncouth roughs that accompany your luggage into your front hall, demanding as a right that they should carry it.

Looking at the Messenger Service from the purely philanthropic point of view, undoubtedly a very good work is done. Boys are taken on just when they are leaving school and at once brought under the healthy influence of a firm but kindly discipline. They are taught to be clean and smart, punctual and accurate, to be well-mannered, and above all learn the invaluable lesson of implicit obedience. By remaining three or four years in the company's service, their employers acquire a perfect knowledge of their character, and so are able to give them a thoroughly good recommendation on leaving to better themselves. Indeed messengers have exceptional opportunities of getting into good positions, and the experience they gain of all the ways of the world during their term of service as messengers will surely not be lost upon them. In one way the system is very difficult to work smoothly. Of course the interests of the company require that an ample staff of messengers should be maintained in order that a prompt and reliable service should be afforded. But at the same time it is evident that the size of the staff must not exceed the demand for its services. Now after looking into things most closely from every point of view, and after comparing one year with another, and one event with another, it seems quite impossible to tell beforehand when a day is likely to be a busy one. As a rule, a very windy wet day is a very busy one; but not invariably. Sometimes a race meeting near London will cause a rush on the company's resources, but not always. Sometimes an office will suddenly become very busy in the mornings for a week together. Steps will at once be taken to meet the unusual demand, when all at once that office will become very slack for a week or so. Then without any warning it will get very busy in the evenings, and subside again as suddenly. The vagaries of the public in this respect are very curious and puzzling. It very much resembles the unceasing activity of the sea, constantly rising and falling in its anxious restlessness. One moment the ocean is smooth as glass, without a ripple on its unruffled bosom; in another, the tempestuous waters are tossing angrily their white-crested manes. So it is with the Messenger Service. Twenty minutes may pass and not a soul require a messenger, even in that busy and wealthy district of Piccadilly. Then all of a moment the office leaps into sudden activity. It has occurred to a dozen or so of different persons that they want something done. So they flash their signals into the office, it may be at the rate of two or three a minute. In half an hour those messengers will be scattered all over London and possibly the suburbs too. Their knowledge of local geography must be something portentous. The company shows a thoroughly up-to-date appreciation of the requirements of the public, especially in their latest new feature of providing luggage porters, strong, respectable men, the pick of old soldiers, sailors, and police.

## THE HEDGLEY-HASKINS LAWSUIT.

### CHAPTER III.

Sunday was literally a day of rest in Plunkett Settlement, if we except one sceptical person who would persist in mending fences or doing other such things on that day, and who was unanimously regarded as a much misguided man, who would one day see the error of his ways to his own intense if not everlasting regret. It was a day of rest from toil. No shriek of distant train or roar of traffic woke the echoes of the Sabbath hills. The streams murmured, the birds sang, the leaves made music when the wind swept them; but the sound of Nature's voices only emphasised the general silence. A great deal of visiting was done on that day; so much, indeed, that one clergyman had levelled more than one vigorous sermon against it as an insidious and dangerous enemy of the human soul. The enemy, however, had not been routed.

There was the usual amount of visiting on the Sunday succeeding the events already narrated, and much speculation was indulged in regarding the effect of the Hedgley-Haskins embroglio upon the relations between the plaintiff's pretty daughter, May Hedgley, and the defendant's son, Ben Haskins; for one local authority of high repute in such matters had openly expressed the conviction that Ben was 'just half cracked about May—so he was.'

The settlement was favoured with a preaching service in the meeting-house every Sunday night. It was a 'union' meeting-house, for some of the people were Methodists and some were Baptists, and in view of the limited exchequer of the settlement they had joined their forces in the erection of a place of worship. On alternate Sundays the preachers of the two denominations conducted service, both to the same audience, for everybody attended every meeting. It was too great an event in the programme of life in the settlement to be ignored, even by the sceptical person already referred to who frequently occupied a seat on the rear benches, and thus, in the general opinion, forfeited all excuse for his continued contumacy.

The service was unusually well attended on the evening under consideration. It was a fine sight to see Mr Haskins rise in his place, for there was

no organ, and 'set' the hymn-tunes; and, a little later, to see Mr Hedgley pass the contribution-box down one side of the house, not omitting even to poke it under the nose of Mr Haskins, and graciously receive that gentleman's thankoffering. The preacher acquitted himself with ability and vigour, in pressing home to the hearts of his hearers the blessedness of unity among the brethren, and altogether the service was of an eminently gratifying character. If now and then eyes wandered to the demure face and figure of sweet May Hedgley, sitting well up to the front with some other girls, and then wandered back to the stalwart form of Ben Haskins, the scrutiny was not rewarded by any startling discovery; for innocence in the one case and studied carelessness in the other was the prevailing expression. When the service had concluded, there was a general round of hand-shaking and sympathetically mutual inquiries concerning health, followed by a very gradual melting away in the autumn moonlight. Mr Hedgley and Mr Haskins wore high serenity on their brows, but it was noticed they did not shake hands.

May Haskins and a girl companion went out together, and set off down the road. The companion, however, speedily, and it is fair to say, not at all reluctantly, found herself leaning on the arm of a young man. May, therefore, fell back and walked alone. Not long, however. A strong footstep crunched the gravel behind her, and the shadow of a sturdy form loomed up in the moonlight beside her own.

'Good-evening.'

'Good-evening.'

A pause, during which the two shadows progressed evenly along the road.

'Fine night.'

'I think it's beautiful.'

'Good meetin' to-night.'

'Yes, it was—splendid, I thought. Great many there to-night.'

'There was so—quite a crowd.'

The most readily available topics being thus exhausted, silence ensued for a little time.

'You're very quiet to-night, May.' This at last confidentially.

'Am I?' also confidentially.

'You are so.'

'I think you are, too.'

'Well, I don't want to be.'

But silence fell once more, despite this frank avowal, for Ben was smitten with a bashfulness altogether out of harmony with his appearance, and his companion was not a whit more confident. But there had to be a break sooner or later.

'Will you take my arm?'

It was a bold question, Ben thought, but he was rewarded by feeling at once within his arm the faint pressure of a shy little hand. The atmosphere was clearer at once, and though they walked some distance farther in perfect silence, it was by no means oppressive.

The reader should understand that these two interesting young persons had not been in the habit of taking moonlit walks together. They had been schoolmates in childhood and friends since, and had met innumerable times, as was inevitable in so circumscribed a field of action as Plunkett Settlement afforded to the young and lively members of the community. But the shadow of the Hedgley-Haskins land dispute had hovered always in their vicinity with a greater or less density, and the two families were never quite sure when another eruption might occur. Therefore, the amount of mutual visiting indulged in by the members of the two families had not been such as to cause a suspicion that they lived for each other. Ben Haskins could count on his fingers the number of times he had visited the Hedgley farmhouse within the last five years. But he had had ample opportunity to cultivate the acquaintance of May Hedgley, as far as mutual reserve would permit, and of late had even hailed the advent of such opportunities. The maiden could not well be oblivious of the fact, and that she did not repel the timorous advances might be construed as evidence of a mutual feeling. But she might have been actuated by motives quite the opposite, and Ben knew enough of woman's nature in the abstract to understand that it is not always prudent to trust appearances. On this particular Sunday evening he was more than ordinarily dubious as to the state of mind of his companion.

'I wasn't quite sure,' he said to her at length, 'whether you'd speak to me to-night or not.'

'Why?'

'Oh, the old folks have had such a row, and people's had so much to say, that I thought maybe you'd ruther I'd stay away.'

'It isn't your fault is it, Ben, that father and your father's goin' to law?' May said in answer.

'No, it is not. I tried to reason with our old man, but it's no use.'

'I don't blame you, Ben,' the girl said; and then went on with a little weary sigh, 'it's too bad. We've been neighbours all our lives—and now to think there's gon to be a lawsuit. I had a good cry over it.'

Ben gave a sudden pressure to the hand within his arm, and echoed her words with unmistakable feeling: 'It is too bad.'

They had been walking very slowly, and many of the people going that way had passed them by, staring eagerly at the two to be sure of their identity, and so have a fruitful source of spicy comment to mingle with general criticism of the meeting. Ben returned the stare in every case with resentful interest, well knowing the motive by which it was prompted. They had now reached what was called the 'cross roads,' from which one road deviated and led away from the settlement. But a short distance along it a bridge spanned the narrow, elm-bordered stream that watered the valley. By tacit consent they turned aside and walked to the bridge.

'Shall we stop here?' Ben asked, when they had reached the middle of the bridge.

She turned with him, and they leaned together over the rail to look down upon the water, dark in the shadow, but showing a track of gleaming silver where the moonbeams fell, and sparkling scintillations where the stars embosomed themselves on the smooth surface. The evening was rarely beautiful. A faint breeze stirred the leafy elms to music, that joined in soothing and delightful harmony the murmurs of the stream. The autumn landscape, bathed in moonlit softness, was a dream of tender loveliness, every harsh outline melting into beauty in the subduing light.

'Isn't it beautiful?'

The girl spoke the words with a little sigh of rapture as her gaze dwelt upon the scene before them. Perhaps they were uncultivated, these two. May Hedgley had not been more than fifty miles from home during her nineteen years of life. Her companion had gone to the market of the nearest city on several occasions, and had seen something of life in the adjoining settlements; but neither of them had spent many years at school, and both were most familiar with the daily round of farmer life. Such intellectual culture as they had came from membership in a temperance society—for a number of these had risen, flourished, and passed away in Plunkett Settlement in the last ten years—and from the reading of the weekly paper, and a few books they had enjoyed; but, measured by critical standards, this would not entitle them to much distinction. Yet even the uncultivated eye and heart at the romantic age have some intuitive conception and appreciation of that beauty around us which those feel who are most cultured, but of which even the most cultured find it difficult to give an abstract definition. So these two felt the indefinable 'spell of the place and the hour,' and though Ben's answer, 'It's a glorious night,' to her fervent ejaculation was commonplace enough, there was behind the expression a depth of earnest feeling. An added charm was given to the effect of certain unexpressed, and perhaps only partially defined, longings in the heart of each. They stood for a little in silence that was as natural as the previous exclamations had been.

Presently Ben spoke.

'I'm glad, May, that the row between the old folks hasn't made hard feelin's between you and me.'

'So am I,' she answered, in a low tone.

'Did you notice how people looked at us to-night?' he asked.

'Oh yes; I expected that.'

'And did you care?'

'No. Why should I? It's none of their business.'

'They make it their business,' said Ben, with a tinge of bitterness.

'They must talk about somebody,' May rejoined. 'While they're at us they're givin' somebody else a rest.'

She was looking down at the moon's reflection in the stream, her face turned a little from him. Ben looked at her, and as he looked a deep longing filled the heart of the great, awkward fellow, and a sudden resolution nerved him to speak his thought. It came to him with sudden and overwhelming force that in all the world there was nothing else so dear to him as this girl who was willing to brave the sting of gossip tongues and walk at his side, even though the shadow of a quarrel hovered over their homes. He spoke her name so sharply that she started and looked up in wonder.

'May,' he said, his deep voice a little unsteady, 'I have something I want to say to you. I hardly know how to speak to you—but I must speak to-night.'

He paused, and the girl looked up at him, wondering still.

'I know I'm only a rough chap,' he went on. 'I can't brag about my good looks or good manners.'

'Did I ever find fault with your looks or your manners, Ben?'

'No, you're too good-hearted to do that. That's why I took to you more than to other girls. You never hurt a fellow's feelin's. I liked you more the better we got acquainted—that is, since we both growed up—and now I care so much for you that I've got to see you more, or not at all. Do you understand me, May?'

It was not very dramatic, and Ben felt far from heroic; but his meaning was clear enough. His companion's wondering look had changed and her eyes fell, but she answered in a low tone:

'Yes—I understand.'

'You are not offended?' he anxiously asked her.

She looked up, a happy light shining in her dusky eyes, and met his gaze fearlessly.

'No, Ben; how could I be?'

He was answered. Without another word he leaned forward and took her in his arms. Had any of the worthy people of Plunkett Settlement witnessed that proceeding, there would have been a great deal more spice in the gossip of the period.

'I was afraid,' Ben said at length, 'that you didn't care for me very much. I wish I could tell you how happy I am.'

'Not happier than I am, Ben.'

In lieu of further remark he lowered his head and kissed her over and over again.

Lovers, as a rule, do not care to have their first mutual confidences reported at length. It is enough to observe just here that a novel and striking complication in connection with the Hedgley-Haskins embroglio had its origin on this particular Sunday evening.

## CONCERNING VAMPIRES.

Rather more than one hundred and fifty years ago there dwelt at Gandersheim, a small town in the Duchy of Brunswick, one Johann Christoph Harenberg, a pious and deeply-learned German pastor, Rector of the Foundation School at the town just named, whose heart was vexed, and his conscience grieved, at the prevalence of superstition among his people. Superstition of any kind was abhorrent to the pastor, who saw even in the ordinary tales of gnomes and fairies, such as are told around the Christmas hearth, things repugnant to God and perilous to the soul. But it was not against these idle fables that the effort of his life was directed. He chose a darker superstition, and smote Satan in a more vital place. He would not spend his strength in arguing against the follies of children while there spread and flourished among his people a belief which menaced perpetually the safety of human life, and after life enchained the soul to a course of evil deeds here on the earth; and therefore, girding himself for a great intellectual effort, Harenberg boldly attacked the prevalent belief in vampires.

In Britain the vampire superstition seems never to have been prevalent—though the burial of suicides at cross-roads with a stake thrust

through them, usual in England till well into this century, closely resembles the precaution used in Slavonic lands for inducing vampires to cease from troubling; accordingly to a native of these islands it may appear that in bringing all his ponderous engines of learning to bear on such a subject, his profound knowledge of Greek and Latin literature, his familiarity with Hebrew, and his exhaustive acquaintance with the theological treatises of all Europe, the good pastor was tilting against a windmill, attacking an illusion which might very well have been let alone. Indeed, there are probably many people to be found who, so far from comprehending the reality of the mischief which Harenberg saw at work among his flock, do not even understand its nature, and are acquainted with no vampires, save those large bats which have a reputation in South America for biting the toes of unwary persons who lie uncovered in their beds. There must always be a certain interest in the false beliefs which have possessed the minds of men; and before beginning to speak of Harenberg's book, which is now somewhat rare, it may be explained that a vampire was a person, man or woman, who, after death, or after that which seemed to be death, returned to the scene of his or her past life, and sucked the blood of living people. This was bad enough; but the worst part of the matter was, that innocent people slain in this way became vampires themselves, and so the evil spread in an ever-widening circle.

Such was the belief which Harenberg set himself to combat; being instigated thereto, not only by the pious nature of the work, but also, as he himself explained, by the wishes of 'an exalted person,' to whom he dedicates his book, in terms of mingled worldly respect and spiritual blessing, which make us feel as if we knew and loved the man. Thus fortified with the protection of the great, which he doubtless considered indispensable to him, and which, perhaps, was so indeed, Harenberg began to accumulate materials for his task.

His first proceeding seems to have been to stock his parsonage with every work he could find which touched, directly or indirectly, on vampires. To these he added an extraordinary number of treatises on necromancy, witchcraft, and the cabalistic art. He provided himself with Reuchlin's *De Arte Cabbalistica* and the *Dialogus de Operationibus Dæmonum* of Michael Psellus. Meyenberg, *On the Depths of Satan*, stood on his shelves, side by side with the Dissertation of Theodore Kirchmeier *On Men apparently Dead;* while the great and learned composition of Gottlieb Wernsdorf *Concerning the Condition of Souls parted from the Flesh, and their Dealings with the Living*, naturally occupied a place of honour. Hoffman's work on *The Power of the Devil over Human Bodies* was, of course, indispensable; while on the collection of tales formed by Harsdorfer under the attractive title, *Mournful Tales of Murder*, the pastor relied for many precious facts. These, with Paracelsus, and a host more names of greater or of less repute among those whose thoughts dwell in darkness, adorned the pastor's study; and there the good man sat day after day—for the work must have occupied many months, if not even years—plunged in the constant contemplation of the most gruesome and terrific amongst the imaginings of man.

If ever ghosts or wandering spirits revisited the glimpses of the moon, one might suppose that the rectory at Gandersheim was full of them. The little study, where sat the patient student, straining, with all his intense German application, and his eager longing to know, after a clear view of the truth or falsity of the evil influences said to proceed from the next world, might surely have been a meeting-place of spirits. Doubtless, the peasants, returning late at night to Gandersheim, trembled and hurried on when they saw across the fields the light gleaming from the window where their pastor sat wrestling with Satan. One cannot doubt that Harenberg himself had his moments of terror and of shaken faith, as he read and pondered the wild and terrible stories which he either relates or refers to in his pages; but of such waverings of spirit there is no trace whatever in his work. One clear thread runs through it all; a firm and steady faith in the universal rule of goodness and of reason shines out of every paragraph. Truth it is which the pastor seeks, and not once does he bow the knee to superstition.

But now let us see what these tales were which so disturbed the excellent man and impelled him to deal this lusty blow at Satan. From the borders of Turkey they chiefly emanated. Servia is particularly named as a hotbed of such beliefs, numbers of which were vouched for on excellent authority. The following story, for example, is told by Erasmus Franciscus, who annotated Valvasor's standard work, describing the Archduchy of Krain or Carniola—the reference is to the third volume, book eleven, of that valuable treatise.

In the year 1672 there dwelt in the market-town of Kring, in the said Archduchy, one George Grando, who, in the ordinary course of nature, fell sick, died, and was buried with the usual rites of the Christian church. These rites were solemnised by one Father George, a monk of St Paul; but so little did they avail to give rest to Grando's spirit, that the monk, with the other mourners, had hardly returned to the widow's house, intending to give her consolation, when they saw Grando himself sitting behind the door. It was clearly futile to console anybody for the loss of one who was not gone after all; and arguing thus, all the mourners tumbled over each other out of the house, leaving husband and wife to settle the matter together. Even the monk fled as quickly as the rest.

As it proved in the event, he would have done better to remain and grapple with the difficulty at the outset. For, ere long, strange stories began to fly round Kring, of a dark figure seen to go about the streets by night, stopping now and then to tap at the door of some house, but always passing on without waiting for an answer. In a little while people began to die mysteriously in Kring; and it was noticed that the deaths occurred in the houses at which the spectral figure had tapped its signal. Some said the spectre was that of Grando; and, at the same time, the widow complained that she was tormented by the spirit

of her husband, who night after night threw her into a deep sleep, doubtless with the wicked object of sucking blood, as all vampires did, while she lay in slumber. All these tales and rumours gathered force so quickly that, at the end of a fortnight, the 'supan,' or chief-magistrate of Kring, could no longer disregard them, but felt himself under the necessity of taking the usual steps to ascertain whether it was indeed the case that Grando was a vampire.

It was a nervous business, but the supan summoned those whom he thought the most stout-hearted of his neighbours; and, having fortified them in advance with a judicious allowance of strong cordial, laid the matter open to them. Grando, he said, had already been gnawing several people in Kring, and it was high time to stop his antics. The brave fellows professed loudly that they were not afraid of 'the restless night-walker,' and they sallied off, provided with two torches and a crucifix.

Perhaps it was a little foolhardy to undertake this task at night; for the wavering light of torches has ere now upset the nerves of many men who are brave enough in the cheerful sunlight. We need not, therefore, be unduly contemptuous of these stout ghost-catchers of Kring when we find it recorded that, on opening the grave, and seeing Grando's body untouched by decay, the mouth open with a pleasant smile, and a rosy flush upon its cheeks, the whole party were seized with terror, and fled in ignominious rout back to Kring. This cowardly retreat of nine living men, before one who was not even certainly dead, annoyed the supan, who had remained behind, occupied, doubtless, with more important affairs. He rated them soundly, and tried to restore their courage with more cordial; but to no effect. Not a man would budge unless he would go back with them to the grave. Even a vampire must certainly respect the supan the men argued; but the supan himself was not quite sure, and thought it prudent to have a priest in the party. A priest was accordingly brought—not the Father George who had already been concerned in this affair, but one of tougher fibre—and the party carried with them also a heavy stake of hawthorn wood, sharpened to a point, which was generally esteemed a sovereign specific in the case of vampires.

At the grave all was as the fugitives had left it. Grando lay smiling on them, with the high flush on his cheeks, like a man just awaking from a refreshing slumber; but there was one of the party now who did not fear him. The priest knelt down solemnly, and held his crucifix aloft. 'Oh, vampire, look on this!' he said. 'Here is Christ Jesus who loosed us from the pains of hell, and died for us upon the tree!' And he went on to conjure the restless spirit in the most compassionate and moving terms, on which a wonderful thing happened. Great tears formed under the vampire's eyelids, and rolled slowly down his cheeks—a sign of human weakness, which gave courage to those standing by. The hawthorn stake was brought forward; but, as often as they strove to drive it through the body, the sharpened wood rebounded; and it was not until one, bolder than the rest, sprang into the grave and cut off the vampire's head, that the evil spirit departed, with a loud shriek and a contortion of the limbs, which proved too well what it was that had found a dwelling-place in the dust and ashes which were once a man.

Such was a typical vampire story, differing in no material point from fifty others which were perpetually circulating from the borders of Hungary to the Baltic. One may imagine how the ignorant peasant folk terrified themselves with these tales, passing them from mouth to mouth with added touches, which heightened their effect, until, on infirm minds, a sensation was produced which the pastor, the natural counsellor of his flock, might well have thought worth his utmost efforts to allay.

With quaint and curious learning Harenberg traces the development of the vampire superstition from the heathen sacrifices of living animals, offered to satisfy the thirst of invisible spirits for blood, through the fancies of the Platonists, and the dreams of the learned Jew, Isaac Abarbanel, who maintained that, before the soul can be loosed from the fetters of its flesh, it must lie some months with it in the grave, down to the doctrine, adopted rather than imagined, of the Greek Church, which taught that persons who died under its ban could not be resolved into the elements again until the curse was taken off, but lay untouched by decay, while their spirits wandered up and down the earth, tapping at house doors as Grando did, with the same fatal consequences. To serve its own ends, the church scattered this doctrine to the winds, which spread it like thistledown, laying up countless difficulties for teachers of a higher morality in the future. But even greater than the responsibility of the monks, Harenberg declares, is that of the so-called men of science, Thales, Saracenus, Boehmen, and many another, who, being cursed with intellectual laziness, introduced a spirit whenever they encountered a difficulty. 'Not, however, that I wish to deny,' he remarks, 'that the lore of spirits, when better cultivated, may give right valuable help to a Christian man; but many things are to be done before that can happen. Safe experiences, sound conclusions, and a well-grounded consideration of the most difficult places in the book of God—these are the elements, and all the "windmill spirits" and soft-blowing airs of fancy must first be swept away.'

'Safe experiences, sound conclusions'—wise and weighty words, good pastor! But when shall the world behold a controversialist who, while exposing the weakness of his adversary's buttresses, casts an equally careful eye upon his own?

'Let us grant,' cries Harenberg, 'that the flush of life was really on Grando's body many days after his death and burial. Still, there would be no miracle in that if the man were alive all the time! Look at the *Chronica Slavica*—by an unknown author, it is true, but not on that account to be distrusted—where you will find that a school-boy of Lübeck, in the year 1367, slept for seven years at a stretch, after which he woke up perfectly well!' If this fact be thought too venerable to use in an argument,

take the Swedish gardener—no authority is quoted for this story—who, going to pull a neighbour out of the water, tumbled in himself. The water was ice cold, and the gardener lay in it for sixteen hours, at the end of which time he was taken out stiff and to all appearance dead; but, being carefully toasted before a gentle fire, with abundance of blankets, came round quite nicely, and may be living still. And, as we cannot all expect to have the constitution of a Swedish gardener, listen again to the wonderful story of a woman who, travelling somewhere with her baby, a child seven weeks old, fell into a pond, and lay under water for no less than three days! You will say both mother and child must have been dead! But no! judicious treatment brought them both round, and they were none the worse; though both these stories, Harenberg admits, have caused great searchings of heart among the learned. Moreover, it is well known that swallows sleep all the winter through, and guard themselves from being waked up too soon, either by burrowing down under the earth or by sinking themselves deep in streams or lakes, where nobody can disturb them.

With such a hail of indubitable facts, the learned Harenberg bombards us into admitting that animation may sometimes be suspended; and that, if the supan of Kring had laid aside his hawthorn stake, his knife, his crucifix, and resorted to the gentler method of chafing Grando's extremities, and toasting him before a comfortable fire, much more satisfactory results might have been obtained. Hereby, of course, a hole is knocked in the vampire superstition, which, if not as deep as a well, or as wide as a church door, is, in Harenberg's opinion, quite enough to let its life out. But, as the pastor was nothing if not an honest controversialist, he has no sooner achieved this signal success than he gathers up his forces to complete it by demolishing the stories of the living people, who claimed to have seen the vampire, or to have been bitten by him.

It would be very tedious to follow the pastor through all the interminable branches of his argument. For, though starting majestically like a river at the flood, it must be admitted that its current soon gets choked among sandbanks of learning, and meanders on through dismal wastes, where one stumbles perpetually over authorities quoted from the most recondite sources. Diodorus Siculus, Sextus Empiricus, Censorinus, Julius Cæsar Bengerus, Thomas Stanleius (one is refreshed to find an English albeit Latinised name), Mauratinus, Conrad Dippel, Epiphanius, Iamblichus—one should be a German pastor to enjoy them. But at the end of all this cavernous reasoning a gleam of light emerges. These tales of such people who believe that vampires have been plaguing them, what are they then? 'Mere illusions!' shouts the pastor triumphantly. 'Nothing in the world but the workings of a diseased imagination.' Really, one is so pleased with the conclusion that one forgets to ask whether the good man might not have reached it by an easier road.

Having thus established himself securely on the hill of wisdom, Harenberg proceeds, in a few concluding chapters, to cast a pitying glance round upon the follies of his neighbours, touching lightly upon witches, Brocken-spectres, werewolves, and other grisly superstitions which were widely held among the people. Witches, he declares, are much to be pitied, there being excellent reason to suppose that all their stories of having sailed up to the Brocken on a broomstick, with a large cat perched in front, and of having done various outrageous and wicked things there, are just dreams mistaken for reality. 'Proof!' chirps the pastor; 'there is excellent proof.' Some years ago a young witch in Mecklenburg gave herself up to the authorities, being quite unable to bear any longer the recollection of the awful crimes she had committed on the Brocken, and driven by an irresistible impulse to confess them. Luckily for her, the authorities were sensible men; and, instead of setting up a stake at once and scattering her ashes to the four winds of heaven, they were minded to watch her, and see whether she really went to the Brocken. Accordingly, they locked her up, with all the charms and unguents which she declared to be necessary, and had the satisfaction of seeing that, after she had smeared her temples and the soles of her feet with an ointment of opium, she did nothing more desperately wicked than to fall into a heavy sleep. This was no hanging matter in Mecklenburg, even though the foolish woman woke up in the firm belief that she had sailed through the skies as before. The prosaic magistrates believed their eyes, and let her go.

Again, the same method is good towards werewolves, those terrific beings, human creatures with wolves' form and temper, who, by their mingled nature, create far more terror than the fiercest wolf or the most savage man. 'What shall I say of werewolves?' asks the pastor, evidently at a loss for a moment. But he quickly recollects how certain peasants once caught one, and brought him before Duke Albert of Prussia. The accusation of being a werewolf was supported by the fellow himself, who admitted that twice every year, at Christmas and at midsummer, he was turned into a wolf, and possessed with a lust for tearing men and animals to pieces. 'Shut him up over Christmas,' said the duke, 'and let us see this werewolf change.' But when Christmas had come and gone, the man was a man still, though possessed by a mania which made him fancy himself a wolf.

Strange what the fancy will do! Harenberg muses. There was a man in Harzburg, a capital fellow, a good Christian soul, but possessed with the notion that on Ascension Day anybody who tried could ascend to heaven. He tried it once himself, mounted up into a cherry-tree, spread out his arms boldly, as if they had been wings, and leaped into the air. Alas! he went down instead of up, bruising himself sorely upon the ground.

With such pleasing anecdotes, the pastor adorns his moral, and, at the same time, drives it home. But, perhaps, enough has been detailed of these reasonable and Christian reflections, as their author styled them; for it is unfortunately true that they would be more amusing if they were less reasonable. The world—it is a de-

plorable fact—does not love reason; it loves lies. Had Harenberg been a liar, he might have been a more popular and more widely-read author. He was too conscientious; and one may doubt whether his contemporaries were at all pleased with him for stripping so many of their favourite illusions of every rag of decent covering. Perhaps these considerations may serve to deter any pastor of our own days who may be impelled to slaughter some superstition—if any there be in this dull age—to refrain from being so very truthful and rational in his argument, and to try to pick up, as he goes along, some of that 'atmosphere' which is the only thing that can make a book attractive to the general reader.

## HOW THE KROOMEN TOOK THE GUNBOAT.

By the Author of *Rising of the Brass Men.*

Between the British colonies of Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast in West Africa lies a region of palm and cottonwood forest and muddy river, stretching away from the shores of the blue Atlantic towards the little-known Soudan; where, along some five or six hundred miles of surf-fringed beach, the woolly-haired Kroomen dwelt for centuries in comparative peace.

Now, as a rule, the West African native will do little manual work; he fishes, hunts, and is proficient at any kind of 'trade,' and should these fail him, the fertility of the soil is such, that a minimum of labour expended in planting bananas, maize, or cassava will provide sufficient food.

The Kroo country, however, is a hard one, where food is scarce; so the inhabitants have frequently to go forth in search of sustenance, and on three thousand miles of coast from the Senegal to the Congo, wherever there are steamers to load or oil-casks to roll down, the easy-going, laughing Krooboy is to be found.

It happened that about seventy years ago various philanthropists and others in the United States sent back a number of freed and partly educated slaves to form a colony in the Kroo country, which they did, and in due time the colony developed into a republic (Liberia). Then the latter proceeded to make laws, which it required the Kroomen to comply with, and erected custom-houses, and levied heavy duties on their trade. The Kroomen, however, accustomed from time immemorial to do what seemed right in their own eyes, and to trade when and where they pleased, objected strongly to pay so much on every case of gin or 'piece of cloth' they brought in, or so many dollars a head each time they sailed away in search of work. So, after a desultory skirmish from time to time, and the burning of a custom-house or two, they finally decided to disregard the Republic altogether.

Accordingly, up to the present day, they board the steamers by night from lonely beaches swept by the heavy Atlantic surf and import their 'trade' duty free, without the aid of the customs. Also, when food is scarce, they steal out in their two-feet-wide canoes to intercept the vessels by river mouths, hidden amid the desolate mangrove swamps, or occasionally even swim off in scores, so as to get away in search of work 'down the coast;' for the Krooboy is more at home by water than land, and there is no surf in Africa big enough to drown him.

From too much 'free trade,' the Republican treasury suffers occasionally—to such an extent that a Gold Coast colonial surgeon who once cured several leading senators, and received a fifty-dollar draft on the Government, was, when he presented it, asked to wait a little, as there were then only five dollars in the exchequer.

However, when there is plenty to eat, the Krooboy stays at home, and by way of recreation organises a desultory war against the neighbouring tribes and the Republicans. Then he burns an outlying station or two, or crawling by night through the bush, fires a handful of broken pottery into some of the gaudily uniformed soldiers who are sent in pursuit of him, 'to maintain the supremacy of a civilised nation over a barbarous race,' as the coloured editors say in Monrovia.

Some few years ago it was decided that to 'assert its supremacy' in a becoming manner, the Republic needed a navy; but it is difficult to purchase a navy, or even one torpedo boat with an empty treasury. However, where there is a will there is—sometimes—a way, and eventually, what the papers called 'the nucleus of our western squadron' arrived. This craft, for there was only one, was something between a big launch and a small steam-yacht. Rumour had it she was a free gift to the Republic by an English merchant, but rumour is not always to be depended upon, and in any case, it would have been mistaken generosity.

It happened that about this time the Kroomen became particularly aggressive, and some of them having been fired on while embarking on a British steamer, before paying the Republicans for permission to do so, their leaders sent many insulting messages to Liberia. A council was therefore held, and it was decided to despatch the new gunboat with orders to burn all the disaffected villages along the coast.

With the greatest secrecy, a small Maxim and Nordenfelt gun were put on board the steamer, with a scanty supply of provisions. Some two dozen soldiers embarked, and a few days later the 'armed cruiser *Goronomah*' put to sea under sealed orders.

The same night that the gunboat steamed out of Monrovia a big 'war palaver' was held by the Kroomen in a village near the mouth of the Cavally river. The village was of the usual West African type; a cluster of 'swish' or mud huts, palm thatched, lying beneath a cluster of graceful palms. In front stretched a broad beach of yellow sand, where the long swell of the Southern Atlantic, curling over in glittering walls, breaks in ceaseless thunder and spouts of foam, while low forest-covered hills rose behind.

A large circle of Kroomen, naked with the exception of a narrow loin-cloth, three parallel

slashes on either cheek, and a broad blue mark tattooed down the centre of the forehead, which is the mark of the race, surrounded a fire of aromatic wood; for although the moon shone down with the clear radiance of the tropics, a fire is always essential to a 'palaver.' Some swayed themselves backwards and forwards, singing the song whose chorus is 'A ooh ah, Ah ooh ah,' to the monotonous tapping of a native drum, while others struck up the paddling chanty used when driving the canoes through the surf.

In the centre of the circle, however, with the red glow of the firelight falling upon their white hair and serious faces, between the whirling wreaths of scented smoke, the 'headmen' of the village held a consultation.

In spite of the distance, and the secrecy maintained at Monrovia, they knew all about the sailing of the gunboat, for the naked savage, by some extraordinary means, always knows what is happening along the coast. The traders say the Ju Ju, or Fetich man, is generally more to be depended on than the telegraph. This is not surprising, for in places where the latter is used, it is frequently found inoperative when most wanted, owing to some native blacksmith having cut out a few fathoms of the 'talking wire' to make necklaces for the daughter of a chief or hammered slugs for his 'Long Dane' gun.

After a debate of many hours, the plan of campaign was determined upon; the Kroomen dispersed, and put out the fire just as the first rays of the rising sun lit up the line of snowy surf on the beach and the swaying branches of the palms.

The next evening the *Goronomah*, after steaming all day parallel to a long line of golden sand and curling breakers, while thundering river bar, cottonwood forest, dismal mangrove swamp, and clusters of graceful palms opened out and drifted away astern, dropped anchor at sunset in a little bay not far from Cavally.

Seated in cane chairs on the narrow deck, the commander, lieutenant, and chief engineer, all pure negroes, educated in the United States or Sierra Leone, and got up in most gorgeous uniforms, smoked their cigars and chatted.

'To-morrow morning, chief,' said the commander, 'you will have steam by six o'clock, when we will go closer in, land the Maxim and twenty soldiers, and burn every hut of the town. Then we will shoot a dozen or two of the Kroomen—to teach them the respect due to the Republic.'

'So we will—you bet your boots on that,' said the lieutenant, who had commenced life in the United States of America.

Then, giving orders to the sentries to keep awake, and warn them if any canoes approached, the three officers went below, leaving the deck to the soldiers and seamen, who always slept there, as there was no room for them anywhere else.

Now the genuine African savage, uncivilised and heathen, is, taking him all round, rather a favourable specimen of humanity, although he has his weaknesses, such as a hankering after cannibalism and human sacrifice. He is always brave, cleanly, and, if treated fairly, to be depended on, while in knowledge of the ways of the forest he is unequalled. The native, however, who is brought into contact with the semi-civilisation to be met with 'on the coast' is generally a weak-kneed creature, who will lie, steal, and take himself off when the least danger threatens.

So the sentries, after vacantly gazing round on the moonlit sea, which on the one hand stretched away into the dim distance, and on the other curling in huge breakers over a projecting reef swept in long swirls of foam over the glittering sand, went one after the other comfortably to sleep.

Then a silence fell over the vessel, only broken by the rattling of the helm as she rolled heavily on the swell, and the dull roar of surf on the beach; while the white fever-mist crept down from the hills, and rolled in ghostly wreaths along the bluff, over the palm trees swaying in the night breeze, and across the wet sand. Through the mist a long line of dark figures silently crept towards the beach, carrying the light two-feet-wide canoes, which will go through almost any surf, towards the water; then naked men, armed with sharp matchets, embarked and paddled out through the breakers. Had the sentries been awake they might also have seen a row of black heads spread over the shining water on the opposite side of the bay, as the Kroomen, gripping the leaf-shaped spear with one hand, swam vigorously with the other towards the steamer; but, as was their custom when on duty, they slept soundly, and saw nothing.

Once the commander half awakened, and looking through the port near his head thought he saw a splash in the water, 'Only a flying-fish or a herring gull,' he said as he went to sleep again.

A few minutes later black hands grasped the cable and the low rails of the vessel as she rolled down towards them, and naked, dripping forms swung themselves over the bulwarks, and stood for a few moments to recover breath, with the moonlight shining on their spears. Still the sleepers rested, unconscious of danger, until wakened by the well-known Krooboy shout they saw their foes standing over them, and many, without a struggle, were hurled into the water; for the Krooman, as a rule, is not fond of useless bloodshed.

Roused from their peaceful sleep, the three officers rushed up the after-companion only to see a desperate fight going on forward, where a swarm of naked savages were spearing their men or driving them overboard, while a few hundred yards away a fleet of canoes waited to carry off the plunder when the steamer was taken.

As luck would have it, all the arms were forward, with the Maxim gun, beneath the deck on which the Kroomen fought, and the sentries and their rifles had been tossed into the sea already. Calling the lieutenant to aid him, the commander stepped behind the shield of the Nordenfelt gun and swung it forward; gazing down the sights, he lined the muzzle on to the centre of a struggling mass of naked skins, then drew the lever. 'Bang' went the gun, and the solid steel projectile tore its way through the

group, and out over the bows to ricochet from wave to wave until it sank beneath the bright water. But, while a row of men went down like grass before a scythe, the commander caught sight of the Republican uniform among the victims, and as it did not seem quite the thing to shoot his own soldiers, he swung the gun round until the muzzle rested on the foremost canoe. Then, waiting till the steamer rolled upwards on the crest of a wave, he drew the lever, and while the smoke drifted across his eyes, saw the shot crash through the frail craft, which upset, throwing its occupants into the water. 'Click, clank,' went the crank as another cartridge slid into the chamber, and as the report rang out, another canoe split into fragments, and the surrounding water was covered with black heads. Then, leaving the wounded to look after themselves, with a chorus of yells, whistles, and hisses, the canoes swept towards the vessel, while two or three projectiles whizzed harmlessly overhead, and threw up a cloud of spray where they struck the water. A few seconds later the Kroomen swarmed over the bulwarks; and the commander, fighting desperately with his sword, as well as the lieutenant and the engineer, laying about them furiously with handspikes, were driven back foot by foot along the deck till they reached the stern and leaped into the water. Shortly after the unequal struggle forward ended; every soldier who resisted was hurled into the water, and the remainder, bound hand and foot, laid on deck. Then, while a Krooboy, who had served as deck hand in the British and African service, opened the valve, the 'clink, clank,' of the winch as the cable came in link by link showed that the anchor was being raised, and a crowd of naked savages descended into the stokehole and engine-room. Here they drew levers, and opened cocks and valves right and left, with the result that in a few minutes clouds of scalding steam and boiling water were flying everywhere. As the laughing 'Frypan,' one of the leaders, told us afterwards, under the forecastle awnings of the R.M.S. *Angola*, when he had resumed his peaceful calling, 'The Lord not give them sense to savy engine, plenty 'team, burn, and skin come off, too much. Krooboy live for get out dam quick.'

Meanwhile, the *Goronomah*, with clouds of steam pouring out of her engine-room skylights, drifted slowly inshore, the lieutenant quietly floating in the shadow of the ship, and the commander and engineer holding on to the rudder-chains aft, buried periodically feet deep as the stern fell in the long swells. As soon as all resistance was over, the assailants offered no further violence to the crew, who swam and floated around—for every coast African is at home in the water; but concentrated all their energy on looting the ship, and in half-an-hour had stripped her bare, and thrown the two guns and all the ammunition overboard.

Then, to make sure of their plunder before she struck, the canoes, loaded to the water's edge, paddled for the shore, while a swarm of naked blacks swam behind, pushing in front of them bales, boxes, locker cushions, and coils of line: in fact, everything that would float, and doubtless got safely ashore through a surf which would certainly have drowned the crew of a European steamer.

Seeing that there was no foe left on board, the commander let go his hold, and swimming to the low bulwarks amidships, crawled over, followed shortly by the lieutenant and the engineer. It was high time, for the gunboat was rapidly drifting toward the reef, where her sides would crush in like an eggshell; so, throwing a coat over his head, the engineer descended into the machinery, and after a severe scalding managed to put things right below, and start the engines 'slow ahead.' Then the commander, grasping the wheel, turned the vessel's head out to sea, while the lieutenant loosed the prisoners, and blew his whistle to gather his men. Stopping a few moments, the crew and soldiers swam alongside and crawled aboard, and shortly afterwards the *Goronomah*, under full steam, rolled along over the moonlit sea, steering for Monrovia.

In the swish huts beneath the palms the Kroomen held high festival, washing down tinned salmon and sardines with exhilarating draughts of gin, vinegar, and Worcester sauce; while they spread tins of metal polish and patent rottenstone on ship's biscuits, and ate them afterwards with much satisfaction. They, however, regretted bitterly that the steamer had not driven ashore and enriched them for life.

All things considered, very little life was lost on either side. The Krooboys treat the affair as a capital joke, and many a sable deck-hand tells the story, his face expanding into the merry laugh of the African, showing his splendid teeth, while he pretends to clean the brasswork beneath the saloon deck awnings.

In Monrovia, however, the journals could not sufficiently praise the commander for 'upholding the honour of the Republic against desperate odds,' and so great was the enthusiasm that enough money was raised to purchase a really smart little vessel, the *Yorktown* and so both sides were satisfied. A few negro women, however, by thundering surf-swept Kroo beaches and in the narrow lanes of Monrovia, realise that war is a cruel thing, as they mourn 'for the mariners who come no more from sea.'

## WHEN SUMMER WANES.

When summer wanes, and green is turned to gray,
The floral fires die out along the lanes.
A thousand glories hasten to decay
When summer wanes.

The sad-voiced wind blows chill across the plains,
And wet white mists trail inland from the bay,
While the last sheaf within the field remains.

On silent wings the swallows steal away;
Its leaves to earth the forest slowly rains;
Night's curtains close too soon upon the day
When summer wanes.

SAM WOOD.

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## THE BIOGRAPHER OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Forty-two years have passed away since John Gibson Lockhart was laid at the feet of his great father-in-law, Sir Walter Scott, within the precincts of Dryburgh Abbey; but we have had to wait until now for the biography of one who was himself a confessed master in the art. A notice by Mr Gleig in the *Quarterly Review* (1864), which Lockhart edited with fairness and ability for twenty-eight years, has been hitherto the chief authority for his early life; but his important place in the literary history of the early half of the century is apparent from the frequent mention of his name and the numerous anecdotes about him that crop up. There is much about him, and altogether to his credit, in Smiles's *Memoirs of John Murray*, and doubtless there will be more when the Blackwood papers, at present in the hands of Mrs Oliphant, see the light. For nothing is more remarkable, as his present biographer tells us, than his universal ability.

'He could write,' says Mr Gleig, 'on Greek literature, on the origin of the Latin language, on novels, on any subject from poetry to dry-rot; but his biographical articles bear the palm.' His life of Sir Walter Scott ranks amongst the best and most interesting biographies in the language, and he was author likewise of brief lives of Burns and Napoleon. In *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk* we have charming and interesting pictures of Edinburgh and famous Edinburgh men in the first quarter of the century, and time has now robbed many of the quizzical and satirical references of their sting. He was an early and able contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*, and while holding an influential position as editor of the *Quarterly Review*, he was in touch with some of the most eminent men of his time. He was the author of four now neglected novels, one of which, *Adam Blair*, may still be read with pleasure and profit, and from which some of the writers of the so-called Kailyard School might learn humility; for in fiction his 'gifts were far from imitative, he could feel with passion, and communicate what he felt with power.' And this of a man who has been regarded in the popular mind as indeed the 'scorpion which stingeth the faces of men' of the *Chaldee Manuscript*, and as cold, hard, satirical, proud, and reserved. The main value of the *Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart*, by Mr Andrew Lang (London, J. C. Nimmo, 1896), consists in showing how, in spite of his early escapades in *Blackwood*, his turn for caricature, his constitutional deafness, his reserve and melancholy, and the many trials of his private life, there existed in him a well of human kindness; that he had tender and reverent feelings for childhood and age, for babies and for 'venerable and secluded men.' This should silence for ever those who say he wanted heart. By birth, sympathy, and early training, Mr Lang is well qualified to write such a book, which took its rise in a desire to add a biography of Lockhart to a new edition of the Life of Scott. The material swelled into the two handsome volumes before us, illustrated with portraits and sketches of contemporaries, and a few of Lockhart's own caricatures coloured by hand. It was well that this work should have fallen to a Border man, one who knows and loves the Tweed, Ettrick, and Yarrow, and the literature and romance of them all, but especially the romance of Scott, whose life by Lockhart, Mr Lang says, has been to him a kind of 'literary breviary' from youth up.

Mr Lang traces the pedigree of Lockhart through the houses of Lockhart of Symington, of Lee, of Cleghorn, of Birkhill, and of Wicketshaw, until documents fail about 1339–1440. 'The war of independence, the chivalrous pilgrimage of the royal heart, the feudal anarchy, the Douglas wars, the struggle for religious domination by the Covenanters, are all among the ancestral memories of the Lockharts' we are told. Dr Lockhart, minister of Cambusnethan in Lanarkshire, was, like his distinguished son, a scholar and a serious, narrow divine of the old Presbyterian school; it was he who reported to his son

the incidents upon which *Adam Blair* is founded. The mother was a daughter of the Rev. John Gibson, minister of St Cuthbert's Church, Edinburgh, and the Spanish type of Lockhart's face may have been derived from her. He was born at Cambusnethan manse, 14th July 1794, one year and a few months before Carlyle at Ecclefechan. A delicate child, and through an early accident partially deaf all his life, he did not long enjoy the bracing air of his native place; his father was translated to the College Kirk of Glasgow when John was in his second year. From the age of six to twelve he attended Glasgow High School, where he was clever and industrious, and, in spite of frequent absences through illness, was usually dux of his class. Full of fun and humour, he yet had no liking for quarrelling or 'bickering' such as Scott seems to have entered into with zest. When he went to Glasgow University he did well in his classes, and secured a nomination to a Snell Exhibition at Balliol College, Oxford, which he entered in 1809. Here he indulged in his fondness for caricature: but he was a good classical scholar, wrote good Latin, and was accomplished in French, Italian, and Spanish. H. H. Milman, afterwards Dean of St Paul's, and a contributor under his editorship to the *Quarterly Review*, was one of his contemporaries and friends, as was also Sir William Hamilton, until a political difference caused a coolness for life.

Lockhart, who wished for an army chaplaincy under Wellington, came to Edinburgh instead, studied law, and became an advocate in 1816, but soon discovered that his strength lay not in law but literature. His enthusiasm for German literature led to a visit to Weimar, where he saw Goethe. When William Blackwood (for whom he had written an article on Heraldry and afterwards translated Schlegel's *Lectures on History*) started his famous magazine in 1817, Lockhart became a contributor, attacking the *Edinburgh Review* and the so-called Cockney school of poets. The time seemed ripe for a revolt against the dominant Whiggism of the *Edinburgh Review* and of Edinburgh society. Wilson and Lockhart led the way, and Blackwood reaped the benefit. It is now certain that Lockhart and John Wilson had a considerable hand in the famous *Chaldee Manuscript*, although Hogg wrote the first draft. His contributions were not all satirical, but included classical subjects, as well as the Spanish ballads. Love and friendship 'destinate' most lives, and a meeting with Scott at the house of Mr Home Drummond in 1818 led to an invitation to Abbotsford and Lockhart's marriage to Scott's eldest daughter Sophia in 1820.

The five and a half years spent between Edinburgh and Chiefswood, on the Abbotsford estate, may be regarded as the happiest in a life which was not without many dark shadows. Lockhart helped with the *Annual Register*, inherited some of his father-in-law's literary schemes, such as the completion of an edition of Motteux's translation of *Don Quixote*, as he was a better 'Spaniard' than Scott. Some mystery surrounds the fate of an edition of Shakespeare upon which both he and Scott were engaged. *Peter's Letters*, issued the year before his marriage, was followed by his four novels, *Valerius*, a Roman story (1821), *Adam Blair* (1822), *Reginald Dalton* (1823), and *Matthew Wald* (1824). The authorship of *Adam Blair* in some quarters was attributed to Galt. Blackwood acted handsomely, giving him £300 down, and £200 for a second edition with copyright. Lockhart had himself to pass through the sorrow described in the opening chapters of the tale, which had another counterpart in real life, as witness the scene in Dr John Brown's reminiscences of his father. 'This book alone,' says his biographer speaking of *Adam Blair*, 'shows how unaffectedly impressed he was 'by the high, bare, austere, and heartfelt devotion of the old Scottish type.' For *Reginald Dalton*, which is a novel of a more conventional type, he received £1000; but after *Matthew Wald*, which Scott said would never do, as it was 'misery from title-page to finish,' he seems to have deserted novel-writing, for which in truth he had no special natural aptitude. Benjamin Disraeli, whom later he called in one of his letters to his daughter, 'that Jew scamp,' visited Chiefswood in 1825 with an offer to the brilliant young Tory writer of the editorship of the ill-fated *Representative* newspaper. Lockhart declined, but soon afterwards accepted the editorship of the *Quarterly Review*. This post, which led to his removal to London, he held for twenty-eight years with conspicuous ability, contributing one hundred articles from his own pen, not one of them political however, biography and classical subjects being most in favour. He did other work for Murray, such as superintending his *Family Library*—the first volumes being *Napoleon*, from his pen. His admirable short life of Burns was contributed to Constable's *Miscellany*. Lockhart was present at the symposium at Abbotsford when the publication of this excellent series of popular volumes was discussed by Constable and Scott, before the dark shadows of commercial disaster fell on both. Murray claimed the original suggestion of these cheap volumes. But Lockhart's great biographical work was his *Memoirs of Sir Walter Scott*, completed in 1838 in seven volumes; the second edition, with corrections and fresh matter, was in ten volumes. Mr Leslie Stephen regards this biography as, next to Boswell's *Johnson*, the best in the language. Mr Lang qualifies this statement, however, by pointing out that subject, treatment, and biographer are very different, but that both are first-rate in their own order. Lockhart's life was henceforth that of an industrious literary man who mingled in the best society, had command of the ablest pens of the day, including those of Croker, Southey, Milman, John Sterling, and of Scott, who could not afford to be indifferent to a £100 cheque for a single article. Lockhart's *Ancient Spanish Ballads* speak for him as a poet, and some verses of his on Immortality were very frequently on Carlyle's lips in later life. From 1843, Lockhart was auditor of the Duchy of Lancaster, a post to which a small salary was attached.

Failing health led to the resignation of his editorship of the *Quarterly* in 1853. Like Scott he sought health in Italy (where he studied Dante) and in his native Lanarkshire; and it was when on a visit to his daughter Charlotte (Mrs Hope Scott of Abbotsford) that he died, on 25th November 1854. A tendency to melancholy and seclusion had been emphasised in Lockhart's case by Scott's embarrassments and death; by the death, in 1831, of his eldest boy, John Hugh, the 'Hugh Littlejohn' of Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather;* by the death of his wife, Sophia Scott, in 1837; and by the estrangement, for a time, and death of a scapegrace son, Walter Scott Lockhart, who had entered the army, and crowded, as his father said, the follies of a lifetime into two short years. From his daughter Charlotte, who married James Robert Hope Scott in 1847, are sprung the only living descendants of Scott. Their daughter Mary Monica, now Mrs Maxwell Scott of Abbotsford, to whom Mr Lang's handsome volumes are dedicated, and to whom he has been much indebted for help and various letters, married the Honourable Joseph Constable Maxwell, son of Lord Herries; and their eldest son, born 10th April 1875, came of age last spring. He is thus the great-great-grandson of Scott.

Lockhart and John Wilson were the ruling spirits in the early days of *Blackwood's Magazine.* Leslie Stephen says his hand is visible in the seventh number. According to the biographer of Thomas Pringle, its first editor, Lockhart, a 'young advocate,' contributed to the first number. Lockhart, as we have said, attacked the dominant Whiggism of Edinburgh, the *Edinburgh Review,* and Coleridge, and Leigh Hunt, and the so-called school of Cockney poetry. He was attacked in return by the author of *Hypocrisy Unveiled,* whom he challenged; but the most regrettable incident of his career, doubtless, was the quarrel with John Scott of *Baldwin's Magazine,* who fell in a duel with his friend Christie. Mr Lang tries to make it clear, however, that neither Lockhart nor Christie were really to blame. Scott's advice to him after this sad affair was to have done with that 'mother of mischief'—as he termed *Blackwood's Magazine.* There is evidence that he repented of much of this early journalism.

Scott had prophesied that Lockhart would 'blaze;' instead, his career showed a steady flame, and he kept his position to the end. There are high tributes to his literary taste and discernment in Smiles's *Life of John Murray,* and the intimacy and mutual confidence between himself and his publisher continued unabated to the end. He was punctual and methodical in his literary engagements, an immense improvement in this respect on Gifford. The *Quarterly* had then a circulation of between 9000 and 10,000. While Croker irritated some of the political contributors and readers by what he inserted or left out, Lockhart had the knack of greatly improving articles sent to him, without giving annoyance. 'By his knowledge of language,' says Smiles, 'and mastery of English style, he added grace and point to even the best written papers.' Mr Lang pays him the high compliment of saying that he *wrote English,* and compares his style in clearness and directness to that of Swift. More than once he seems to have hinted to Murray that he received too high an honorarium—a hint which was never taken. In a note printed in Smiles's *Murray,* we find that publisher writing in 1828 to the effect that his dividend would in future be £325 (instead of £250) a number, and he added: 'I think it very hard if you do not get £200 or £300 for your own contributions.' This made his editorial fee £1300 a year.

We find that he thought of Mr Gladstone for an article on Newman; and John Ruskin felt grateful for marginal corrections and suggestions, and asked his editor to Denmark Hill. He would not insert a damaging article on Wordsworth, even at his old friend Professor Wilson's instigation. Like Wilson in *Blackwood,* he noticed Tennyson's first volume unfavourably; on the other hand, John Sterling's favourable criticism of the second volume, in spite of Croker's views to the contrary, was a great aid to the rising poet's popularity. Save his biographical paper on Theodore Hook, none of his own essays have been reprinted. Unlike Carlyle and Macaulay, or even Southey, who used their review articles as pegs upon which to hang elaborate essays, Lockhart made his paper an exponent of the matter in hand, and kept himself studiously in the background. The essays of Macaulay and Carlyle have, however, become part of their collected works; while Southey's *Life of Nelson,* an expanded *Quarterly Review* article, is now a classic, and has had the honour of a greater number of different editions than any other modern biography. Lockhart declined Carlyle's *Chartism* for the *Quarterly,* and suggested that it was better suited for separate issue; he dared not publish it, at all events. It is possible, Dr Smiles thinks, that Murray declined *Sartor Resartus* on his judgment; if so, that did not prevent good feeling between them, and Carlyle has left no acid etching of Lockhart as he has done of so many of his contemporaries. Lockhart's *Burns* formed the peg upon which Carlyle hung his fine and characteristic essay for the *Edinburgh Review;* and when he came to review Lockhart's *Scott* in an essay which is still read though far from being as good as the *Burns,* he credited him with having done it vigorously, and with sagacity, decision, candour, diligence, good manners and good sense. We find Lockhart congratulating Carlyle on his *Past and Present,* and telling him that he had more power of putting life into the dry bones of the past than any other writer except Scott, and urging him to do a romance of the middle ages. Carlyle's hint to Lockhart's assistant, Elwin, to write a biography of his chief, came to nothing.

Lockhart's great achievement, as has been said, was his *Life of Scott.* Mr Lang remarks that he seems to have been born to love Scott, and it should never be forgotten that, while paid a fee by his trustees, the main portion of the profits went to Scott's creditors, when he might have done meanwhile many remunerative articles or volumes. His wife, in writing to Cadell the publisher, from Sussex Place, in 1836, tells him that Lockhart was working as hard at it as could be wished. His power of concentration, which was largely the secret of his success from the first, was evident. 'When once set to a thing, he neither sleeps nor takes the necessary exercise. . . . He has been arranging it so long in his mind, that now fairly commenced he will not

be long about it; and he has read to me, and continues to do so, what he writes, and I am much mistaken if anything in our time will come up to it in interest, style, or as a picture of manners just passing away. I cannot speak enough of the interest he has contrived to give to the genealogy, the least promising part, and you may believe the rest is not behind hand.' This is Sir Walter Scott's daughter who writes, yet every reader can confirm her impression to the full, and so, as Mr Lang tells us, 'his lesser light is blended for all time with the warmth and radiance of the man he loved.'

At his various London residences Mr Gleig recalls outpourings of wit, bursts of merriment, and exuberance of fun, while Lockhart was charming in his intercourse with such women as Lady Salisbury, the Duchess-Countess of Sutherland, Miss Edgeworth, Lady Davy, and the mother of Tom Hughes, who kept his table supplied with pigs' feet and other delicacies. However depressed he might be, and he was often out of health in later years, he recovered himself when he took pen in hand, and to his daughter Charlotte, or his son Walter, he would describe his doings and surroundings. We have a pretty account of how Landseer conveyed a present of two descendants of the real Abbotsford 'dandie dinmonts' to the Queen in 1851, who, when warned by the artist, 'Take care, madam, they have been dressed with a little oil and brimstone,' replied: 'Pooh, what signifies that?' and she caressed them both. It was Lockhart, and not Sydney Smith, it seems, who said, when Landseer proposed to do his portrait: 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?'

Lockhart's strong, complex character, and his reserve, have caused him to be often misjudged. The Dean of Salisbury, who contributes some interesting recollections, says: 'He had a very warm heart, often concealed by a cold, reserved manner.' Mr Gleig, in his notice in the *Quarterly*, says: 'There never lived a man more high-minded and truthful; more willing to make sacrifices for the comfort of others; more faithful to old ties of friendship and affection.' The *Times* said of him that 'although he had turned himself into a pillar of literary strength, yet the leading qualities of his mind would have fitted him for any post where far-sighted sagacity, iron self-control, and rapid, instinctive judgment mark the born leader of others.' In appearance he was tall, slight, and handsome, with dark hair and a broad, black brow, indicating force and penetration. The Rev. E. D. Griffin, an American clergyman, who met Lockhart at Mr Murray's in Albemarle Street, in 1828, describes him (why does not Mr Lang quote this?) as 'tall, and slightly, but elegantly formed; his head possesses the noble contour, the precision and harmony of outline which distinguish classic sculptors. It possesses, too, a striking effect of colour, in a complexion pale, yet pure, and hair black as the raven's wing. Though his countenance is youthful, yet I should designate reflection as the prominent, combined expression of that broad, white forehead; those arched and pencilled brows; those retired, yet full, dark eyes; the accurately chiselled nose, and compressed, though curved lips. His face is too thin, perhaps, for mere beauty, but this defect heightens its intellectual character.'

Should these volumes of Mr Lang send readers again to Lockhart's *Scott*, Lockhart's biographer will feel, we may be assured, that he has not written in vain.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER XI.—THE CONSPIRATORS BAFFLED.

THE clock had chimed a quarter past one, and the moon was exactly balanced upon the western wall when the bugle sounded the second time for the troops to fall in. As it did so my heart beat so fast that I almost thought it would choke me. I was playing for high stakes, and I tried to calm myself; for one little show of nervousness or indecision might ruin everything.

In the courtyard outside the garrison was standing at attention. The officers were hitching up their sword-belts, and in other ways preparing for the march before them. But look as I would, I could see nothing of Roche. Was it possible that he intended to remain behind in order to welcome the foe when they should arrive? In that case the plan I had arranged for myself would be certain to miscarry. The hair rose on my scalp, and a cold shiver ran through me as the thought occurred to me.

Five minutes elapsed before he put in an appearance, but when he did, I was relieved to see that he was prepared to march out with the column. Having scanned the battalion, he gave a few orders in a sharp voice, and then took his place in the order of march. As he did so, I left the window and made my way from the room across the Fountain Courtyard and up the stone steps on to the battlements, calling as I went to A-Mat to follow me with a torch, as arranged. Once there we ran as fast as our legs would take us to the stairs leading down to the great gate. We only reached them just in time, for as we took our places, myself a few steps from the bottom and A-Mat with his blazing torch behind me, the foremost files were but a few paces from the archway.

'Halt!' I cried, at the top of my voice, and with every ounce of command I could manage to cram into it, at the same time holding up my hand as a signal to them to stop.

As if by clockwork the surprised battalion obeyed, while Roche spurred his horse forward to discover what this interruption might mean. Thank God, he acted just as I had hoped he would do, and now I was prepared for him.

'Men!' I cried; 'Soldiers of King Marie, in His Majesty's name I forbid you to move one pace forward. You have been told that the king is dead, and that the army under General Du Berg has been defeated. The messenger who brought that news did not come from the army at all. But I left this afternoon, and I can tell you that, far from being defeated, the army has been victorious all along the line. We have won a great victory, and those who have spread this report are leading you into a trap. Return to your quarters, and leave me to deal with those who are attempting to deceive and ruin you.'

When I had finished speaking there was an

instant's silence, in which I saw Roche's face working with astonishment and suppressed passion.

'Lieutenant,' he cried, turning to an officer at his side, when he had recovered himself a little, 'take a file of men and arrest that person. Let him be confined in a cell until I return. Throw open that gate there, and now, my men, forward.'

'The first man who moves will answer for it to the king,' I cried, as the officer in question came haltingly forward to arrest me.

'The king is dead,' shouted the general, 'and I act in his place.'

As he finished speaking, my ears detected a hammering upon the gate outside. Was it the king, or was it another part of this infernal plot? But this was no time for half measures; I had to risk that or lose everything.

'Open that gate,' shouted Roche again.

The great gate was accordingly unbarred and thrown back, but neither Roche nor the men behind him moved. My heart seemed to stop beating as I leant forward to see who entered. Then such a shout went up as never a man in that courtyard had heard the like before, for there, seated upon his own magnificent state charger, who stood tossing his head and champing his bit as if conscious of the value of the performance in which he was taking part, was the king himself, looking pale and very weary, but otherwise as well as when he had left the camp with me more than eight hours before. Behind him was old Polacci grinning from ear to ear. The king regarded Roche steadily for upwards of half a minute. Then he spoke, and his voice sounded clear as a bell.

'You see you were mistaken, general,' he said quietly. 'In spite of your machinations I am still alive and well.'

The general must have realised that the game was lost. At any rate he did not attempt to say a word in return. He looked at me and then at the king, and then backwards and forwards from one to the other of us, as if he hardly knew which of us to hate the most. His face was working strangely, and in my own mind I thought he was about to have a fit.

'You are placed under arrest, general,' said the king. 'Colonel Prennan, I appoint you Governor of the Fortress, and I shall hold you responsible for your prisoner, also for a Frenchman who, I am told, is within the walls.—Now, my men, you may return to your quarters. I have no intention that you shall be delivered into the hands of our enemies just yet.'

Prennan, the new Governor of the citadel, approached Roche with the intention of demanding his sword. As he reached him the latter was observed to sway somewhat in his saddle, and afterwards to clutch at his horse's mane. Then he seemed to choke, and a moment later fell from his charger's back to the ground. The doctor hastened to his side, but it was only to report him quite dead. The excitement of the past few days, followed by the disappointment caused by the failure of his plot, had been too much for him, and, as it was discovered later, his heart had given way under the strain.

It made a strangely dramatic picture, and one that I think few who saw it will be likely to forget.

The moon lighting the farther side of the courtyard, the staring soldiery, A-Mat holding his torch aloft upon the steps, myself standing below him, the king sitting in the dark gateway upon his gray charger, and the traitor Roche lying dead upon the ground, with his white face and great eyes staring up at us as if in mockery of our vengeance.

'*General* Prennan!' cried the king in a significant voice, thereby giving the new Governor of the citadel his step in rank, 'let that man's body be conveyed to the mortuary. When that is done, find me the Frenchman of whom I spoke just now. Let him be detained in custody until I can examine him.'

Having said this, he turned to me, and dismounting from his horse, took my arm, and we made our way towards the palace steps. I noticed that he seemed uncertain in his walk, and that his hands were feverish to a degree that frightened me. But I attributed this more to his fall than to any direct illness.

'Instow,' he said, as we walked along, 'I am deeper in your debt than ever. God alone knows what I should have done without you this night.'

'I am more than thankful to have been in a position to serve you,' I answered.

Then thinking I should divert him from his gloomy thoughts—for that they were growing gloomy I had no doubt—I bade him look up at the palace door. Olivia and the Princess Natalie were standing there waiting to welcome him. The meeting between husband and wife was touching in the extreme, Olivia bursting into tears as she kissed him. Strangely enough the king seemed scarcely so much affected as I had expected he would be. He continued to glance to right and left as if he suspected some harm, moving his head in a mechanical fashion that was the reverse of reassuring.

Leaning on his wife's arm he passed into her boudoir. Here the meal of which I had partaken an hour or so before was still spread upon the table, and we endeavoured to induce the king to eat. But he would touch nothing. His eyes by this time were inordinately bright, and I could see that Olivia was becoming alarmed as to his condition. She crossed the room and knelt at his feet, placing her soft arms on his.

'You have done too much, Marie,' she cried. 'You have nearly killed yourself by this long ride. My darling, you must go to bed at once and I will nurse you. Believe me, you will be better in the morning.'

He tried to rise, saying as he did so in a voice whose dead level was terrible to hear:

'You do not understand. If we cannot carry the position all is lost. No, you must not stop me. I am not well, but I shall die if we do not win to-day.'

Olivia turned her face to me with a look of agony such as I shall never forget as long as I live. In reply to her unspoken entreaty I rose and went towards the king.

'Come, your Majesty,' I said, 'this will not do at all. The sooner you are in bed the better it will be for you.'

'Bed?' he cried, with an attempt at scorn in his voice, 'how can I go to bed when my kingdom trembles in the balance? Do you know what it all means to me? It means that life, love, and

honour hang by a hair, and you talk of bed. No, no.' Then after a pause: 'I tell you Du Berg must advance or the day is lost.'

He was silent for upwards of a minute, then his senses seemed suddenly to come back to him, and he smiled a little foolishly.

'I'm afraid I have been talking nonsense,' he said apologetically; 'but I am not feeling quite myself to-night. I think I shall go to bed. Olivia, dearest, you need not be alarmed. It is nothing serious; I am overtired, that is all. Instow, I know, will give me his arm.'

I made a sign to his wife not to oppose him, and then gave him my support as he desired. In this fashion we proceeded to his bedroom, where I assisted him to undress and put him to bed. By the time this was done his wits had left him again, and he was babbling on all sorts of subjects: Venice, his kingdom, his army, the treachery of Roche, and many others which I cannot now remember. It was pitiful to hear him, and more than once I felt a lump rising in my throat as I listened.

As soon as he was comfortably settled I called Olivia to him, and then sent a servant off in search of the palace doctor, who lost no time in putting in an appearance. He was a nice young fellow, extremely clever, and, better than all, an Englishman, whom the king had picked up in Hong-kong.

'I trust there is nothing the matter,' he said as I shook hands with him.

'The king has been taken ill,' I answered. 'I fancy the ride from the front and the fall he had outside the city have brought him to a high state of fever. He was delirious, and I have just got him to bed.'

'I had better see him at once, then,' the doctor replied. 'His Majesty has not been in a good state of health for some time past, and a trouble like this may do him an infinity of harm. Is any one with him?'

'Only his wife,' I said. 'If you will come with me, I will take you to them.'

So saying, I led him from the room and down the corridor to the royal apartments. Having left him there, I returned to Olivia's boudoir to await his verdict with what patience I could command. It is at such moments as these that one lives a lifetime; it is in such moments that one understands what it is to be brought face to face with the probability of a loss that at first seems almost eternal. In that dread uncertainty under which I was then labouring I forgot my own fatigue, my own interest in all other passing events, in fact everything save the man I loved who lay at death's door. The clock upon the wall ticked remorselessly on, the sentry on the steps outside passed and repassed with the monotonous regularity of an automaton, and all the time I stood by the window trying to understand what would happen to us and to the kingdom if the king were taken from it.

How long I remained in this state I cannot say. I only know that it seemed hours before I detected the doctor's step in the corridor outside. When he entered the room I scanned his face for the verdict. What I saw there frightened me beyond all telling.

'What have you to report?' I asked in a voice such as one would be likely to use in addressing a person returned from the dead. 'What is the king's condition?'

'Serious, very serious,' replied the doctor, as he shut the door behind him and approached me. 'His Majesty is in a high state of fever, and is still delirious. I need not disguise the fact from you that I am very anxious about him.'

'But is there any immediate danger, think you?' I asked. 'Tell me candidly, for you must be aware so much depends upon your answer.'

'There certainly *is* danger,' he answered. 'I will not deny that. But whether it is immediate or not I cannot tell you. A few hours will satisfy us upon that point.'

'In the meantime what are you going to do?'

'I shall go back to His Majesty and remain with him. His is a case in which nothing but the most devoted nursing will avail. He must not be left alone for a single instant, and when he recovers consciousness all public business or news of an exciting nature must be religiously kept from him; otherwise I will not be responsible for the consequences.'

'I quite understand,' I answered. 'Between us we ought to be able to see that none reaches him. Have you told the queen how critical his condition is?'

'No,' he replied; 'that is why I left him to see you. Under the circumstances I think it better that she should not know the real facts of the case. It would be cruel to alarm her before there is any real necessity. We shall be better able to judge to-morrow whether she must learn the truth.'

'I quite agree with you,' I said. 'I am glad to think she is not to be frightened to-night. If I can be of any assistance, you know you may command my services.'

'I am quite aware of that,' he answered. 'But if your lordship will be guided by me I should advise you to retire to rest yourself. You are thoroughly worn out I can see, and for every one's sake it is advisable that you should not run any further risk.'

I promised to comply with his advice, and then he left me and returned to the sickroom. After the door had closed upon him I opened the window and stepped out on the balcony. It was nearly three o'clock by this time and a cool morning. Already the stars in the eastern heavens were losing their radiance. In another hour they would have disappeared altogether and a new day would be born to us. What strange things had happened since last the king and I had seen the sun rise together—a battle had been fought in which the royal army had been successful, we had received the news of Roche's treachery, and we had ridden for dear life to save the citadel and those we loved. Important, however, as all these things were, they seemed to sink into utter insignificance when compared with the danger in which the king's life now stood.

I was turning to re-enter the room, intending to seek my own apartment and go to bed, when someone opened the window and passed into the veranda. It was Olivia. On seeing her I hastened towards her and placing my arm round her waist, kissed her and inquired how she had left her husband.

'He seems a little quieter just now, thank God,' she said. 'The doctor is with him and has sent me away to rest. Oh, Instow, you don't think

Marie will die, do you? For Heaven's sake, tell me you don't think that!'

The agony contained in her voice almost unmanned me, but I was quick to remember the doctor's warning and to decide upon the course I should pursue.

'My dearest Olivia,' I answered, 'what on earth has put such a thought into your head? Not the doctor, I'll be bound. Why, my darling, your husband's case is as simple as ABC. As you know, he has not been strong for some time past. The doctors in Europe warned him not to overtax his strength. Well, what has he done? Ridden one hundred and sixty miles in twenty-four hours, fought an important battle in which his horse was shot under him, saved his capital, and defeated a traitor. Is that following the doctor's advice? Of course it isn't. And what is the result? Why, that he is knocked up. No constitution could stand such a strain, much less his. However, he has a clever doctor, he will receive the best possible nursing, and what is better still, he will be compelled to take the rest he has so long required and has earned so well. Whatever you do, you must not let him think you are anxious. Try to believe that in a week or so he will probably be himself again.'

'You cheer me beyond all telling,' she answered. 'The uncertainty of the last hour has been too terrible. I could not have borne another like it. But you have seen the doctor, and I know you would not deceive me, would you?'

Base as it may seem to say so, I felt there was no course open to me but to scorn the insinuation. I did so, and then had the satisfaction of seeing her eyes brighten and a happier look come into her face. Having escorted her to the door of the bedroom, which for the convenience of her nursing she had caused to be prepared next that occupied by the king, I kissed her and bade her good-night, and then set off for my own apartment. Tired as I was, however, I was not to be permitted to seek my couch in peace. I had scarcely touched the handle of the door before I saw some one coming towards me along the corridor. It was General Prennan, the new Governor of the citadel, and from the way in which he beckoned to me I gathered that he had something he desired to say.

'You must pardon my importunity at this time of night and when you are so tired, my lord,' he said. 'But I have some serious news to communicate to you. The Frenchman, General Roche's accomplice, has been found, and is now imprisoned in one of the cells at the rear of the barracks. Under the influence of his fear he has made a statement that in my opinion, and I fancy you will agree with me, is of the utmost importance and calls for immediate action. As soon as I heard it, I left him and came straight to you, feeling that, as you are His Majesty's chief adviser and relative, it was only right that you should be informed.'

'If you will come into my sitting-room,' I said, 'I will place myself at your disposal. You can then tell me everything. I need not inform you that after all I have passed through in the preceding twenty-four hours I am quite worn out. However, the king's business must take precedence of everything, even personal comfort, so please come in.'

He followed me into the room, and when I had turned up the lamp, which stood upon the centre table, he took a chair. I seated myself opposite him and begged him to commence, which he did without further preamble.

## CHESHIRE CHEESE.

The passing year will be remembered by all connected with the Cheshire cheese trade as one of the most disastrous that they have ever experienced, but if they are not comforted with the reflection that better times are ahead, they will at least be able to derive solace from the conviction that things cannot well be worse than they have been in the 1895 and 1896 seasons. Whether they will improve next year the development of events in the dairy industry at home and abroad alone can determine. Consumers of cheese rarely know whence their purchases are derived, and Cheshire cheese is to them more of a name than a reality; and it must certainly have come as a great surprise to many to be told that the finest cheese shown on the pitch at Whitchurch lately sold for forty-six shillings a hundredweight, and inferior qualities for as low as twenty shillings, when they were paying from ninepence to a shilling a pound in London and the provincial towns for what they were told was Cheshire. Yet this is not so great an anomaly as it seems, and the much-abused middleman was not getting such an enormous profit as the disparity of the figures might suggest, though he was no doubt reaping a rich harvest. Many reasons have conduced to the depreciation of value in Cheshire cheese, but so many have been suggested in the correspondence in the public press, which the enormous fall in price—as much as twenty shillings per hundredweight on some makes—has occasioned, that the public are like a weak-sighted man suddenly confronted by too much light—more confused than before, and unable to comprehend the state of things which has brought ruin on a great industry. We will endeavour to remove this difficulty.

Agriculture, as our readers do not need to be told, has been getting into a more and more depressed condition as the years have passed since we entered this decade. But the dairy farmers of Cheshire have managed to keep their heads above water pretty well, and have closed their accounts each year with the balance on the right side; because their mainstay has been the cheese trade, in which they excelled, and they were not amenable to the fluctuations in the prices of grain and the unfair incidence of railway rates which were dragging their brother farmers down in other counties. But a change has come over the scene, and that so rapidly, that they may be excused for being dazed at the extent of the rebuff they have received. The bulk of the season's cheese is disposed of at the close of the summer and the beginning of autumn, at markets known as 'pitches,' where great quantities are usually shown, prices being to a large extent regulated by the demand, though some farmers might stand out for a price which they thought the special merit of their pitch warranted. These pitches have of old been busy scenes, and the animation has been the more marked in seasons where drought

has caused a falling off in the total amount of pressed curd produced in the country. But year by year we have grown less dependent on home sources of supply for this as well as for other food, and only the acknowledged superexcellence of the product has kept up prices for Cheshire, when elsewhere they were continuously dropping. The past year, however, has seen a crisis in the cheese trade all round, and Cheshire has had to feel the blow with the rest. She has, indeed, largely brought it on herself. In the old days of cheese-making a great deal of time was allowed for the ripening of the cheese after making, and the celebrated Stilton cheese first made its name on account of the perfection of its ripening, which its maker thought incomplete under twelve months; but times have changed. Most things are done in a hurry now. And the farmers of Cheshire, as of other places, have been beguiled into adopting the not long since discovered system of rapid ripening, whereby a cheese can be placed on the market within a week or so of leaving the press. This enables the speedy disposition of the cheese, and brings milk and money nearer together.

But the disadvantage of this slapdash process is that the keeping properties of the cheese are *nil*, and cheese so made can only be disposed of for immediate consumption. Factors who buy their cheese at these 'pitches' have been bitten and they are now very careful. They have bought quantities of cheese at a price, and put them in their stores to await demand from their customers, the retailers. But if there has been an abundant supply and their stock has been left on their hands any time, it has commenced to go wrong, and they have had to sell it for any price to get rid of it, as putrefaction rapidly ensues with quickly ripened cheese once the first signs appear. In former times, when there was no other source of supply to turn to, this might have been merely the misfortune of the factor. Not so now. Everywhere he can find that which his hands seek. France and Holland, Italy and Sweden, send us tribute from their dairies, Dutch factors getting more profit for their humble Goudas and Edams than their continental competitors for their fancy makes, quantity making up for smaller price. But the United States and Canada are the most powerful rivals the English farmer has to face in this respect, and it is mainly to this competition that the Cheshire farmer owes the disaster of the past two years. He brought it more swiftly on himself by his method of cure. For he was compelled to sell, no matter the state of the market, knowing his cheese would go wrong on his hands. Canada and the States, however, administered the *coup de grâce*. In 1894 we spent nearly five millions and a half abroad for cheese, the United States taking £1,608,405 of this sum, and Canada £2,688,946. In the past nine months we have imported little more cheese than in 1891, though our needs, with an increased population, should be greater. People, therefore, looking at the matter superficially, and drawing deductions from the *primâ facie* evidence, come to the conclusion that English farmers have had less competition to face than before; and the wonder grows that in these circumstances such an unexampled drop in prices should have occurred. As a matter of fact, however paradoxical as it may seem, it is this very lessened importation which governs the low rates ruling, and has caused the declension in prices. If there had been free importation because we needed the cheese, there would have been no low prices. Indeed, the cheapness of cheese this season has come as a staggerer to people all over the world who are interested in the manufacture of what is a staple in so many districts here, and in the colonies and the States. For a long period there has been a war for supremacy in the cheese export trade going on between Canada and the States, and the former has won. It is able to turn out a better class of cheese, and the liability to 'heat' on voyage is not so great as it is with shipments from the States. So a year or two back Canada passed her rival and now monopolises the largest proportion of our import trade; her cheese being of such really excellent quality that it is sold for what it is in the shops, some provision dealers making quite a feature of 'Canadian Cheddar.' This cheese, especially that made late in the year—September *par excellence*—is of a solid firm texture, free from the leathery attributes of its 'filled' rival, slow ripened, and gradually matured, and will keep as well as any cheese turned out of an English dairy. It has grown greatly in favour here, not only with consumers, but with merchants who, owing to its keeping qualities, find it safe to handle.

Last year there was a big make of cheese in Canada, encouraged by the good prices fetched by the product during the previous season, and the United States also sent us large quantities, the total supply of 2,133,809 hundredweight being, however, 132,266 hundredweight below our imports for 1894. The season of 1895 was also a favourable one for the production of cheese in England, and it is calculated that an increased output took place here. The Antipodes have come into play as a serious factor in the cheese situation, the first nine months of 1895 witnessing the landing of 92,162 hundredweights thence, and as the greater part of this came in the earlier part of the year, it helped to intensify the plethora of stocks from all sources. With such a great make on all sides, agents for Canadian factors here and importers generally advised their correspondents on the other side not to ship, as a glut here would mean the sending down of prices. American and Canadian shippers followed this advice, and some factories were closed down, while thousands of boxes of cheese were put into store in Montreal and in the Western States to be brought out in better times. Only Australasia failed to take any notice of the condition of markets here, and with characteristic obstinacy shipped repeatedly in face of falling markets. Still, a certain portion of the spring and summer make had to come forward, and the consequence was that by the time the Cheshire pitches began prices had drooped until a really fine cheddar from the Dominion could be bought as low as thirty-eight shillings a hundredweight. The chief

persons to profit by this state of things are, of course, the retail dealers here in the case of foreign and the factors in that of home, as the consumer has nowhere been able to get near these first-hand prices.

The buyers at the pitches were aware of the facts we have stated. They knew that not only was there a large amount of the old make in store in different parts of England, some of it bought at sixty shillings a hundredweight the previous autumn; but they were aware that the make was pretty extensive in Canada again, and that the falling off in imports here arose from low prices and the going into store on the other side of a large quantity, which could be brought here by the cable in nine days if needed; and they regulated their purchases accordingly. They could buy splendid Canadian cheese at about forty shillings a hundredweight which would keep as long as they wanted it to. Why should they pay more for home made that might be converted into mould easier than into money?

This is the secret of the failure of Cheshire, and what will have to be guarded against as best it may in the future. The market has taken a better turn, and cheese sold at ruinous prices a short while back would show a profit now. The drought early in the year, in combination with the unprofitableness of making cheese to sell at the low prices ruling, has had a serious effect on the out-turn of home-pressed curd, and as Canada has gone in this year more for butter than ever before, her total make is also much reduced. Good cheese will fetch more money this winter than last, and previous losses may be in part made up. This shows the wisdom of making cheese that will keep.

At the Cheshire dairy show last year, prize cheese fetched comparatively quite a respectable figure, all the cheese on offer selling fairly well, and showing a profit. But it was capable of keeping. As they were told by the president of the show, the dairy farmers of Cheshire must make cheese that will keep, and to do this must revert to the system by which their fathers built up the fame of Cheshire. Then they will be able to act as their 'cute rivals do. When Cheshire was throwing her cheese away, Canada was putting hers by. She is now bringing it out and selling at a profit. Cheshire must do the same, or English cheese must follow English butter.

## THE HEDGLEY-HASKINS LAWSUIT.

### CHAPTER IV.

'FATHER, is there no way to stop this here lawsuit?'

Ben Haskins asked the question as he and his father were engaged in some work at the barn on Monday morning.

'I don't want to stop it,' promptly rejoined Mr Haskins senior.

'But I do,' said Ben.

'Go ahead and stop it, then,' cheerfully replied the other. 'I can't—and I won't.'

There was silence for some time after this ultimatum. But Ben was not disposed to yield so easily.

'Father,' he said at last, 'I've worked on the farm here all my life. I never grumbled or wanted to clear out, or spend money foolishly. Ain't that so?'

'That's so, Ben,' replied the father, wondering a little what his stalwart son was driving at. 'You've been a good boy—no mistake about that. But you'll git all this when I'm gone.'

'I never thought of that,' Ben rejoined slowly. 'Here was my place, and here I stayed. I never thought of anything different. But I do want somethin' now—I want to see this here lawsuit broke off.'

'Why?'

'Well, for one thing, I think it's a foolish piece of business. For another thing'—Ben paused, and a swift flush overspread his sunburnt brow—'I want to git married.'

Mr Haskins leaned against the side of the barn and stared.

'Git married!'

'Yes—ain't I old enough?' Ben was twenty-three.

'I s'pose you are—who to?'

'May Hedgley.' Again the swift flush was on Ben's face.

Mr Haskins stared at his son, then at the ground, and then at his son again; but said nothing for several minutes. Ben waited patiently.

'Said anything to her about it?' the old man at length inquired.

'Yes.'

'Well,' said Mr Haskins, after a little further deliberation, 'I think you're a fool.'

It was an angry flush that surged over Ben's face at this remark.

'What do you see wrong about it?' he demanded. 'Anything wrong with the girl?'

'She's a good enough girl, I guess,' said Mr Haskins slowly—'but she's a Hedgley.' The tone of the concluding observation conveyed unmistakably the idea that in Mr Haskins's mind the objection noted was insuperable.

'She's the best girl in the settlement, by a long chalk,' cried Ben warmly. 'She's a good housekeeper, and she knows how to mind her own business.'

'Well,' said Mr Haskins, 'that can't be said about 'em all, sure's you live. But she's a Hedgley, Ben.'

'Is that all you know against her?' his son demanded.

'Oh, I don't know nothin' about the girl. But she wouldn't be Hedgley's daughter if she couldn't wear a smooth face when she wanted to.'

'I'd rather you wouldn't talk that way, father,' said Ben sharply.

'What are you gon to do with 'er when you git 'er?' was the old man's next question.

'We kin live,' said Ben coldly, 'if not here—then somewheres else.'

Mr Haskins went on with his work for a few minutes in silence.

'Am I to understand that you're aginst it?' Ben demanded at last.

'Yes,' said Mr Haskins tersely and emphatically, 'I'm aginst it.'

Ben said no more. He felt that to go on would be to quarrel, and he and his father had not had a serious quarrel during his whole life. He shrank from it now, though feeling deeply his father's reception of what he had

had to say. He abruptly quitted work and left the barn. To get away by himself and think the thing out was paramount in his mind at that moment. He went into the house and threw on his coat, but before he got out again his mother, observing the unusual expression on his face, called him. In response to her inquiries he stated the case briefly.

'But where are you going now, Ben?' she asked.

'Oh, jist for a walk. I can't stay around the place to-day. I don't want to row with him, even if I do have to clear out. I want to go off somewheres now and make up my mind on this thing.'

'You 'll be home to dinner?'

'Perhaps. I don't know, mother. But I 'll be home to-night, anyhow.'

He did not come home to dinner, nor supper. Late that night, however, he arrived; and his mother, who sat up to watch for him, could see in his face that his old-time composure was fully restored. And she wondered at it. He ate some supper, but chided his mother for waiting up for him.

'I was anxious, Ben,' she said simply. 'You never stayed away that way before, without I knowed where you was, or was sure you was all right.'

Ben was her only son. Two daughters there were beside, but both were married and away. If Ben should go, the farmhouse would be lonely indeed. It had always been a kind of tacit understanding between Mr and Mrs Haskins that if Ben should marry, he and his wife would share the large farmhouse home with themselves. But Mr Haskins had no idea that the daughter of the Hedgleys would be Ben's choice. He and his wife had discussed the subject at great length that day, in Ben's absence. There could be nothing said against May Hedgley, and Mr Haskins even admitted privately to his wife that he thought she was a fine girl. But she was a Hedgley, and her father had sued Mr Haskins and was trying, Mr Haskins averred, to beat him out of a piece of his property. Mrs Haskins, mother-like, pleaded for Ben, and pointed out how hard it would be for them if he went away to the States or somewhere else, as he would be sure to do if his father quarrelled with him. He had been a good boy, and they ought to please him as far as possible. Mr Haskins admitted this, but thought at the same time that Ben should consider their feelings a little. And so they argued, without arriving at any definite conclusion, further than that Mr Haskins promised not to lose his temper in any case, and not to say anything more about the proposed marriage unless Ben broached the subject. He distinctly declared, however, that if Ben did marry the girl it would be in direct opposition to his wishes, and without his consent. From that position he decisively refused to withdraw, and for the next few days there was between father and son a kind of armed neutrality.

While all this was transpiring at the Haskins farmhouse there was a somewhat similar condition of affairs developing at the Hedgley domicile. On their way home from meeting on Sunday evening it occurred to Mr Hedgley to inquire of Mrs Hedgley concerning May's whereabouts at that particular moment. He was answered by one of May's younger brothers, who eagerly volunteered the information that she was with Ben Haskins; he had seen them turn off together at the cross-roads towards the bridge.

'That 's got to be stopped,' said Mr Hedgley with decision. 'I don't want none of Haskins's tribe about my place. If I hear of any more sech tricks, th 'll be trouble.'

To which observation Mrs Hedgley vouchsafed no reply. If Mr Hedgley got settled down to a discussion of the Haskins family, there was danger of his forgetting the sacredness of the day. Therefore Mrs Hedgley said nothing, and her husband, having issued his mandate, felt that it would be duly heeded, and permitted himself to resume his Sabbath meditations.

Imagine his surprise, therefore, the very next evening, when he and his wife were sitting together, May and the other children having retired, to learn from the lips of Mrs Hedgley that May and Ben Haskins wanted to get married, for May had confided the fact to her mother that day.

'What!' ejaculated Mr Hedgley.

His wife assured him that she spoke the truth.

'She shan't do it!' cried Mr Hedgley in a loud and angry voice.

'She says she will,' quietly observed Mrs Hedgley.

'Well, I say she shan't!' retorted the other. 'The rascal! If I 'd knowed he was fishin' around here tryin' to lead my girl off, he wouldn't come again in a hurry. How long 's this thing been goin' on? Did you know anything about it?'

'I never dreamt of the like,' said Mrs Hedgley, 'till she told me. I knowed they often met one another and that people said he liked May. But he never comes here, you know that.'

'The rascal!' repeated Mr Hedgley again with renewed energy. 'And she 's been fool enough to listen, hey? I 'll go straight and see him to-morrow. I 'll, I 'll—— huh!'

He broke off with an angry exclamation, too much overcome to finish the sentence.

'I don't b'lieve it 'll be any use to talk,' said Mrs Hedgley. 'I tried to reason with May, but it ain't no use. It 's a nice mess all round. You and Haskins is bound to go to law, and May and Ben 's bound to git married. We 'll be the laughin'-stock of the country.'

'Will we?' cried Mr Hedgley in great scorn. 'You 'll see whether we will or not. Wait till I git my eye on Ben Haskins!'

He had not long to wait, for he and Ben met the next morning. Ben was going down the road and Mr Hedgley was at work just inside the fence that separated his land from the highway. Ben came along whistling.

'Well, Mr Hedgley,' he said cheerfully as he came up, for he and Mr Hedgley had always been on speaking terms, and in view of recent happenings it seemed to Ben that the proper thing to do was to be as polite as possible to the man who had the distinction of being May's father. He was not a little dismayed at the reception accorded his well-meant advances by Mr Hedgley.

'See here, Ben Haskins,' cried that gentleman with great warmth, 'I want to talk to you. What notions have you been puttin' into my girl's head?'

'In what way, Mr Hedgley?'

'Oh, you know well enough what way. If I 'd had any idea the way things was goin', you 'd 'a' heard from me long 'go, young feller. If I ever ketch you round my girl agin, I 'll horsewhip you. I don't want none o' your tribe snupin' round me at all, and I won't have it nuther. I 've as good a mind as ever I had to eat,' went on Mr Hedgley with rapidly rising fury, 'to climb over that fence now and break this pitchfork over your back. You long-legged sneak! But it 's jist what I might expect—jist what I might expect. Your father wants to chisel me out o' my land, and now you 're tryin' to fill May's head with notions. You 're a nice feller, ain't you? You orto be ashamed of yourself!'

Mr Hedgley paused and glared angrily at his listener, whose face wore an expression of the utmost composure.

'Mr Hedgley,' Ben said quietly, 'I don't think you ought to say all that to me. If I want May to marry me, is there anything crooked or bad about that? Am I a rogue, or a thief, or a fool? You 've knowed me ever since I was a boy. Be fair and square, now; what do you know bad about me?'

'I don't want to know nothin' at all about you,' cried Mr Hedgley. 'I don't want nothin' to do with you. I want you to mind your own bis'ness. That 's what I want.'

'Well, Mr Hedgley, I am not gon to row with you,' said Ben. 'I hope you 'll git to see things different. Though I don't know but I ought to be glad that you and father 'ave found somethin' at last that you can agree on.'

'What 's that?' demanded Mr Hedgley sharply.

'About me and May. You both say we shan't git married,' Ben replied.

Mr Hedgley was somewhat taken aback at this remark. It galled him sorely to be found on the same side of an argument with Haskins senior, even if his daughter's future was involved in the outcome.

'Thinks she ain't good enough, I s'pose?' he queried in a belligerent tone.

'You 'll have to ask him that, sir,' Ben replied. 'But between the two of you there doesn't seem to be much chance for May and me.' And shrewdly noting the effect of his random shot, Ben thought it would be wise if he brought the conversation to a close just there. Without waiting further he strode off down the road.

## GOVERNMENT WASTE-PAPER.

The waste-paper department of Her Majesty's Stationery Office is a more interesting place than its general appearance might suggest. It consists of what was formerly a marble-mason's yard, with a range of old buildings round it. The enormous government stationery depot in Prince's Street, Westminster, takes in a constant stream of material from paper-mills, and factories, and printing-offices, and distributes it to over three hundred government establishments in all parts of the kingdom—including such mammoth concerns as the Post Office, the Admiralty, the Customs, the War Office, Somerset House, and so on—and from these there flow back equally steady but reduced currents of materials that have been used, into this waste-paper department in Earl Street, Westminster, half a mile or so from the central depot. They get in here something over two thousand tons of material annually, with a pretty steady increase of fifty tons a year—a fact which is in itself an interesting indication of the growing intricacy and expanding business of government establishments, as well as of the more systematic aim and precision with which all government transactions have now to be conducted. 'Over everything we do now,' said a civil servant of long standing and experience, 'we take five or six times as much trouble as we did when I first came into this office. Everything must now be reduced to writing. The least inaccuracy or discrepancy is the subject of correspondence and investigation, so that even the same amount of business requires a far greater amount of work.'

But business itself is continually expanding, and this waste-paper department feels the effect of it, and moreover may be considerably influenced by changes that might be supposed to be very remote from it. For instance, the establishment of the halfpenny postage for open envelopes has brought a very perceptible increase of material into the waste-paper branch of the Stationery Office. Enormous masses of circulars are every year sent out in unsealed envelopes through the post. These are addressed from directories—sometimes from old directories — and a very large proportion of them cannot be delivered, and are returned to the post-office, from which eventually they get packed off to Westminster to be treated as waste-paper. Of course there are sometimes changes which tend in the opposite direction. This is curiously suggested by a glance down the list of establishments to which the Stationery Office has had to deal out stores in the past. Several of these have the pen run through them, and the word 'abolished' written after them. Among them are the 'Salt Office,' the 'Lottery Office,' 'Registry of Slaves,' 'Commission for French Claims,' &c. Every such abolition, it need hardly be said, would reduce the business of the stationery depot, and of this branch of it; and though the particular establishments mentioned were extinguished before the waste-paper department had become an institution, there are occasionally official changes tending to reduce the consumption of government stationery, and to keep down the stream of 'waste-paper.'

Each of the three hundred government departments supplied from Prince's Street is kept provided with gunny-bags, into which all its used-up stores not of permanent importance are packed. Occasionally they manage to pack up things that hardly come under the head of used-up stores or waste-paper—a bundle of unused postage stamps, for instance, or a roll of postal orders, or an occasional cheque. They had a cheque turned out at the Earl Street waste-paper depot the other day that appeared to have run a curiously unfortunate career. It came originally from Siam, but the letter in which it was enclosed was wrongly addressed, and when opened was found to afford

no address of the sender. The letter itself thus represented two blunders, and its appearance at the waste-paper branch of the Stationery Office certainly indicated a third. However, the precious slip of paper was rescued, and was eventually put into the proper channel.

At certain intervals—about every six weeks in the case of the larger establishments—the well-stuffed gunny-bags are borne off to Earl Street, where large floors are to be seen heavily packed with them. Of late, indeed, the extensive premises have proved insufficient for their storage, and even at a slack time of year there may generally be seen great ricks of these gunny-bags piled up in the open air, and covered over by tarpaulins. When the time comes for dealing with them, they are hoisted by crane to an upper floor, and turned out upon tables, the tops of which consist mainly of strong wire gratings. By tossing about the contents of the bags on these gratings, the heaviest of the dust and small litter is separated, and specific sorting begins.

Many various kinds of things come under the general heading of 'waste-paper;' and the first business is to classify them under so many letters of the alphabet. Into one class are put all letters and envelopes. Class 'B' is for various forms of printed matter, such as old reports, and so on. For government official purposes there is a special kind of paper manufactured, of a light buff colour. This is set apart by itself under the letter 'C.' Then again, every consignment from any considerable post-office in the kingdom brings Earl Street large quantities of the narrow light blue strips on which telegrams for the newspapers are reeled off by the mile. Every week they get turned out upon the tables enormous quantities of these ribbons, still bearing messages that come into various offices, tingling with excitement for the public, but from which all interest has evaporated. These spent telegrams are heaped up in class 'D.' Then come browns and wrapping-papers generally, and next a class for all sorts of coloured writing-papers. There is also a division for odds and ends of string, scraps of tape, and pieces of gunny and canvas, all of which will by-and-by go to the making of brown paper. Next we come to class 'H,' into which all old account-book covers are set apart; and many of these, unless some shoe-manufacturers are sadly maligned, are destined, sooner or later, to do duty as leather for ladies' shoe-soles. It is said to be only wicked foreigners who do such things. A good deal of the millboard material of which account-book covers are made is exported to Belgium, and it is said to be there that they are deftly made up into shoe-soles, just thinly faced with leather, so as to present a very smart and durable appearance, until they are worn on a wet day, when, of course, there is rueful revelation. Torn newspapers and posters of various kinds form another class of waste; and finally, in class 'L' are deposited various sorts of paper combined with canvas or linen, which have to be disposed of separately, because the manufacturers' acid, which will dissolve the paper into its original pulp, will not similarly reduce the fibrous material.

These are the main classifications, though there are some other minor ones. For instance, paper that is a good deal embellished with sealing-wax has to be separately dealt with; and oiled paper, for which some offices make a certain amount of use, has to be specially managed, since, if massed together in any considerable quantity, it is liable to spontaneous combustion. Then again, the waste-paper bags contain a certain number of magazines, many of which have a market value, apart from that which they possess as waste-paper, and there are old printed books, such as out-of-date directories and almanacs, which dealers are sometimes willing to purchase. These may be sold without mutilation, but with a great deal of the waste here, such as letters and official documents, confidential reports, account-books, and so on, this cannot be done. At one time such things used to be sold to manufacturers, who were required to enter into bond to pulp them at once. This arrangement did not prove very satisfactory, and for a time government waste-paper was sent to Westminster Prison, or the one at Coldbath Fields, to be torn into fragments by the prisoners. This was continued till 1885, when the Home Secretary came to the conclusion that, 'as a matter of policy,' this arrangement was undesirable, and eventually a gas-engine and powerful guillotine cutting machines were set up in the premises here in Earl Street; and all sorts of letters and confidential documents are now passed down from the upper floor, by means of 'hoppers' and 'shoots,' to the machines, where they are sliced up into fragments too small to permit of any sort of information being gained from them. Account-books, after being stripped of their covers, have the headings of their pages sliced off, and may then be permitted to find their way to the butter shop, or, if they happen to be of hand-made paper, showing a slightly ribbed surface, they will fetch a comparatively high price from gold-beaters, who find such paper admirably adapted to the requirements of their business. They are also purchasers of old parchments, a good many of which find their way to the waste-paper depot, and which, according to the latest official report, realise as much as £16 a hundredweight.

There are forty or fifty girls and women always engaged at Earl Street in turning out and sorting and cutting up and re-packing into bags; and though it looks to be rather a dirty business, and some of it pretty hard work, employment is eagerly sought here. They get regular employment of eight hours a day, and they earn about ten shillings a week; and what is more, if they do not happen to be married, this ten shillings a week regularly coming in generally enables them to do so with very little delay. The most noticeable feature of their work is the refilling of the gunny-bags after the sorting and cutting up. The receptacles are suspended each by four hooked ropes fastened to the beams overhead. They are provided with Brobdingnagian wooden clubs to ram the paper down into the bag as it is filled in, but as a matter of practical experience they find it easier to get into the bags and tread it down—one filling in while another works

her way from the bottom of the sack to the top, and then descending by means of wooden steps.

Turned out, dusted, sorted, chopped up—if necessary—filled in again, and weighed, the waste-paper is now taken in hand by one or other of the dozen men also employed about the place, and stowed away. Periodically, precise statements of what is in stock are drawn up and sent to all known dealers in such materials, and those of them who wish to buy any of the lots offered to them return the lists with the highest bids they are prepared to make, and the highest bidder becomes the purchaser, and carries it off. The annual sales bring in something over £10,000 a year, which, according to arrangements prevailing up till 1841, would all have gone as 'perquisites' into official pockets. These were the good old times before the Civil Service 'went to the dogs.' It was found in very many cases that the official who pocketed the proceeds of waste-paper had the original ordering of the goods. The more he ordered, the greater would be the waste, and the better for his pocket; and of course there was a dreadful howl when, in 1841, Mr M'Culloch proposed a reform. The reform was indeed carried—on paper. But that too for a long time proved to be little better than waste-paper. The officials naturally entertained the strongest objection to relinquishing their customary perquisites, and held on to them, until a few of them were prosecuted for theft, or, to adopt the more polite phraseology of a Treasury minute, for 'the systematic misappropriation of public property;' and then for the first time Mr M'Culloch's reform became a real one, and ever since all waste has been properly collected and systematically dealt with.

## KELP-MAKING IN SHETLAND.

The manufacture of kelp was carried on with energy in Shetland more than fifty years ago; and during the seventies the price touched its highest point—namely, 7s. 6d. per cwt. In those days the crofter-fisherman found kelp-making a considerable aid in enabling him to meet his rent, and in providing food and clothing for his family—often no easy task in Shetland, owing to frequent failure of crops and uncertain earnings from the sea. If a man had an energetic wife and grown-up daughters, his chances of good returns were the more certain. The local 'merchants' in most places readily bought up the kelp, paying for it in goods, of course: cash was seldom or never asked for, from the fact that the sellers knew that it would not be given, and they were quite content to get any kind of material, or meal, or flour, for the value of the kelp sold. The kelp was often made in out-of-the-way places, and at a distance from the store-places of the local buyer; and it was not an uncommon thing to see girls and old women carrying thither filled 'kiashies' (straw baskets), the weight of a single kiashieful often being considerably in excess of a hundredweight. The process of weighing, however, was to the seller the most irritating part of the whole business; and it was no rare thing to hear the panting, perspiring girl—gesticulating wildly, and with fiery eye, and face white with passion—venting her feelings in vehement language at what she justly termed robbery on the part of the merchant, who insisted upon 119 lb., or 1 cwt. and 7 lb. to each hundredweight. We do not know if this was a universal custom in regard to kelp-weighing, but we can vouch for the fact that this weight was taken in some of the islands.

The manufacture of kelp in Shetland has now fallen off; although in some of the islands one still sees, in passing along the coast, the familiar and well-known cloud of blue smoke arising from some low-lying part of the shore. There is a curious superstition connected with kelp-burning. When the fire is first lighted care must be taken that the wind is from such a direction that the smoke will blow landwards; if the smoke went to seaward, the crop of seaware next year would be destroyed. Such being the popular belief, no kelp fire was ever set alight without first looking 'how the wind lay.'

The seaweed known to the islanders as 'red warr' is the best, and many buyers of kelp were so particular that 'red warr' alone was used, that they sometimes set a watch near the kiln during the burning process. The ware is gathered in during the months of April to September. This part of the work is performed by the women. Wading almost waist-deep into the sea, with bare feet and legs, and often scantily clad, they drag ashore the dark-brown masses of ware that are found floating near the surface. At other times they proceed in a small boat to outlying rocks—'skerries'—and with sickle in hand, bending far over the gunwale, they cut off the ware and 'tangles' at arm's-length below the surface of the water. After stormy weather and high seas masses of drift or detached ware are thrown on shore, and this is considered by the people more immediately concerned as a godsend. After all the ware has been gathered it is put into round stacks and is spread out the first dry day thereafter. This alternate spreading and stacking is continued until the ware assumes a light brown colour, and at the same time has become partially dry and brittle. An earthen box or enclosure, about fourteen inches broad and six inches deep, and varying in length from eight to twelve feet, according to the quantity of ware to be burned, is then formed of 'feals' or sods built on a clean plot of grass. Once lighted, the burning is kept going night and day, in a careful and systematic manner, care being taken to lay the ware on evenly; and the fire is only allowed to burn low for raking, that is, to allow an iron instrument like a small garden rake to be passed from end to end of the kiln longitudinally. At this stage the kelp is a semi-liquid mass, of reddish colour, and glowing like molten iron. When the ware has all been burned the fire is put out, sea-water being used for the purpose, and the whole mass is then closely covered with sods, and allowed to thoroughly cool. It is now a solid, hard substance of a dark bluish-black colour, and very heavy for its bulk.

When quite hard and cold, the mass is broken up by being struck with hammers or heavy stones—chiefly the latter as being the most ready and plentiful—and divided into pieces varying in weight from three-quarters to one and a quarter hundredweight. The workers are, as may be easily imagined, almost the very colour of the kelp—face, hands, and clothes being stained a deep blue. But this is of little consequence, as the stuff seems to contain all the cleansing properties of a first-class soap, and washes off quite freely from the skin, as well as from cotton and woollen fabrics. Iodine, an expensive and valuable substance used largely in medicine and photography, is the chief substance of value chemically extracted from kelp, and the demand for it at one time almost doubled the price of the article. Before, this kelp was largely used in the production of soda or soap, and the residue, after the iodine is extracted, is still used for the purpose.

## THE YAQUI INDIANS.

The Yaqui Indians are the most populous aboriginal tribe dwelling in the Mexican province of Sonora. Before the advent of the Spaniards they were the most numerous and powerful race in Northern Mexico, and were then, as now, an exceedingly peaceful people. They tilled the soil and raised large crops of grain, and even indulged in many of the minor manufactures, making an excellent pottery, and weaving blankets and woollen fabrics, which they exported or traded with their neighbours. Since the Spanish conquest, wherever they have been left to themselves, they have remained an independent, self-supporting people; but that inherent faculty for oppression and extortion, everywhere common to Spanish peoples, has decimated their numbers and driven many of them into open rebellion against the recognised authorities.

Shortly after the arrival of the Spaniards thousands of these Indians were enslaved and driven at the point of the musket to work the gold and silver mines of the country. So ruthless were their taskmasters, and so blind to their own interests in the eager rush for wealth, that thousands, some good authorities say hundreds of thousands of slaves, were literally worked to death.

This state of affairs continued until the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Spaniards saw their folly in killing the geese which laid the golden eggs, and somewhat moderated their hard treatment of the native races all over Mexico; but it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that their lot became bearable, and it has gradually improved from that date.

Nearly all the work in the Sonora mines, and much agricultural labour as well, is done by the Yaquis. As the traveller takes the train through the country he will notice here and there little bands of them on the railroad track, barefooted or in sandals, working industriously, and exhibiting an activity and gaiety in marked contrast to the sullen, browbeaten, Mexican labourer. This last is, after all, only a mixed Indian, in whose veins courses the blood of many tribes, intermingled with a dash of Spanish. Nominally free men, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they find that their freedom begins and ends with the word; for though there is now no legal slavery in Mexico, the Indians are still kept in a state of servitude by the superior wit and finesse of their masters. For example, it is the common law everywhere in Mexico that when a labourer is indebted to his master he must stay with him and work off the debt. Now, the proprietor of a large hacienda, say ten or fifteen leagues square, pays his hands entirely, it may be said, in provisions and merchandise. He keeps always on hand a large stock of the common necessaries of life and the cheaper kinds of clothing. These he disposes of at outrageous prices, and always keeps his workers so much in debt that there is seldom, if ever, a piece of money given to them, work they ever so hard or industriously. As the proprietor of the hacienda is the only one who keeps a record of such transactions, and the Indian is positively forbidden to keep any account for himself, it will be seen that it is no difficult matter for him to be invariably in debt.

This system is bad enough as conducted on the haciendas, but it is infinitely worse in the mines, where many of the Yaquis are yet worked and overworked in a manner that reminds one of the days of Cortes.

In the Altar mining district on the Pacific coast is a concession jointly owned by several Mexican families, having an area of five hundred and forty square miles. This is the Llanos and Cienega Concession, a strip of as rich mineral country as is anywhere to be found in the world. In length it measures some twenty leagues, and is three leagues wide. For over two hundred years it has been worked for gold by the Spaniards and Mexicans; two hundred years that we know of, and doubtless for centuries before that, as now and again are unearthed stone implements of a time that long antedate the arrival of the Spaniards. Indian traditions also tell of vast quantities of gold having been taken therefrom and sent down to the city of Mexico to the Aztec kings and to the Montezumas.

The system of winning the gold from the alluvial there adopted is different from any method seen outside of Mexico. In working alluvial diggings, generally known as placer mining, it is customary to obtain the gold by means of a running stream of water directed through sluice-boxes, the gold settling by its own weight in the riffles at the bottom, while the gravel is carried away in the stream. So absolutely necessary is water regarded for this class of mining, that where there is none at hand placer mining is abandoned as being hopeless; but in the dry districts of Mexico the natives have contrived a machine to extract the gold from the alluvial which sets the commonly accepted theory at defiance. So far, indeed, have they gone in the opposite direction, that the drier the soil the easier they find it to

work, and water of any kind, even a slight shower of rain, they find detrimental to the working of their machines.

The machine looks like a heavy canvas-topped table, with a hopper at one end. Into this hopper the gravel is thrown, and the table being placed in a slanting position the gravel and dirt fall down over its surface. Across the canvas top are nailed strips of wood. A bellows like a blacksmith's, kept in constant motion underneath, gives the canvas an undulating movement, which forces the dirt over its surface and retains the heavy particles of gold behind the wooden slats. The principle is the same as in the ordinary water method of extraction.

In the Llanos and Cienega Concession are the two little towns, El Tero and El Yaqui, about a mile and a half apart. The population of each is about eight hundred souls, and probably two hundred of the total number are Mexicans, and the balance Yaquis. Within a radius of three or four miles from both settlements a hundred and fifty machines are kept steadily employed. Five Yaquis dig up the gravel and attend to each machine, while a Mexican foreman stands by and, lazily puffing a cigarette, superintends the job. It is this foreman's duty to collect the gold, and at the end of each day turn it in to the proprietor of the mines. The task set for each little gang is the treatment of twenty-six tons of alluvial per diem. At first this does not seem so exorbitant, but when one considers that the gravel has all to be sifted in order to separate the large stones from the pay dirt, and that much of it has to be carried up out of deep holes, in leathern sacks on the heads of the workers, it is seen at once that this is indeed a heavy task. And the pay for this labour amounts to the munificent sum of tenpence a day. This would be little enough if the wages were paid in money; but when we consider that even this small wage is taken in trade at the mine-owners' store, where no article is sold at a less price than a hundred per cent. above that which obtains in the town, it will be seen what a beggarly pittance theirs is.

And yet the Yaqui doesn't grumble at his lot, even to his companions. He is always good-natured and generally smiling, even though he be so tired that at night-time he can scarcely crawl home to his wife and children, for his daily task requires twelve and sometimes fourteen hours to accomplish. The greater part of that time he is working beneath an almost tropical sun, which sends the mercury up to a hundred and ten degrees for many consecutive hours; and there are times when even a hundred and eighteen and a hundred and twenty degrees are registered. No Mexican labourer, or indeed any other class of men, could stand the work.

A queer-looking home is the Yaqui's hut. It is built of branches of the oquetoa bush, a species of thorn. The roof is made of brush carelessly thrown on the top. In this home evidently little effort has been made to keep out the fresh air, as one can see through the sides as easily as through a lattice-work. This is no drawback to the Yaqui, who for eight months of the twelve sleeps and cooks outside; their hut in the meantime being used as a store for all their worldly goods and possessions, which, as might be expected, do not amount to much, either in quantity or in value—a small supply of provisions, some cooking utensils, and a very spare assortment of clothing and bedding. Much bedding they neither have nor need, as during three-fourths of the year the nights are so warm that covering of any kind is unnecessary, and the remaining quarter is only cool enough at night-time to make the women wrap their shawls more closely round them, and the men crawl under their serapes.

The Yaqui's serape serves a number of purposes. It is his bed and blanket during the cool weather of the winter nights; his cloak in the spring mornings when the air is yet brisk before the sun warms the atmosphere; and his saddle-blanket when he is travelling on horseback. It is a gaudily coloured affair, a blanket in which all the colours of the rainbow are to be counted. And yet it is not unattractive; the pattern, quaint and unusual, is woven with a regularity and precision which speak well for the deftness of the weavers; and the colours, often glaring, are placed in such cunning juxtaposition that one can seldom pick out a single serape that could in reason be called ugly. Serapes are cheap too; a small one, seven feet by four, can be purchased for a sum equivalent to ten shillings. As the majority of them are very thick and strongly made they form excellent rugs, superior for durability and neatness of design to many imitation oriental rugs, for which much higher prices are obtained.

Shamefully as he has been misused for generations, every one who comes in contact with the Yaqui gives him credit for being a good industrious Indian. Neither better nor worse than other places in Sonora is the treatment accorded to him on the Llanos and Cienega Concession. These mines support in luxury a score of wealthy families in the city of Mexico, and as many indolent, dissipated Mexican overseers in the province of Sonora, who squander at the gaming tables in Hermosillo and Guaymas thousands of pounds with a nonchalance that is only to be accounted for by the fact that they feel secure in a never-ending supply of the precious metal to be garnered at their order by a herd of docile Indians. It is estimated that the gold from this concession, which is worth three pounds fifteen shillings an ounce, costs only seventeen shillings an ounce to produce.

Down in Hermosillo the Government of Sonora considers it has an Indian question. So it has in a manner, one that it has raised itself, and for which it is entirely responsible. Mexican-like, the Sonora Government some years ago confiscated the lands along the course of the Yaqui River, which had from time immemorial been owned by the Yaqui tribe. This land the Government recently sold to an American company, which intends, after directing the Yaqui River over its fertile soil, to raise large crops of tobacco and coffee for the European markets. Angered at what they consider a barefaced robbery, a portion of the tribe went on the warpath, and bade defiance

to the troops sent against them. For over twenty years has the Government tried to subjugate this little band of warriors, but without success since the year 1886, when having been driven away from the river, they took to the mountains, from which they have never been dislodged. As a fighting man the Yaqui is a success. The same qualities of perseverance and grit which go to make him an excellent worker also make him an enemy not to be despised. Time after time have the Sonora troops left the capital to settle the Yaqui question, and each time have they returned considerably reduced in numbers. In the mountains, where the Indians are thoroughly at home, they patiently await the coming of the troops, and distributed over the open country, each man ensconced behind a cactus bush, patiently return shot for shot with the enemy. As they know every foot of the country, and each man fights on his own account, with never a thought of surrender even if wounded, the poorly commanded and worse equipped soldiery get tired of the job long before the Indians. At night-time, singly and in pairs, the Yaquis crawl from one bunch of cactus to another, unseen by the sentries, whom they shoot down, and then the bulk of their forces, which are not far away, rush up, and after firing two or three volleys into the Mexican camp disperse in all directions. As they never form into a compact body, the soldiers cannot get the satisfaction of a pitched battle, but have to submit to a demoralising system of guerilla warfare. After a brief campaign of this unsatisfactory fighting, disheartened and vanquished, the soldiers retreat.

In any other country such a state of affairs would not last long. The open rebellion of an aboriginal tribe would be crushed with an iron hand; but in Mexico, where nobody is ever in a hurry, this warfare is allowed to drag itself through many years.

It is in this way. The Mexican army is mainly composed of recruits forced into its ranks from the jails. A prisoner is released from confinement on condition that he enlists in the army; thus the cost of keeping him in jail at the expense of the state is avoided, and frequently a man is sentenced to enlistment without ever being sent to jail, with the same economical end in view.

This method of recruiting the army prevails to a greater or less extent all through Mexico, and is more particularly the rule in the province of Sonora, where not infrequently a whole regiment, barring the non-commissioned and commissioned officers, is composed of criminals. With a regiment so recruited it is not surprising that there are many desertions, and that *esprit de corps* is entirely lacking.

Before going to the front these criminal soldiers have often been given but three or four weeks' drill in company and regimental movements. This is perhaps considered enough to get them to the point where the enemy are to be found, but it is not sufficient to inculcate discipline, and enable them to overcome the Yaqui with his demoralising style of warfare. Under these circumstances, no one ought to be surprised that the Yaquis still hold up their flag, and laugh at the Government. So repeatedly have they beaten the troops sent against them that they do not now look upon war at all seriously; indeed, they rather enjoy it than otherwise, sometimes provoking it just to get possession of the commissariat wagons with their contents, and the rifles and ammunition of the troops.

Of the Yaquis on the warpath, the number is relatively very small, and the fighting strength of the tribe is kept up in this way. As soon as the chief is informed by his scouts that a detachment of soldiers is advancing to demand his surrender, or to exterminate his band of followers, he at once sends out messengers in every direction to the district where he knows bodies of his clansmen are working. In a short while, by twos and threes, they straggle in, and coming from many quarters they swell the Yaqui army to respectable proportions.

After having stayed away from their employment long enough to see the troops return, they go back to work as if nothing had happened. Thus has the Yaqui war been prolonged for years. It is reasonably supposed, however, that a termination to this strife may be looked for before another year passes away. The American company which has bought the lands in dispute from the Mexican Government, and has spent large sums of money during the last few years in digging irrigation ditches for the cultivation of the soil, which is said to be the richest in Sonora, and capable of producing most remarkable crops of tobacco, coffee, cotton, and sugar, is now ready to begin cultivation. It will therefore be necessary for the Government to suppress the insurrection. Among those interested in the completion of the irrigation ditches, and the ultimate cultivation of all that rich country along the course of the Yaqui river, there is a growing opinion that the war will die out as soon as the call for labourers is heard in the land. The Indians will then only be too glad to obtain steady work with the assurance of good wages; and this will be guaranteed them by the landowners, who will need all the labour the country can afford to sow and harvest their crops.

In future years these Indians, strong and intelligent as they are, and addicted to few vices, will become the backbone of the working-classes of Sonora, and will add an untold sum to the value of one of the most promising countries in the world, a value which under Mexican misrule alone would never have been dreamt of.

## THE SWEETEST THING IN THE WORLD.

Oh tell me what are the sweetest things
In nature or in art?
Sweet is the sound of the trembling strings,
Sweet is the living voice that sings,
But sweetest the fount whence music springs,
The loving, silent heart.

David Anderson.

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## JOURNALISTIC REMUNERATION.

The remuneration of writers generally proves an interesting subject in these days when so many people of all grades and classes make use of the pen as a walking-stick; nevertheless this is a side of the great question strangely neglected by the so-called hand-books to journalism. People who only write occasionally have, as a rule, very curious ideas of what their efforts are worth from a mercenary point of view, and it must be understood that in this article no attempt is to be made to compare or dilate upon the incomes of salaried journalists, the enlightenment of the 'fugitive contributor' alone being considered.

There can be little doubt that the great literary boom, concerning which that veteran journalist, Mr James Payn, prophesied some sixteen years ago, is now in our midst. Nearly every day sees the birth of some new issue, and hence in London, where papers on the bookstalls are returnable, the bookstalls at the railway stations threaten to extend into the tunnels, so great is the strain upon their accommodation. It is still, however, the custom to speak slightingly of journalism as an ill-paid and half-starved profession; Mr Stead has said that a man must be unusually mentally active, and ever on the alert, to make four or five pounds a week; but the latter observation was made some few years ago, and hardly applies to the present state of affairs in the journalistic world. In fact, an energetic and capable 'free-lance' can pick up a very snug little income, untrammelled by any of the drawbacks of an office life; and while all cannot be members of the regular staff of a newspaper, it should be remembered that there is always room for good copy, even in the most exclusive of journals. Unquestionably most of the best writing for the Press is done by the 'free-lance;' his articles must be good or they will be rejected.

The *Times* will pay from five to ten guineas for an article contributed by a correspondent, and rather than lose a good one, considerably more. If one has really got anything to say of great public interest, or any information of a peculiarly exclusive character, it is always better to begin with the Jupiter of Printing House Square. No paper is more prompt and courteous in returning unsuitable manuscript, provided, of course, that the golden rule of always enclosing a fully stamped and addressed envelope is carefully attended to. The rate on the other great London dailies is, as a rule, two guineas per column; the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily News*, the *Standard*, and the *Morning Post* all paying that sum. Formerly the *Daily Chronicle* would have nothing to do with that obsolete coin, the guinea, reckoning its remuneration in pounds, and that at the rate of one to a column; but with increased circulation the rate has probably made a corresponding advance. Articles exceeding a column in length, or at the most a column and a 'stick,' are not encouraged. As a well-known newspaper manager once told the writer, articles should just turn the column and no more; space being an important consideration with all editors, and therefore allowance for copy exceeding the column is rarely given, payment being in reality two guineas for an article rather than per column; though the *Daily News* always gives its contributors the benefit for all that is printed. The 'halfpenny' mornings vary so much in size, that it is difficult to lay down any hard and fast rule concerning their scale of remuneration. A guinea and a half per column will be found near the mark, the latter being the rate on that extremely prosperous venture, the *Daily Mail;* while the provincial dailies rarely exceed an honorarium of one guinea. The daily morning journals, however, take very little from outsiders, having large staffs and correspondents of their own in all parts of the world; therefore the free-lance will do far better by bombarding the evening papers with his lucubrations, since for their copy these subsist to a far greater extent upon that sent in from extraneous quarters.

Among the London evening newspapers the *Pall Mall Gazette* holds pride of place for most munificently rewarding its contributors, two

guineas per column being the usual rate, while for special articles a good deal more is given. The *Evening Standard*, whose literary matter is practically confined to the entertaining essays that form the leading feature of its outside page, pays for them at the rate of two guineas a column, but a contributor fortunate enough to receive a proof will have to wait some time before his article will appear. The *St James's Gazette* at one time was said to pay as much as three guineas for an article, now the remuneration is a guinea and a half, while should the copy submitted be converted into a 'leader,' two guineas will be allowed. The *Westminster Gazette* pays a guinea and a half per column; and during Baron Grant's *régime* this was the sum given by the *Echo*, which now rarely renders more than a guinea. The *Globe* rewards the writers of its 'turnovers' with a guinea; and as with such a small paper space is very much cramped, littérateurs should be careful to cut their effusions intended for this journal as short as possible.

The weekly reviews, the *Spectator*, the *Saturday Review*, &c., give as much as five guineas for accepted articles, but in their case special attention should be drawn to the editorial warning that the sending of a proof is no guarantee of acceptance. The editors of these periodicals appear to agree with the dictum of everything reading raw in manuscript, and not improbably strike a proof of anything that seems promising. Again, contributors should be careful to keep copies of their manuscript, since the rule that no rejected matter can be returned, even when stamps are enclosed, is rigidly adhered to.

The remuneration for the letterpress of the weekly illustrated papers it is impossible to define; for since this class of journal is so entirely at the mercy of the art-editor, contributing articles to them is fraught with a good deal of uncertainty. Probably no papers have done more towards bettering the condition of the middle-class author and sharp paragrapher than those of what are known as the 'bits' class. During its early years *Tit-Bits*, the forerunner of innumerable similar productions, only paid one guinea for its weekly prize-story, outside contributions for its other columns not being invited; now, however, one guinea per column is the rate throughout the paper, and quite recently a special premium page has been instituted on which the remuneration is at double the above. *Answers*, the *Success*, the *Golden Penny* all pay one guinea per column; and the first-named by the weekly award of a five-pound note for what is considered the best article in each issue may be said to reward its fortunate recipient in a truly liberal manner. *Pearson's Weekly* gives two guineas a column for original articles; and this shall close our list.

One of the most important considerations, however, to the great army of writers is the question of when they are paid for their work. A paper might offer to pay ten pounds a column, but if one had to wait several years for it, the brilliancy of such an arrangement would in the meantime lose some of its lustre. In America many magazines and newspapers pay promptly on acceptance, and it is often urged that English editors should follow their example. Over here monthly settlements are the general rule, though a few offices like the *Daily News*, for instance, pay their contributors weekly. One of the promptest newspapers under the former arrangement is the *St James's Gazette*, which mails its cheques on the first of each month, while the majority clear them off as fast as circumstances will permit; at any rate contributors need suffer no uneasiness on this score.

Much also has been written concerning the relations between editor and contributor, clerical editors being frequently singled out as being sadly deficient in the rules of official politeness; as a matter of fact, high-class trade journals are the most punctilious in this respect, their courtesy and good-feeling often coming as a surprise to those who have received what to them may seem unnecessary rebuffs in the gentle art of contributing manuscripts—as far as the general run of periodicals is concerned.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER XI. (*continued*).

'THE case is as follows, my lord. This evening, after General Roche's death, and when His Majesty had entered the palace with you, my first work was to pack the troops back to their barracks, then to see that the traitor's body was conveyed to the mortuary to await burial. After that had been done I doubled the sentries on the walls in case the French should come up as Roche had arranged, and then set off to find the man who had been my wretched predecessor's accomplice. Taking a sergeant and half-a-dozen men with me, I searched every part of the citadel in which he could possibly have found a hiding-place, but without success. At last, however, a man came to report having seen the individual in question crouching behind the great water-tanks between the barracks and the arsenal. Thither we repaired and captured our man. He did not attempt to resist, but whined continually for mercy, imagining, I can only suppose, that he would be soon put to death. I did not undeceive him, but had him conveyed to the guardroom, where I questioned him regarding the plot in which he had assisted. However good a conspirator he may have been, he proved a despicable coward when driven into a corner. At first his answers were evasive, and he devoted himself to denying all connection with the conspiracy in question. Seeing this, I resolved to play a game of bluff, and, summoning the sergeant, ordered him to take a couple of files and lead the man to a secluded place behind the arsenal and shoot him at once. This brought the fellow to his senses. He grovelled upon the floor, implored mercy, and finally confessed outright. From what he said I gathered that Roche and himself were alone concerned in the plot. None of the other officers of the garrison nor the palace officials played any part in it whatever. I questioned him as to Roche's intentions in the event of success crowning their efforts, and learnt the following. It appears that the garrison was to march out and be annihilated in the jungle about twenty miles from the city. The French were then to walk in without resistance. Roche was to receive a reward of ten thousand pounds and an important position in the Tonquin forces, while he, my informant, it was arranged should receive five thousand francs as his share of the infamous transaction.'

'But in the event of their not being successful, what was to happen then?' I asked.

'That is exactly what I am coming to,' he answered. 'At first the fellow seemed reluctant to tell me, but upon my rising from my seat and bidding the sergeant lead him off to execution he soon found his tongue; and this is what came out. In the event of the messenger not returning to the camp with the order for the troops to advance, twenty-four hours were to elapse. Then if all were satisfactory at the citadel and the necessary arrangements had been made, exactly at ten o'clock on the night following, Roche was to display two lanterns on the western wall for five minutes, to be followed by a single lantern, which would be swung to and fro for three. A horseman who had been watching from a spot in the jungle would then set off and convey the intelligence to the commanders of the troops, who would at once advance, Roche agreeing to let them in by the main gate before daylight.'

'The scoundrel—the double-dyed treacherous scoundrel,' I cried, striking my fist upon the table. 'But surely, Prennan, there may be some way in which we can turn this to account.'

'That is exactly why I worried you with my news to-night,' replied Prennan. 'Had it been less important I should have kept it to myself until to-morrow.'

'I am glad you did not. But there is one thing we must find out first,' I said, 'and that is where the force that is to attack the citadel is encamped. Do you know?'

'In the jungle about thirty miles to the westward of the city I believe,' he answered. 'But I do not know the exact locality—however, we should have no difficulty in obtaining it from the prisoner. If you wish it I will go and question him at once.'

'That would be the better plan I think,' I answered. Then as an idea struck me I continued: 'On second thoughts I think I will accompany you. Where shall we find the prisoner?'

'In the cells behind the barracks my lord,' he replied. 'I have placed a sentry over him that there may be no possible chance of his escaping.'

'Very good. Then if you will lead the way, I will follow you.'

'But you are worn out—and'——

'And the business upon which we are embarking is more important than any feeling of fatigue, I believe you were going to say. Come, come, general,' I interrupted, 'let us get on. The sooner we have questioned him and I have ascertained what I want to know the sooner I shall be able to get to my bed.'

With that we let ourselves out by a side-door, and proceeded across the great courtyard, now chill with the newness of the morning, and past the barracks to the cells where the man in question was confined. A sentry with loaded rifle was pacing up and down the stones before the door, but when he saw us enter the yard, he halted and came to the present. The general had taken the precaution to keep the key himself; with it he now opened the door, and we entered.

It was evident the prisoner had not attempted to sleep, but was still seated on his bed-place just as his guard had left him, waiting with a scared face for his sentence to be pronounced upon him. The lantern which was placed outside the window did not give a very good light, so I brought it in and hung it upon a nail above the bed. Having done this I turned to examine the man before me. He was a tall fellow with a not unhandsome face; wore a large beard and moustache, was well set up, and evidently of decent birth. There was, however, something about his face that seemed strangely familiar to me, though I could not tell where I had met it before. Suddenly it dawned upon me, and a second later I turned to Prennan and said in German:

'Will you oblige me by sending for a barber? I want to have this fellow shaved.'

He looked surprised, but imagining I had some very good reason for my singular request, did as I asked without comment. When the man arrived, the operation was performed, not, however, without a show of reluctance upon the prisoner's part. While the work was proceeding, I took the general outside, and after it was finished led him into the cell again.

'Now,' I said, 'oblige me by looking at the man, and tell me where you have seen him before. I think it is just possible you may see a likeness to some one you have met.'

Prennan looked and then turned sharply round to me.

'He is the native who attempted the king's life on his wedding day, and who swore he did not know a word of French. I should recognise him anywhere.'

At this the prisoner, imagining that his doom was decreed, fell upon his knees and whined pitifully for mercy.

'Get up,' said the general, with an expression of disgust upon his face such as I cannot hope to describe to you. 'If you want to save your miserable life, you had better collect your wits and prepare to answer truthfully the questions his lordship is going to put to you. Otherwise you die in an hour.'

'I will answer,' whined the man, licking his dry lips and almost grovelling in his eagerness to betray his friends. 'I swear to you I will answer truthfully any questions you may put to me.'

'Then tell us where the French force is located that was to march in here to-night,' I said.

'They are encamped on a plain in the jungle twenty-nine miles to the westward of the city.'

'Whereabouts is this plain?'

'It is three miles beyond the lake in the hills, called by the natives the lake of A-Thou.'

I turned to Prennan, who knew the country as well as any man in it.

'Do you know the place?' I asked.

'I know the lake of A-Thou well enough,' he answered, 'but I do not know the plain he speaks of. To the best of my knowledge, it is all dense jungle thereabouts, into which very few natives have penetrated.'

I turned to the prisoner again.

'If you are deceiving me, it will be the worse for you. Supposing I gave you the chance, could you lead us to this plain you speak of?'

'With my eyes shut,' he answered confidently. 'If you will but spare my life, I will take you there in almost half the time that you would reach it by any other road. I know a way through a certain pass in the hills that cuts off half the distance.'

'Do the French know of this short cut?'

'Perfectly well. I showed it to their commander myself only a week ago.'

'And how long will it take us to reach this pass proceeding on foot?'

'Not more than four hours. I did the distance myself on foot in that time.'

'Could you take us there under cover of night?'

'Day or night will be the same to me.'

I looked at Prennan and he looked at me. I then informed the prisoner that we would give him a decision in an hour, and signing to the general to follow me, left the cell, taking the precaution to remove the lantern, and to lock the door carefully after us when we went out. I could scarcely contain my eagerness, and once back in my own room I spoke.

'If what this man has told us proves to be true,' I said, reaching down a map from the wall, 'we may be able to turn Roche's treachery to good account after all. The enemy, as you are aware, have distributed their forces as follows: One portion is here, within the frontier, and was yesterday defeated by General Du Berg. A second is now encamped in the jungle, which I will mark here. That is the force which is to seize the capital, and having garrisoned it is to turn south and fall upon the king's army in the rear. The third, which is also the weakest, is hastening up from the eastward in this direction in order to afford support to that engaged by Du Berg. Now the plan I have in my mind is as follows: You must remember no word has been carried to the foe that their plot has failed. Therefore we must allow no one out of the citadel to-morrow with one exception to be mentioned directly. As soon as dusk has fallen, to-morrow, or rather this evening, since it is now morning, every man that can be spared must march out to the pass mentioned by the prisoner we have just left, under his guidance. Once there they will prepare to take the enemy by surprise as they are marching through the ravine. At ten o'clock the signal with the lanterns will be given from the battlements as arranged, the messenger will depart satisfied, and the force will then start for the city. The rest should be easy. Now to go back a little. A despatch informing Du Berg of all that has occurred must be written at once and forwarded by a messenger we can trust. If the foe are inclined to show fight, he must either attack them and drive them back as far as possible, or leave half his force to hold them in check while he proceeds across country to meet us on the plain upon the the other side, and cut off the stragglers as they emerge. By the end of the week we should have the reserves and native allies in readiness to co-operate with him and drive the third detachment towards him; the rest should be only a matter of time. What do you think of my scheme?'

'It strikes me as admirable. If it can only be worked out—which should not be difficult.'

'In that case I will draft the despatches while you find a messenger whom you can trust. He must be a reliable man in every way, and on no account must he let what I shall write fall into the enemy's hands.'

'I know the very man for the work. I will call him up at once.'

'Please do so. If you will have him ready to start in an hour, I shall have prepared my letter by that time.'

He left the room, and I settled myself down at my table to write. It was broad daylight by the time I had finished, and I was so weary I could scarcely open my eyes or move my limbs. Then the messenger had to be examined, instructed, and despatched, after which I went softly along the corridor and knocked at the king's bedroom door. The doctor answered it, and on seeing who it was, came into the passage to speak to me.

'How is your patient?' I asked anxiously.

'In a very critical condition, my lord,' he answered. 'I fear the case is even more serious than we imagine. But I shall be able to tell you something more definite by mid-day, I hope.'

I thanked him, and, with an aching heart, went back to my own room. It looked as if I should require all my strength for the work that would have to be accomplished before I should get to bed again. In less than five minutes I was on my bed enjoying such sleep as I had never known in my life before.

(*To be continued.*)

## GOLD-MINING IN NEW ZEALAND.

By A New Zealand Journalist.

There is a big, jagged tongue of land, projecting northwards into the sea, on the east coast of the north island of New Zealand. The long rollers of the Pacific break on its outer side, and it acts in some measure as a break-wind for the waters of the Hauraki Gulf, at the head of which lies the picturesque city of Auckland. This projecting tongue of land is called the Coromandel or Hauraki Peninsula, and is the scene of the present gold-mining revival which has attracted the eyes of English capitalists to New Zealand with a fresh interest.

The Coromandel Peninsula is a network of hills and valleys of all sizes and shapes, as if a sea of molten earth and rock had suddenly become solid in the moment of its wildest commotion. Those rugged hills and hollows are mostly covered with New Zealand bush—a somewhat impenetrable combination of high forest trees and dense vegetable undergrowth. Beneath this shaggy coating of bush, imprisoned in reefs in the hills and valleys, lies the gold, which at present is the subject of so much talk and sanguine expectations. The knowledge that the Coromandel Peninsula is auriferous throughout its length and breadth, and very richly auriferous in many places, is certainly not of recent date. Earliest of all the discoveries of gold in this colony was that at the Kapanga in Coromandel in 1852. But the later discoveries of alluvial deposits in the Middle Island quickly drew diggers away to those tempting El Dorados where a 'wages claim' often meant £8 to £10 per man per week, and a single dish of 'wash dirt' has been known to pan out as much as eighty ounces of gold. Then, later on, the Maori war put a stop to Coromandel mining; and after the war was over, the stiff-necked opposition of Maori proprietors in the Peninsula to the prosecution of mining on their lands was for a time a serious obstacle to eager prospectors and miners. At length, in 1867, a large area of land, leased from the natives, was proclaimed a

gold-field, and within two years from that time duty had been paid at Auckland on over £264,000 worth of gold from the new gold-field. Very brilliant, indeed, are the early annals of the Hauraki gold-mining district. The mines of Coromandel proper quickly made a name for themselves as astonishingly liberal, though erratic, producers of gold; and during the first decade of the existence of the Thames gold-field, gold to the value of over four million pounds sterling was entered for exportation at Auckland. One Thames mine alone paid its lucky shareholders £500,000 the first year that it was started. Fortunes were, indeed, made with exciting rapidity at that time. But by degrees this pleasant state of things ceased to prevail. The extraordinarily rich deposits of gold near the surface became exhausted, and capital was required for developing the reefs at lower levels, and for prospecting for fresh gold-fields in the rough forest country. Quartz-reefing is not like alluvial gold-digging, and Hauraki gold is not too easy to win. Capital was not forthcoming. New Zealand seems, even at that time, to have lost her early knack for breeding capitalists, and the Hauraki gold-fields had not then caught the eye of English gentlemen of that species. So it came about that mining in the Peninsula languished and fell into disrepute as a money-making industry. Nevertheless, it has been continuously pursued, with various lapses and accessions of energy, and for four or five years past has been showing signs of reawakening animation which have suddenly culminated, during the last eighteen months, in a wonderful display of life and activity.

It was really the splendid vitality of one particular mine that first spread abroad the impression of a general revival of mining throughout the Hauraki district, and attracted the attention of people outside the colony. This mine is the 'Waihi,' well known now as a rich bullion producer. The 'Waihi,' which is situated in one of a series of curious, isolated conical hills, surrounded by swampy plains, in the south of the Peninsula, was not much more than paying its way ten years ago, but since then its annual output of gold has been constantly increasing, latterly by such magnificent leaps and bounds that during the last four years bullion to the value of nearly £400,000 has been won from the comparatively limited workings of this mine.

About a couple of years ago, when the success of the 'Waihi' had wakened up the Peninsula, an additional fillip was given to the energies of mine-owners and miners by the discovery of rich ore in a mine, belonging to the Hauraki Company, at Coromandel. A great deal of money had been lately expended in attempts to develop this mine, with a discouraging lack of the results looked for, when a patch of very rich ore was discovered, by a queer accident, in a section worked by a party of four tributers, who, making good use of their time, managed to get out about £12,000 worth of gold before their tribute lease expired, and the company eagerly resumed possession of the unexpectedly precious section. Since then the work done in the mine has been giving capital returns, and the company paid dividends last year to the amount of £60,000.

Though brilliant discoveries are almost certain to result from systematic prospecting in the virgin ground of the back country, it is agreed that quite as good results may be obtained from plenty of cross-driving in old levels, and opening out lower levels, in mines abandoned as worked out or not worth working. The Thames is a low-lying district, and for want of a sufficiently effective pumping plant there, it has never been practicable to keep the water in the mines beneath the five hundred feet level. So, though the lodes above that level are pretty well worked out now, those beneath it have never been explored. Experts believe, however, that the ore, which has proved so rich and plentiful in the upper portions of the reef, will carry downwards, and the great likelihood of this being the case has induced English capitalists to invest largely in Thames mines. One English company, which has become the owner of certain mines in the heart of the Thames gold-field, is now vigorously carrying on their extensive operations that will eventually result in the deep drainage of the mines of this locality. The New Zealand government is defraying part of the necessarily large expenditure with a subsidy of pound per pound. It is needless to say that the proceedings of this energetic English company are being watched with much interest, for there are strong probabilities that, when the reefs are opened out at lower levels, Thames mines may more than renew their munificent youth.

The Hauraki gold-mining district has an area of about a hundred miles in length and from seven to twenty miles in breadth, and the ore found in its different gold-fields varies considerably in character. In the Coromandel and Thames gold-fields the ore is for the most part what is termed 'free milling,' and gives comparatively little trouble. In the Te Aroha gold-field, in the far south of the Peninsula, the ore is mostly of a very refractory nature, a complex sulphide ore, for which no treatment seems yet to have been found which is at the same time satisfactory and not too expensive. It is believed, however, that at the present time some of the ore in the Waiomo mines at the Thames, which is of the same kind as the Te Aroha ore, is being subjected to an experimental treatment which promises to fulfil the necessary requirements. If it really does so, there is little doubt that Te Aroha, with its vast quantity of gold-bearing stone, will become a highly remunerative gold-field. In the treatment of the bullion ore of the Ohinemuri gold-field, to which the flourishing mines of the Waihi, Karangahake, and Waitekauri districts belong, the cyanide process has been found to give eminently satisfactory results; and it has also proved very effective in dealing with the ore in the Kuaotunu mines (in the Coromandel field), where the gold occurs in the quartz in such a minutely divided state that it is finer than the dust on a butterfly's wing. In fact, over fifty per cent. of the gold obtained of late in the Hauraki district has been extracted by leaching the ore with cyanide solutions.

Certainly the cyanide process has had a large share in promoting the present great 'boom' of the mining industry in this colony. For not only has it stimulated native energy and talent by demonstrating how mines, hitherto worked at a loss, could be rendered highly profitable, but it

has also, through the eloquent success of the 'Waihi' mine, introduced the mineral resources of the Hauraki Peninsula to the practical notice of the British investor.

The present 'boom' has had a very vivifying effect on the general aspect of things in the Coromandel Peninsula. The Peninsula townships, great and small, which used to wear a dead-and-alive look, out of their close sympathy with the mining industry have brightened up astonishingly, and are now full of prosperous bustle, alive with hurrying people, and noisy with the complex din of shouting men and clanking trucks and of great engines and heavy stamping batteries in vigorous operation. They are also energetically building more houses and halls and hotels to meet the demands for accommodation and entertainment of their suddenly augmented populations. A cheerful sense of 'something going on' seems to pervade the atmosphere, even in those wild sylvan fastnesses where the prospector and miner have not yet begun to tear the forest covering off the land and make ugly gashes in the sides of the hills.

The influence of the Hauraki mining revival has made itself more or less felt in all the big commercial centres throughout the colony, but nowhere, naturally, to the same extent as in the city of Auckland, which has the gold-fields, so to speak, almost at its doors. When the Hauraki mines were in their shining prime, many years ago, Aucklanders rushed to the Coromandel in such numbers that there were scarcely vessels enough in the harbour to take them across there. In the 'boom' now on, instead of flocking to the Coromandel, they flock to the Auckland stock exchange, where, to meet the excited rush, a 'free' stock exchange was established for a time. Never in the annals of Auckland has there been such a floating of new companies, and such a tremendous traffic in shares as within the last eighteen months or so. Never have Auckland brokers had such a busy time. To cope with the necessities of their situation, a new association of brokers has been formed, and the old greatly reinforced. But still, the business to be overtaken has compelled them to work to such late hours that the labour inspector has deemed it his duty, in the interests of the clerks, to occasionally make a midnight raid on the stockbrokers' offices. The share list has swollen to such an enormous extent that it takes an hour and a half to 'call' it over. It is also found necessary to have three 'calls' daily, the first at 9.30 A.M. Knots of eager-faced, eager-voiced men throng the part of the exchange open to the public, and there you may see a broker, prosperous and well-groomed in aspect, in earnest confabulation with a rough-looking miner, in a Crimea shirt and bell-bottomed trousers, the Sir Crackle of the moment, just over from Coromandel with the graphic details of the latest bit of mining news. All over the town the talk is of mining topics. In the city restaurants in the lunching hours, any chance words distinguishable above the general hum of conversation are sure to relate to mining matters. When friends meet in the street they exchange, instead of remarks about the weather, straight 'tips' in regard to their favourite mining shares. In the trams taking the business men back to their homes in the suburbs there is always a rapid and large exchange of pennies and papers when the newsboy enters with his bundle of *Evening Stars*, and then the eyes of all the men seek, with comical simultaneity, the column with the latest share quotations in their respective papers.

Even the women have caught the fever of mining speculation, and it is said that at afternoon teas they discuss rises and falls in the share market in a very knowing way, while they commiserate with poor Mrs X, whose shares in the 'Never Say Die' have dropped to a fourth of what she paid for them, and congratulate Mrs Y on having sold yesterday, at ten and sixpence, the eight hundred 'Golden Hopes' she bought last week at a shilling. Their sex is already represented on the exchange; but a lady stockbroker can only be regarded as a natural phenomenon in the first country in Her Majesty's dominions that has given its women the franchise, and produced a lady mayor.

Some of the new mining stocks are so low-priced that a schoolboy, with half-a-crown in his pocket, may become the happy possessor of a dozen shares, and an unbounded confidence that the rise in those shares will shortly enable him to buy a 'Humber' bicycle. One may even be allowed to entertain the hope that the shilling he has generously bestowed on the deserving tramp at the door may, if judiciously invested on the exchange, prove the foundation of a life-long competence to the man.

Of course it is scarcely necessary to point out that a great deal of this traffic in mining stock is simply a species of gambling. Many of the speculators, men as well as women, know nothing about the mines in which they invest. They scarcely trouble themselves to inquire if there is a mine of any kind represented by the shares they buy. All they care to know is that the shares are likely to rise, for they hold them simply to sell again when that happens.

As might be expected during a period of excited mining speculation like the present, more or less worthless mining companies have sprung up alongside of those reliable ones that are, in part, the product of the boom, and in part make for its steady continuance; but such worthless companies belong to a species of small fry that are born and live—or die—in the local share-market, and have never a chance of injuring the credit of the colony, or the pockets of investors outside of New Zealand. As for the local victims, experience, the proverb tells us, is the teacher of a certain class of people.

The capital so long and urgently required for the development of our New Zealand quartz reefs is at length finding its way here in a steady stream from abroad. Already a considerable number of mines are in the hands of English companies, and the last dividends paid by two of them—'Waihi' and 'Hauraki'—were certainly of an amount to stimulate the further investment of British capital in mining properties in the Hauraki district. South African capitalists, whom the partial paralysis of mining affairs in the Transvaal through the recent troubles there has caused to look abroad for investments, have also shown an anxiety to acquire New Zealand mining properties, on which their experts have reported most favourably.

Though the late increase in the output of gold from the Hauraki mines generally has been of a very satisfactory nature, and some of the mines in the hands of New Zealand and foreign companies have already given earnest of a promise to rival the success of the 'Waihi,' it is scarcely to be expected that the majority of mining properties will endow their shareholders with large fortunes. Of course, of a country like the Coromandel, where even the resources of the mines in operation are only partially known, and which has vast areas of virgin auriferous ground as yet unprospected, no one can predict what treasures of gold and silver may be there unearthed. But still, it is likely that a large quantity of the ore 'grassed' will always be of a low grade. This likelihood need suggest nothing very discouraging, however. With first-class appliances for extracting and saving the gold, low-grade ore can be made to give, at least, bread and butter profits. This has been proved for many years in the Transvaal and in Victoria. Miners in this colony have always regarded fifteen pennyweight of gold per ton as the minimum return for which quartz can be profitably worked; but in the Rand, where their command of large capital has enabled them to carry on mining with the latest and most effective machinery and scientific appliances, eleven to twelve pennyweight per ton is found to give good profits. In Victoria profitable returns have been continuously obtained from ore of a poorer grade than that met with in the Hauraki gold-fields, in those high reefs which the miners term 'barren,' and which have hitherto been despised and neglected.

Though the alluvial diggings even yet contribute more to the annual output of gold in New Zealand than the quartz workings, the returns from the latter are very rapidly increasing, and it is the quartz workings that are certainly to be regarded as the permanent gold-fields of the colony.

Quartz-refining in the Coromandel Peninsula is, according to reliable mining authorities, little more than in its infancy as yet; but if in the physiology of an industry the saying that the child is father to the man holds good, then very great things indeed may be expected from the mature development of mining in the Hauraki gold-fields.

## THE HEDGLEY-HASKINS LAWSUIT.

### CHAPTER V.

The picnic in Plunkett Settlement was one of the events of the year. The members of the two religious denominations comprising the great bulk of the population were accustomed each autumn to unite their forces and hold a picnic for the benefit of the young people; but there were very few old people who stayed away if attendance were at all possible. The spot selected for the one to which it is now necessary that we refer, was a pleasant meadow where elm trees offered shade and facilities for swings, and the smooth sward was suitable for the various games. The Hedgleys and the Haskins were there, and if the elders did not manifest any marked interest in each other's welfare, it might have been observed that Ben and May invariably welcomed with a kind of subdued satisfaction any chance that enabled them to approach each other without exciting comment or prompting the suspicion that they connived at such a result. For they had decided that open rebellion would not be the most prudent course to pursue, and were for the time content to accept a few brief words betimes and eloquent glances in the intervals, in lieu of the closer companionship for which they longed. Mr Hedgley had not discussed the matter with May herself further than to warn her that he did not wish to see her with Ben Haskins again. She had made no reply whatever, and the matter had dropped there. It is just possible that more would have been said, but the thought that old Haskins didn't think May good enough for Ben, which had been working in Mr Hedgley's brain since his conversation with the latter, had somewhat nettled him and changed his point of view of the whole affair.

We are not concerned with the picnic in general. The day was fine, and the people bent on enjoyment. The scene was bright with life, and colour, and movement, and the children, at least, were supremely happy. To one of these the reader is indebted for even a passing reference here to the Plunkett Settlement picnic. Billy Hedgley, May's brother, a lad of twelve years, was smitten with an ambition for tree-climbing. Selecting a lofty elm, he pulled himself up among its branches, nearly to the top, where a slender stem deviated from the main trunk. Swinging himself out on this, he swayed it to and fro in high glee, and to the great envy of some less courageous boys below. But presently he swung with too much weight and the stem split partly from the parent trunk, and the next moment he was suspended in mid-air in such a position that he could not regain the tree. The stem would have split clear off and sent him headlong to the ground, but that it was partly sustained by a branch over which it bent.

The boy's position was perilous in the extreme. To lose his grip would be to go headlong down, perhaps to death. If he tried to scramble back, the stem might snap off altogether and so hurl him down. There was nothing for it but to cling to the stem and scream for help. His cries and those of his companions speedily brought a crowd to the spot.

How was he to be extricated from his terrible position? To climb the same tree was out of the question, for he was so far out from the trunk that his rescuer would have to depend on the branches, which would not bear the double weight of the boy and of a man strong enough to release him. Every moment increased the probability that Billy would lose his grip and fall. Women and children screamed, and men ran hither and thither. Billy's mother sank upon the ground wringing her hands and moan-

ing in anguish. Already several men were in the tree, but the first to climb soon discovered that the boy could not be reached that way with safety.

Ben Haskins came running up and took in the situation. He saw at a glance that hope lay in one direction only. Not far from the first tree stood another, straight and slender, but the summit reaching some distance above the level of the stem to which the boy clung. If the top could be bent over far enough the boy could be reached. How either the intending rescuer or the boy would then fare he did not stop to think. May's hand was on his arm, and her eyes searching his face imploringly, as she cried in wild entreaty. 'Oh Ben. Can't you do something?'

'Yes,' Ben answered between his teeth.

In a twinkling his coat was off, and he was swinging himself lightly up the smaller tree.

Billy, pale but determined, clinging to his perch, watched him with eager eyes, while the crowd below stood back and stared.

'You can't do it, Ben,' shouted Mr Haskins. 'You can't reach him there.'

'Yes, I can,' said Ben in a cheery tone. 'Hang on, Billy. I'll be with you in a minute.'

Up the tree he went, measuring the distance with his eye, till he had reached the proper height. Then he swayed cautiously toward Billy. The tree bent very slowly under his weight. Taking a firm grip with his left hand, and throwing one foot also round the tree, he surged outward, and the supple stem bent like a whip, carrying him down till his right hand was within reach of the boy.

'It'll break! It'll break!' shouted the men below; but Ben paid no heed.

He knew that the tree he was on would not bear Billy's weight and his own, and allow them both to escape that way, but he hoped to be able to assist Billy in regaining a safe position on his own tree.

It was a moment of fearful anxiety to those below. Should both fall, death or serious injury was certain; and there seemed no other way.

Ben was the coolest of them all. He reached down and took a firm grip of Billy's collar and told the boy in a perfectly calm and encouraging tone to try and crawl back along the broken stem.

Billy obeyed without a moment's hesitation. But his position was such that he had to turn himself round before moving toward the tree. In doing so he partly missed his hold, and clutching awkwardly, surged so heavily that the stem was split farther down and would no longer bear his weight. But for Ben's grip he would have fallen. But the double weight was too much for Ben's tree, and it began to bend dangerously. If he could swing Billy in among the branches of the other tree, the latter might hold on and save himself from falling, or at most tumble from branch to branch and perhaps escape without much injury. It was now the only chance. Nerving himself for a stern effort, for he himself hung in an awkward position on the under side of his tree, he swung the boy clear of the broken stem, and by a supreme exertion threw him bodily toward the larger tree.

Billy snatched like a cat at the branches, and his climbing proclivities came to his aid for once with good results. He caught a branch, swung from it to another, and in a twinkling was hugging the body of the tree in safety.

It fared not so well with his rescuer. Ben, in swinging the boy clear had lost his own foothold, and now hung by one hand. He quickly clutched with the other also, but the tree could not right itself under his weight, and he could not climb hand over hand back by the way he had come. He could move the other way, but that would cause the tree to bend more, and ultimately break. The one chance was that he, too, might, when it went down, come within reach of a branch of the other tree and break the force of his fall.

It was a moment of horrible suspense to those below. They had given a great cry of relief when Billy reached a place of safety, but now their anxiety was redoubled.

But it was all over in a moment. Ben's mind was made up in an instant, and he began very cautiously to move himself by sheer muscular force toward the end of the stem to which he clung. He knew he must presently let go and fall, but he might reach the other tree. Presently an ominous snap warned him, and he pulled himself together for another ordeal. The tree had broken beneath his weight. As well as a man might, whose feet were treading air, he lurched toward the other tree and let go. A shriek went up from below. Several of the men had seized a shawl with the idea of holding it up to break his fall, if that should happen; but Ben did not fall there. He caught a branch of the large tree and swung out under it. Had it been strong, his iron grip would have sustained him, but it split down from the tree under the terrific impetus of his falling weight, and poor Ben went down in a heap, the side of his head striking heavily against a projecting root.

He lay there motionless. They crowded eagerly round him, with exclamations of pity and horror; for his cool daring and gallant act had thrilled them, as human hearts are ever thrilled by brave deeds, whether performed in the seclusion of Plunkett Settlement or in the gaze of a larger world.

But it was May Hedgley, with face as white as the dress she wore, who held Ben's bruised head in her lap while his weeping mother washed and bandaged the wound as best she could. And not even the bitterest gossip in the settlement saw in the act the slightest impropriety. Nobody thought now of Billy. He had clambered down the tree and hovered about the outskirts of the crowd, appalled at the outcome of his foolhardiness. Water was quickly brought, and gradually Ben returned to consciousness. But it was then discovered that his arm was broken as well as his head injured, and that his whole system had received a severe shock. With obstinate nerve he endeavoured to get up and walk, but the effort was obviously too great, and they insisted on his lying down again. Mr Hedgley, whose mind had undergone a remarkable change within the hour, hovered around him with an anxiety the sincerity of which was so apparent that even Mr Haskins senior could not find cause for resentment. The picnic had lost its charm for everybody, and there was a general movement towards breaking up. Articles of

clothing of all descriptions were piled into Mr Hedgley's large express wagon to make a bed for Ben, and very carefully he was taken home. A messenger had already gone for the doctor. Mr Hedgley and Mr Haskins walked side by side behind the wagon in which Ben lay, and Mrs Hedgley and May followed with Mrs Haskins in the latter's carriage.

Verily, the Hedgley-Haskins embroglio had developed another remarkable complication.

### CHAPTER VI.—CONCLUSION.

One fine morning, just after the occurrence of the events last noted, Lawyer White of Berton village entered a carriage at his office-door, and turned the horse's head along the road leading in the direction of Plunkett Settlement.

To explain the purpose of this morning drive it is necessary to go back to the day on which Ben Haskins left home after his disagreement with his father on the marriage question. When he left the house Ben had no definite idea in his mind, but as the condition of affairs gradually took hold of him the thought suddenly struck him that it might be a good idea to consult Lawyer White. He had heard that the lawyer had argued in favour of a settlement, and though that gentleman was engaged to plead Mr Hedgley's case, Ben thought it possible that his sympathy might be enlisted. For if this lawsuit went on, there was little hope of his own suit for the hand of May Hedgley being favourably regarded by the parents of either. So straight to Berton village he went and placed the whole matter before the lawyer.

'If you kin stop this suit,' said Ben in conclusion, 'I'll see that you're well paid for any trouble you've had so far.'

It so happened that Lawyer White was himself a bachelor, with a slight squint in the direction of matrimony, and Ben's awkward dilemma appealed directly to his sympathy, even if he had not already pronounced against the advisability of the lawsuit in question.

'My dear fellow,' he said, 'I'll help you with all my heart. And I think the thing can be done. You and Miss Hedgley are just the lever I want to lift the old fellows out of their obstinacy.'

They talked the whole matter over very cordially together.

'You go home,' counselled the lawyer at last, 'and go on with your work as usual. Don't quarrel with your father or with Mr Hedgley. And don't try to see Miss Hedgley too often. Leave the matter in my hands. I'll be busy for a day or two, but just as soon as I can I'll take a drive out to the settlement and see what can be done.'

This explains the composure that had caused surprise on the part of Ben's mother when he reached home that night.

In the meantime, the picnic episode had brought about a sudden change in the relations of the two families. Ben's injuries were serious, and he was confined to his bed. On the evening of the accident Mr Hedgley and Mrs Hedgley went over to hear the doctor's verdict, and there was no objection when May declared her intention of going also. It was a new experience for all concerned, but this was not a time for the consideration of bygones, or anything else but the condition of the brave fellow who had risked his life and so nearly lost it for the sake of Hedgley's boy. Mr Haskins could not resent a sympathy that touched him so nearly, and his wife was secretly pleased rather than annoyed at the turn taken in their mutual relations. The happiest of the lot were Ben and May, and the former would have borne more broken bones with equanimity if that were necessary to insure him the satisfaction he now enjoyed. It was pleasant to have May come and sit beside him, as she did very often in the next few days, and feel that there was none to chide her. It was pleasant each evening to see Mr and Mrs Hedgley enter the house to which they had so long been strangers, and with genuine sympathy ask concerning his welfare.

But there still remained the shadow of the impending lawsuit. It had not been referred to, either directly or indirectly since the accident, but that did not remove the difficulty. It was with keen satisfaction, therefore, that Ben, on the morning to which reference has already been made, looking through his window along the highway saw the carriage of Lawyer White drive past in the direction of Hedgley's. Just then May came in, and she and Ben discussed with some anxiety the outcome of the lawyer's visit. They were still talking, nearly an hour later, when the carriage returned and entered the gate. The lawyer was not alone. Mr Hedgley, with an odd expression of mingled doubt and some feeling less easily fathomed, was seated at his side. They got out of the carriage and were joined by Mr Haskins, and the three moved toward the house. May rose in some trepidation and prepared to go.

'Stay where you are, May,' said Ben, catching her hand. 'I want you to stay.'

She hesitated, looked at Ben, and the love in his eyes constrained her. She sat down again by his side.

The three men entered the room, and at a glance the lawyer knew that he was master of the situation.

'Well, old man,' he said, grasping Ben's hand with a hearty grip. 'You've been making a hero of yourself, I hear. Yes, sir,' he went on, addressing himself this time to Mr Hedgley and Mr Haskins, 'it isn't one man in a thousand that would do a thing like that.'

'My daughter,' said Mr Hedgley, indicating May.

'Ah,' said the lawyer, shaking May warmly by the hand. 'The nurse, I presume.' This with a genial smile. 'I've no doubt he'—indicating Ben—'gets the best of care. Pray sit down, Miss Hedgley, if you are not afraid of a lawyer.'

'Oh no,' said May, with a laugh and a blush.

'And how are you, old boy?' went on the lawyer. 'Gracious! But you must have nerve. I went down with Mr Hedgley to see the place. It's worth some broken bones to do a deed like that. Do you suffer much? What's the chief trouble?'

And so the lawyer rattled on, praising Ben, throwing a merry remark in May's direction, not saying anything very serious, but all the time talking straight at the feelings of the two

men who stood there, both uncertain as to the part they should play in this little comedy.

Presently the lawyer rose, winked at Ben, and remarked that he guessed that the young gentleman would be better with his nurse than listening to any further talk. With profuse expressions of hope that Ben would soon be on his feet again, and a profound bow and cordial handshake with May, he turned to go.

The two men went out with him to his carriage, still in that uncertain frame of mind; for he had not mentioned the lawsuit to Mr Hedgley, and Mr Haskins, of course, was in total ignorance of the object of the lawyer's visit.

'Gentlemen,' said the lawyer in the blandest tone, when they had reached the carriage, 'you both remember, of course, the meeting in my office not long ago. You remember what I told you then. Now I want to ask you both to remember what has happened since, to look at the fine young couple we just left in that room, and then tell me whether you think it right for you two old neighbours to go on with a lawsuit.'

There was a pause, during which Hedgley and Haskins took a good long look at each other. It was a questioning look, but there was nothing belligerent in the expression.

'Gentlemen,' continued the lawyer, 'I've found out—no matter how—that those two young people want to get married. Now, I don't know much about your settlement, but I'll venture to say there isn't another as fine a pair to be found in these parts.'

This was a double-barrelled compliment, and both charges went to the mark. Both Mr Hedgley and Mr Haskins were obviously pleased.

'Which of you,' went on the lawyer, 'is going to stand in the way of their happiness?'

'I'm not,' said Mr Hedgley with a sudden effort.

'Nor me,' echoed Mr Haskins with almost startling promptness.

Each had secretly been waiting for the other to speak.

'And you shouldn't,' declared the lawyer. 'Whether you know it or not, there are very few men with as much grit of the right sort as that young man. His wife will be all right. And if that daughter of yours, Mr Hedgley, isn't one of the kind to make a man happy, I can't read a face.'

'May's a good girl,' said Mr Hedgley with pride.

'Yes,' said Mr Haskins, with a burst of generosity, 'there isn't another as fine a girl in the settlement. I kin tell you that, squire.'

'I've always had a good opinion of Ben,' said Mr Hedgley, not to be outdone, 'but sence this here accident, he's been the same to me as if he was my own boy.'

'Then,' said the lawyer, with an irresistible laugh, 'I guess I've lost a job, haven't I?'

'Looks like it,' said Mr Hedgley, with a dubious grin at Haskins.

'Reckon you have, squire,' said Haskins, with a broad smile; and then with a sudden look of serious appeal he held out his hand to Hedgley.

The latter took it with a firm grip and held it.

'That fence,' said Mr Haskins, 'goes back where it was.'

'That fence,' said Mr Hedgley, 'stays where it is, on the land that goes to Ben's wife.'

'Gentlemen,' said the lawyer, climbing into his carriage, 'I guess that's the sort of quarrel I can safely leave you to settle.'

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Last October brought about the fiftieth anniversary of the first successful use of an anæsthetic in surgery. The blessing conferred upon suffering humanity by this introduction is sufficiently obvious, but there are other advantages which are not so readily apparent. Before ether or chloroform was used, a surgical operation was undertaken solely in the endeavour to save life, or to save a limb; now operations are common whereever benefit to the patient is hoped to be derived from them. Another advantage is the attraction of men to the medical profession who would not, or possibly could not have been able to practise surgery at all under the old conditions which entailed such torture to the patients. 'The pre-anæsthetic surgeon,' says the *Hospital*, 'was often spoken of as a "butcher;" and the term was in those days hardly one of disparagement. Now, thanks entirely to anæsthetics, the surgeon is not a "butcher," but an "artist;" a skilled user of the finest tools—of tools which can be manipulated without any distracting thought, and employed with the calm deliberateness needed to secure the highest possible result to which the scientific conservation of life and structure and function can by any possibility attain.'

Once more public attention is being directed to the danger on our ocean highways of floating derelicts. Quite recently a British steamer reported, according to the law passed last session, having passed a derelict of four thousand tons floating keel upwards in the track of ocean-going steamers. Mr Cuming Macdona, to whose energy the passing of the Derelicts Report Bill is due, has recently pointed out how lethargic the British government has been with regard to this subject, when compared with what the Americans are doing. Mr Macdona has given notice of another bill to be introduced next session, the object of which will be to form an authority to search for these floating dangers of the deep, and to tow them into port, if worth the expense, or to destroy them as the case may be. This course the American government has followed for several years past, in addition to which they have pointed out the position of derelicts as last reported by passing vessels. More than once our government has been approached in order that the two nations may work conjointly in this humane undertaking, but nothing has been done. Mr Macdona is doing useful work in initiating legislation in this much-needed direction.

Attention has been recently called to some curious architectural adornments which are to be

found on the church of St Giles's, Camberwell. It seems that about twelve years ago the restoration of this building was urgently called for in consequence of the action of the weather upon the soft stone employed in the building. Among other renewals, it became necessary to replace a number of gargoyles, which, owing to their exposed position, had altogether perished. Whether with the permission of his superiors we do not know, but the mason employed upon this portion of the work gave his gargoyles the heads of contemporary statesmen, conferring wings upon those with whom he was in sympathy, and horns, long ears, or other degrading features upon their political opponents. Unfortunately the same error with regard to choice of stone seems to have been made in the new work as in the old, and these unique specimens of ecclesiastical ornament are rapidly going the way of their predecessors. Might we suggest to those in charge of all such crumbling specimens of architecture, that they have a chance of trying the virtues of the various stone-hardening compositions which have from time to time been brought forward.

Nearly every city in Britain contains some kind of a museum, and it must be admitted that the collections of natural history objects are not inspiring to the beholder for want of sufficiently descriptive labels. Those who want to know how to remedy this deplorable condition of things should, if possible, pay a visit to the library of St George's, Hanover Square, London, where by the public-spirited action of an anonymous donor, there is at present exhibited a Natural History Collection which it has taken a lifetime to get together and to describe. The collection also includes a library for the use of students, so that any one who wishes information about any particular bird, beast, or shell can get it here, and learn all about it with very little trouble. Everything is explained in a full and yet an explicit manner. For instance, the visitor, instead of being at once 'floored' by columns of long words which convey no meaning to him, is plainly shown how the animal world is classified into twenty-five divisions, and how these again are grouped into five subdivisions. How again these are put into classes. Here is a specimen of the descriptive matter: 'Division I. (the backboned animals) contains Classes 1 to 5—namely (1) Mammals; (2) Birds; (3) Reptiles; (4) Amphibians; (5) Fishes. They are all alike, because they have—(*a*) an inside framework of bone; (*b*) a long backbone; (*c*) a spinal cord; (*d*) four limbs; (*e*) red blood; and they are called *backboned animals* (*Vertebrata*).' Any one seeking information is thus as well instructed as if some kindly disposed naturalist walked by his side, and under such pleasant conditions he is encouraged to push his inquiries further.

At a recent meeting of the London Electric Omnibus Company it was stated by the chairman that they had an electric vehicle almost ready to put upon the streets, but that the adoption of improvements had caused some delay in completing it. There would be practically no noise and no vibration in connection with this omnibus, and it was estimated that the current for running it would not cost more than twopence-halfpenny per mile. He put forward the hope that it would be possible to run these horseless carriages at cheaper fares than those now charged by omnibus companies.

The late Dr Lockhart, who was the first medical missionary sent to China, collected a number of books, printed in Chinese and many other languages, relating to China and neighbouring countries, and these volumes he presented to the London Missionary Society. From a catalogue recently made of this interesting library, it would appear that there are two thousand volumes, and a large number of pamphlets. The books include some not found in any other library, and one of which no other copy is known to exist, even in China itself. This is an illustrated work on the aboriginal tribes of the empire. There is also a wonderful Chinese geography which in its statements, supposed to be matters of fact, quite outdoes the imaginings of either *Gulliver's Travels* or that equally veracious voyager *Baron Munchausen*. The book is entitled *Shan-Hai-King* (The Hills and the Seas), and describes the different nations of the earth as being distinguished by men with three faces, by dwarfs, by one-armed beings, and by creatures which are half-man and half-fish. But the most curious attribute ascribed to any nation is that in which the population have holes right through their chests, so that a pole can be thrust therein and they can be carried about palanquin fashion. The Rev. C. G. Sparham of Hankow, in describing this collection of Chinese works, asserts that the book just referred to had been seriously quoted to him by Chinese scholars.

The busy bee has always been held up to the admiration of mankind as the type of industry, and the product of his unceasing labours, the fragrant honey from the hive, has been regarded as one of the few delicacies left to us which could not be tampered with by a trick of trade, or imitated by the wiles of chemistry. But alas! this is not so. It is said that imitation honey, made from starch, sugar, Indian corn doctored with sulphuric acid, and from sugar and dextrine, is now placed upon the market, and that it is very difficult to distinguish it from the genuine article.

A very interesting account of the turquoise mines at Nishapur is given in a recent report of the British Vice-Consul at Meshed, as a result of a personal visit to the district. On approaching the mines from Nishapur (Northern Persia) the traveller first comes to the villages inhabited by the miners, which are about five thousand feet above the sea-level, but the hill, at the foot of which the mines are situated, is one thousand feet higher still. The works are of the most primitive description. The Reish mine, which is the principal one, has its entrance in a hollowed out cave, in which is a shaft forty feet deep. At the mouth of this hole two men turn with their bare feet a rickety windlass by which the broken rock is hauled up from below in sheepskin bags. These stones are then broken with hammers by natives who sit at the mouth of the cave, and when a turquoise is found, it is placed aside in its rough state and sent to Meshed. Stones of perfect form and colour are very rare, and even if one presents the correct colour when first taken from the mine, it will soon deteriorate, and will sometimes exhibit a kind of eruption of white spots. But the stones are eagerly bought, for all Orientals value them, and even the poor people

will have one set in a tin ring, possibly more as an amulet or talisman than for the intrinsic value of the stone. But those who wish to possess a really good specimen never think of buying until they have kept the stone for some days in order to see whether its beauty is evanescent or permanent. The stones when cut in Meshed rise in value about one thousand per cent., but the consul states that turquoises are at present far cheaper to buy at Tiflis and Constantinople; moreover, in the latter towns it is possible to get stones which have been in stock for many years, and can therefore be considered more trustworthy than those freshly mined.

Another interesting consular report which has recently come to hand is that of the late Mr Enslie, who was British Consul at Hiogo, Japan. In one section of this document we have the healthy experience of seeing ourselves as others see us, for it includes a summary of a series of articles appearing in a Japanese paper on the subject of the commercial competition between Great Britain and the land of the chrysanthemum. From this we learn that the day has for ever gone when Japan found it necessary to depend upon other countries, and a new day has dawned when she can supply them with her own manufactures. She no longer needs instruction from Europe and America, but will now teach them many things. At one time she stood in awe of those countries; now they fear her. Japanese coal and the Osaka spinning-mills have become sources of anxiety to Welsh coal-owners and Lancashire mill-proprietors. The manufactures of Japan now threaten what has been a British monopoly on all sides, and hence England feels jealous and is afraid of Japan, and so on *ad infinitum*. From all which it would seem that the result of the recent war with China has made the Japanese somewhat boastful. Perhaps their military and naval tactics have been a little too warmly praised by Western nations, and they have been thus flattered into a very inflated opinion of themselves. That the war was conducted with consummate tact, every one must admit, but at the same time it must be remembered that Japan's antagonist was not a first-class power; if she had been, results might have been a little different.

The charming art of miniature painting, which was so seriously threatened when the wonders of the photographic camera first became evident, and every one rushed to have his or her likeness pictured by the sun, is, we are glad to note, still alive—as visitors to the last Royal Academy exhibition, where about one hundred examples were shown, are well aware. A more recent exhibition of these tiny pictures on ivory or vellum has been opened in London under the auspices of the Society of Miniature Painters, a body of enthusiastic workers formed in the interests of this branch of art. This is their first exhibition, and so many excellent works were shown that we may be sure the experiment will be repeated in future years.

Fifteen years ago, Darwin—in a letter to Alexander Agassiz—alluding to the different theories with regard to the formation of coral islands, wrote: 'I wish that some doubly rich millionaire would take it into his head to have borings made in some of the Pacific and Indian atolls, and bring home cores for slicing from a depth of 500 feet or 600 feet.' Scientific men have pondered much over this remark of the great naturalist, and at last, by the help of a government grant and a contribution from the Royal Society, with colonial co-operation, Darwin's wish is to be realised. An expedition has gone to Funafuti, one of the group of the Ellice Islands north of the Fiji Islands; and by the aid of diamond drills the coral is to be pierced and cores obtained as Darwin suggested. Early investigators believed that the coral rock was composed of living coral down to the sea-bottom, but it has long ago been determined that the polyp cannot live at a greater depth than ninety feet. Next it was imagined that the reefs were built on the crater tops of submerged volcanoes, a mere idle supposition. The only way to get at the secret is to bore through the living and dead coral, so as to get at the foundation of the growth. The island selected is under British protection. The great difficulty is the want of fresh water, without which boring operations are impossible: but it has been met by chemical treatment of the salt water employed in washing out the bore hole. The New South Wales government have lent special machinery and men to work it, and H.M. gunboat *Penguin* is deputed to look after the interests of the expedition.

That form of 'matter in the wrong place' which comes under the head of household dust has always been a nuisance, and the usual plan of removing it from furniture and carpets by brush and broom only results in its transference from one resting-place to another, its translation being accompanied with grave discomfort to the human respiratory apparatus. Nor do we know how far the dormant germs of disease may not be aroused by the constantly recurring process called dusting. With a view to mitigate these discomforts, there has lately been introduced 'Harvey's pneumatic dusting machine,' of which we are inclined to have a high opinion. The machine consists of a small box on wheels, with a suction bellows attached which can easily be worked by moving a hand-lever to and fro. In connection with the bellows is an india-rubber tube which can be carried to any part of a room and applied to dust-choked places. When the bellows are worked, a strong draught of air is sucked inwards through the tube, and the dust is dragged with it, and carried to a calico bag inside the box, which can be emptied and cleaned periodically. In like manner dust can be *pulled out* of carpets, book-shelves and books can be relieved of their accumulated dirt atoms without removal, cracks and crevices can be made to yield up their stores of uncleanness, and the entire process carried out without polluting the air. We understand that the Harvey machines are being adopted with great benefit at many public libraries. Mr Harvey's address is Kidderminster, England.

Many years ago some harebrained individual offered one of the English railway companies a large sum of money if they would consent to run two locomotives into one another at express speed in order that he might witness the resulting smash. His offer was of course refused. But the idea was recently revived by a railway company in Texas, who wanted funds for new engines

and rolling stock, and hit upon the happy notion of smashing up their old stock in order to pay for new. A pre-arranged collision between two heavy trains was advertised for September last, and the novelty attracted a crowd of twenty-five thousand persons, who paid handsomely for their admission tickets. On the day appointed the trains were started a mile apart, the engine-drivers jumping off directly they had opened the throttle valves. The trains met with an awful crash, both boilers exploding at the same moment, and projecting a mass of splinters and wreckage in every direction. There were two deaths in the crowd, and many cases of serious injury; and possibly, when all claims for compensation are settled, the railway company will not find much of their ill-gotten gains left. The enterprise was, to say the least of it, an indecent pandering to morbid excitement for the sake of gain, and no useful end could be looked for from it save the gate-money.

In more than one respect the recent polar expedition under Nansen differed from its predecessors, especially in the comforts provided for the crew. It is not, perhaps, generally known that the good ship *Fram* carried apparatus for generating the electric light, the motive power being a windmill, and the electricity stored by means of accumulators. The machinery worked perfectly until parts of it wore out, and other portions were urgently required for the manufacture of snow-shoes and runners. According to a Danish paper, from which we take these particulars, on festive occasions an arc lamp was hung in the saloon, and the light given was so good that Dr Nansen frequently employed it for painting and photographing. The accumulator cells, which, we may remind our readers, consist of square vessels filled with acidulated water and holding leaden plates, were often frozen through, but this accident did not interfere with their working. Electricity was also usefully employed in this expedition for firing mining cartridges embedded in the ice. In this way was the solid mass broken through, and the *Fram* set free.

## SQUIRE THORPE'S BOTANY.

By W. E. Cule.

Squire Thorpe of Old Bevis lost all interest in the garden-party when a certain pink blouse vanished from the scene. Even tennis failed to charm, and he would have been content to forego the further pleasures of the gathering and ride home in no better company than that of his own thoughts. But he had promised to wait for Adams, and it would hardly look well, after all, to run away so early.

He joined his host, who was smoking a lazy cigar under the elm. Sir John would probably be able to tell him something more concerning the pink blouse than he had been able to gather from the ordinary process of introduction.

'Tired of tennis?' suggested the baronet lazily; 'rather warm game on a day like this.'

'Yes,' assented Thorpe; 'it's very pleasant though, when you are playing with nice people.'

He had touched the subject rather rashly, but Sir John was quite unsuspicious.

'I suppose so,' was his careless reply. 'Nice people are always pleasant in that way. You would find it different though if you had to entertain them. I don't mean the people we are familiar with, of course—they're all right; but it's another thing with strangers.'

Strangers! The pink blouse was certainly a stranger in the district.

'One has to know people's interests and find out what they like to talk about,' went on Sir John, fortunately blind to his companion's only half-concealed impatience to hear more. 'And there's the rub. Some folks go in for the most unearthly subjects, and of course one must pretend to know something about them. For instance, now, did you notice that girl in the pink blouse, who came with the Hamptons, and went away a few minutes ago?'

'Eh? Do you mean Miss—Miss Polwarth?' asked Thorpe, with sublime unconcern.

'That's the name. A nice-looking girl enough. She belongs to the Polwarths of Polwarth, a good old Cornish family, though not as well off now as it used to be. But that girl is a girl with a "subject," if you like—and what do you think? She's a lecturer—actually a lecturer upon it!'

'What?—the Rights of Woman?' asked Thorpe, slightly startled.

'Worse than that,' said the baronet gloomily; 'we all know something of that subject by this time. But her fad is Botany, if you please—Botany! and she lectures at a ladies' college. What ordinary man can talk botany?'

Thorpe made no answer. He suddenly became aware that botany had never been included in his studies.

'When people go in deeply for that kind of thing,' continued Sir John, 'they naturally like to talk about it. What interest do you think that girl would find in the ordinary chatter of a gathering like this?'

'Great Scott!' muttered Thorpe, 'and I talked to her myself for an hour about nothing! She didn't seem to mind it, but she must have been bored to death.'

'Of course she must,' said his host, who had failed to catch more than the last words of the remark. 'No doubt that was why she went away so early. But what can be done in such a case as that?'

Thorpe, pondering the matter with mingled feelings of mortification, amusement, and disgust, could easily have suggested a few things that might have been done. But at that moment the baronet was called away, and he was left alone with his suggestions.

'It's a shame,' he thought savagely. 'It's a shame to let a fellow put his foot in it like that. People with fads ought to be labelled or classified. Or why shouldn't there be a list of them and their "subjects" on the back of the invitation card? One would have some chance then—she was a nice girl though!'

Here he fell into a troubled reverie, in which the same pink blouse played no small part. This mood remained with him during the remainder of the day, and Adams of the Grange found him but an absent-minded companion on the ride home.

As he passed through the hall on his way to the library he noticed the *Field* lying upon a

table, and, suddenly remembering that matters botanical sometimes received attention in that journal, he took it with him for examination at his leisure.

The yachting columns were passed over with hardly a glance, for probably the first time; the curiosities in Notes and Queries failed to attract him, and he did not pause even to read an account of the Match for the Gold Prize, under the head of Tennis. These things were not for the Squire to-day, and he was not satisfied until he reached what were to him the deeper waters of the Garden Column.

An hour later he went into the grounds and interviewed the gardener. Jenkyns was an old man who had spent long and easy years under the Thorpes, for the squires of Old Bevis had for generations been noted rather as mighty hunters than as patrons of horticulture. That there was a certain amount of garden, and certain convenient conservatories and shrubberies, had been quite enough for the late Squire, and, until to-day, quite enough for his successor. So Jenkyns had been allowed to sleep in peace, and now the old man stared in surprise to find himself rudely awakened.

For the Squire had suddenly developed an intense interest in things horticultural. He led his man under the glass and among the beds, through the shrubs and into the forcing houses. He worried him for scientific names and flowering seasons, startled him with harsh, heart-breaking criticisms, and finally made him admit that the Old Bevis gardens were far from equal to those at Sir John Pinder's, or even those at the Grange.

'You see, sir,' said the old man in plaintive explanation; 'your uncle, the Squire that was, took no sort of interest in flowers and such, and never cared a jot whether he had a garden or not. I've wanted to make improvements, such as taking in part of the south lawn for shrubs, and building a new rose-house. But lor, sir, it was no manner of use to him, and that's why I've never gone in much for the latest things, such as you be speaking of now.'

'Well, we must change all that,' declared the Squire in a decided tone. 'You can brighten up the place at once, and I'll give you a list of the things I wish you to get in this week. There's no time to be lost.'

'Very good, sir,' was Jenkyns's ready reply. 'I'll set things a-moving straight off.'

The Squire strolled back to the house, his journal under his arm. Jenkyns stood for a moment at the door of the greenhouse, watching his master's retreating form with a wondering expression in his eyes. He was beginning to recover from the unexpected attack.

'It's full time, though,' he muttered, with growing satisfaction. 'It's full time. Let him just give me a chance, and I'll soon show that chap at the Grange what I can do.'

And already he saw a glorious vision of himself as head of a garden compared with which even Sir John's would be insignificant, and commander of a staff of sturdy under-gardeners whom he should rule with a rod of iron.

During the next few weeks Squire Thorpe spent an uncertain amount of time each day in the study of botany, or, to be precise, that branch of it represented in the Manor gardens. It is true, in spite of the astonishing progress he made that the study was a weariness to his soul, and that he frequently felt inclined to throw both Jenkyns and his flowers into the limbo of things neglected. But the thought of a pink blouse, and an occasional meeting with its owner, nerved him to the odious task and bordered all his hours of pain with rosy hope.

He did not tell her of his efforts. His sister, at his request, was issuing invitations for a large garden-party at Old Bevis, and he had determined to wait that occasion before he attempted to delight Miss Polwarth with his newly-acquired knowledge of her 'subject.' What was the use, he asked himself savagely, to go and bore the girl with his ignorance when her soul was thirsting for wise converse with one of kindred tastes. Better far to wait until he could prove that he had, for her sake, toiled for and gained a footing in those realms where she held so high a place.

Miss Polwarth was surprised at his reserve. She thought a great deal more of Thorpe than she would have admitted even to herself, and one of her pleasantest memories was that hour at Sir John Pinder's, when the Squire had, as he now thought, tired her with the ordinary gossip of new acquaintances. She had looked forward with a strange feeling of anticipation to meeting him again, only to find that he had become silent and reserved, and to perceive that he thought fit, for some reason unknown, to be on his guard while speaking to her. Thus she wondered, and all the advantages of higher education could not save her the natural mortification which a sensitive and sweet-natured girl must feel in such a case.

But the Squire's day came at last, with all the best aspects of wind, weather, and circumstances. He saw the Old Bevis grounds bright once more with fair women and brave men, and rejoiced to find that his studies had not been in vain. Jenkyns, spurred on by his master's interest, suggestions, and criticism, and supported by an able temporary staff, had done wonders, and many who remembered the gardens in the old days made complimentary remarks with reference to the changes apparent everywhere. Thorpe listened with mingled elation and anxiety, thinking only of Her.

The Hamptons came, and their guest with them, but the afternoon had almost passed in introductions, welcomes, and other necessities before the Squire found his opportunity. Then, leaving all duty in his sister's able hands, he slipped away to Miss Polwarth's side.

'I should like to take you over the gardens,' he said eagerly. 'Perhaps you could help me a little in one or two things. You are such an authority, you know.'

The lecturer assented, though not with the alacrity of one who is about to revel in her pet subject. The Squire noticed her manner.

'She thinks I'm going to bore her with gossip,' he thought proudly. 'Wait a little while though.'

On their way across the lawn he paused to exhibit a shrub which was one of his recent importations.

'I suppose you know this,' he said easily. '*Mespilus Smithi*—a splendid thing. It is sometimes classed with the thorns, and called *Cratægus*

*Lobata*. It looks very pretty in flower—rich green leaves and pure white blossoms. It isn't very well known yet.'

The Squire had carefully rehearsed every sentence during the morning, and felt, justly, that he had begun well. Nor was he disheartened to observe that Miss Polwarth did not seem to brighten all at once. She simply made some polite remark and followed to the rose-garden.

'You like roses?' he asked sympathetically. 'I have given them some attention this year. Have you seen this? *Augustine Guinoisseau*, or the White la France. Is it not charming with its freedom of growth and bloom, its delicious fragrance and purity? See that lovely trace of pink in the centre of the full white flower.'

Miss Polwarth could not have guessed that Thorpe's eloquence came direct from the *Field*, yet she did not show any signs of being impressed.

'It is very pretty,' she agreed, without the least enthusiasm. 'You seem to take a delight in'——

'I do,' said Thorpe, unconsciously interrupting in his eagerness to tell her all he knew before he forgot it. See this—the *Rose Gustave Piganeau*. It is quite new, and one of the most promising recent additions to the hybrid perpetuals. When in full flower it is of very large size and depth, the petals being broad and robust, and composing a bloom of remarkably massive character. Mark the velvety lustre on the centre petals. This is a new variety, but it is very popular already.'

Miss Polwarth was impressed at last; but not in the way he had expected. There was more of surprise than admiration in her look, and he could almost have imagined that he saw the faintest shadow of disappointment. But, still confident, he put his fancy aside and passed on.

It must be admitted that the Squire did very well during the next half hour, and he was too eager in the performance of his task to notice his companion's fading interest. He had really almost lost sight of the patient-faced girl beside him, and only knew that he was paying his court to the Lecturer on Botany at St Mary's Hall, and paying it, too, in the way which should please her best.

At length he reached the end of his lesson, pausing before a fine orchid. It stood in a small greenhouse which had been set apart for its accommodation, and was a splendid specimen of its class.

'This is a thing you will like,' said the Squire, with a warmth which he did not feel. 'A harmony in gold and bronze. Observe the rich golden petals, and the wavy yellow sepals so delicately tinged with bronze, while the small triangular lip, as you perceive, is golden, with a purple border and white throat.'

'It is very fine. What is it called?' asked Miss Polwarth.

What was it called! The Squire knew well enough, for had he not pored over that orchid paragraph until not only the long Latin name, and the general characteristics which he had recited so glibly, but the very plant itself seemed to be impressed upon his brain. Had he not paid a heavy price and taken immense trouble to obtain this specimen for this special occasion? Yet at the Lecturer's simple question he lost his mental equilibrium, and the name of the orchid vanished from his memory.

The words had been so unexpected. His impression was that she could have identified at a glance any specimen in the plant creation, having all the titles and characteristics as it were at her finger-ends. He could not know that Botany and Floriculture were subjects which she would have been glad to banish for a time from the realm of things spoken of, for during the past month they had haunted her to the limit of her patience. She had been the victim of every noodle in the vicinity who thought himself a lover of flowers, and of an innumerable host of people like Sir John Pinder, who honestly believed it their duty to converse with her upon the subject with which she was most familiar. Life had become a burden under those distresses, and she would have left the Hamptons a week before but for one thing. Now even this one thing had turned upon her, and the afternoon to which she had looked forward so eagerly had been invaded by her plague. Oh, Botany, Botany, Botany!

So her question had been the last effort of failing patience, and she waited listlessly for the answer.

'It is called'—— began the Squire slowly. He could not remember the name, but he must not fail at this last moment. She did not seem to know the plant—perhaps anything in Latin would pass.

'It is called,' he said, 'the *Aurora Borealis*—the far-famed *Aurora Borealis*. You must have heard of it.'

The effect of his words was startling. The Lecturer looked quickly into his face and seemed to perceive at once the meaning of it all—the secret of his late reserve, his portentous gravity to-day, his conduct among the roses—all crowned by this last insult. She had heard of men who thought it their duty to jest at the expense of educated women, and this was one!

'How dare you, Mr Thorpe?' she cried angrily, but with a curious break in her voice. Then, before he could recover from his astonishment, she had turned.

'Good gracious, Miss Botany—I mean Miss Polwarth!'—and in his eagerness the Squire put forth his hand to detain her. 'What is the matter? I forgot the thingamy's name, that's all—quite forgot it, really I did!'

Near the door stood a garden-seat, placed there for the convenience of the orchid's visitors. Miss Polwarth reached it, but could get no farther. As she sank into it Thorpe caught a glance of a flushed and indignant face—then a tiny lace handkerchief appeared.

'Good Lord!' cried the Squire in dismay, 'what have I done?'

. . . . . .

It seemed a long time before she could be convinced, but at last his protestations and explanations—he even took the *Field* from his pocket to discover the correct name of that confounded orchid—took effect. The Lecturer spoke, still from behind the handkerchief.

'Do you mean it? I—I thought you were laughing at me, be—because I lecture on botany. Everybody seems to talk about it, and now I—now I hate it, that I do!'

'Do you, by Jove?' cried the Squire, amazed. 'So do I. And I got it up just to please you!'

There was a moment's awkward silence, during which he drew nearer, and in his agitation even bent over the arm of the seat.

'You hate it?' he said nervously. 'Of course you do. How can you help it? And I've been boring you all the time. But it was all Sir John's fault, and you'll forgive me, won't you?'

Another brief silence, which did more for the Squire than all his talk of roses. Then a flushed face appeared from behind that tiny square of lace, and a very tremulous voice answered him.

'It was all a mistake then—and there is nothing to forgive. Of course, you could not guess how tired I was of—of being botanised!'

'Of course not,' emphatically. 'Only wish I knew! How I must have worried you. But—I say now, if you are really tired of botany—if you are'——

The Squire paused, fearing that he was going too far. Yet Miss Polwarth's face did not forbid him to speak. It was flushed and rosy, indeed, but not with the flush of anger. He went on:

'If you are really tired of it, why—why need you ever go back to it? I'——

But there. What passed in the greenhouse after that fateful pause was strictly private and confidential, and I can only whisper that the great Orchid was shamefully neglected. It could see, of course, but it is to be presumed that it considerately looked the other way, and its sense of hearing was of small service. For after a few short, eager questions, followed slowly by soft, half-spoken replies, the voices sank into murmurs, the murmurs into whispers, and the whispers into a long, happy silence.

. . . . . .

'Confound botany!' cried a voice, ten minutes later. The exclamation was followed by a light, ringing laugh, very reprehensible certainly in the Lecturer at St Mary's Hall, but perhaps excusable in the future lady of Old Bevis. It was also followed by something white, which flew through the doorway, hovered a moment in the air, and fell among the rhododendrons. It might have been a sheet of the *Field*.

Jenkyns, pottering among the shrubs next morning, picked it up and opened it. He read a paragraph or two, and shook his head.

'It's botany,' he murmured slowly. 'I guess the Squire's been and dropped it.'

He was right in more senses than one; but he could not know that when that sheet had fallen his own prospects of a magnificent garden and a noble staff of assistants had vanished into the unsearchable distance.

## THE LITTLE OLD CLERK.

The little old clerk is thin and gray,
And his coat is shiny at every seam;
His hat belongs to a long-past day,
And his boots are patched, 'neath the blacking's gleam.
'Shabby-genteel,' or scarcely that,
The passers-by dub him, with vulgar scorn—
That little old clerk, in the napless hat,
The faded coat and the boots so worn.

The little old clerk, from ten till five,
With a slight respite for a meal between,
Sits writing on, in a human hive,
The busiest bee 'mong the drones, I ween.
Smart young fellows, in well-made suits,
(His fellow-clerks) sneer, with a scornful eye,
At the faded coat and the old patched boots,
And ask him if better he cannot buy.

The little old clerk takes his napless hat
From off its peg, when his toil is o'er,
Brushes the coat that they all sneer at,
Then, with patient smile, passes through the door.
Twenty long years he a clerk has been
In that office dim—yet no higher goes;
Many placed over his head he 's seen—
The old clerk 's passed by in his shabby clothes.

The little old clerk, in the evening's gloom,
Enters his cottage, with anxious eyes;
Some simple blossoms brighten the room;
A crippled form on the sofa lies.
As a sister's lips to his own are pressed—
(The one for whom shabby through life he goes)—
He thanks God that he with her love is blessed,
The little old clerk in his faded clothes!

ELSIE HARRINGTON.

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1*st*. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

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A NEW NOVEL

MY LORD DUKE

BY

E. W. HORNUNG

Author of *A Bride from the Bush*, &c.

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# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MRS MACQUOID.

By R. RAMSAY,

Author of 'The Colonel's Plan,' &c.

I.

'Do you think he is come for that?' said Jane.

'He shut the door carefully,' answered Bella; then, finding that small fact weak to support a case on, she bolstered it up a little.—'I am sure that he only asked for Katie, or Anne would have been to fetch us. She has gone back into the kitchen. But to me the way that door was shut is most convincing. It was not Anne—she was gone before I heard it; and she never closes it like that, turning the handle round. There must have been a reason.'

'It is lucky we had finished dusting,' said Jane; 'and I am pleased that I put William's photograph in the box. It was getting faded, and, I am sure, ought to be removed.'

There was a deeper meaning than might be thought in those prudent words. William had been Katie's first husband, and his likeness had occupied a prominent spot on the drawing-room wall; it was just as well that it should not stare blightingly down on Katie's second prospects. So her sisters thought.

Katie was the only one of the family who had married. Jane and Bella remained under their brother's roof, keeping house for him, and darning his heather-mixture stockings; that roof was an old and honourable one, if dilapidated, and kept up its dignity on the moors, as became the lone mansion of an impoverished Highland gentleman. The house was big and cold without; inside it was barer and colder. James—called The Laird by three crofters in the glen—did not seem sure that the world held anything but books, and did not care to discover. His sisters grew rather like the gray, outside walls; they were elderly and thin, and their tempers were like their noses—sharp.

When Katie came back to her brother's house, a penniless widow, she was like a butterfly alighting where the heather is black and burnt; there was no finding the place she had fluttered out of. They were all older, and the house was grimmer. The others' clothes hung stiffly on all the pegs, and there was no spare bed but the visitor's four-poster with its faint smell of lavender. Her coming gave an extra room to clean, and made some difference in the accounts. She had in truth no welcome.

The two elder unmarried sisters were not ill-pleased to have John Macquoid riding up from Auchendrane, making hoof-marks on the soft bog-road, where there were so few. Katie's ways were not their ways, and they would not be sorry to have the house to themselves, and to put the spare bedroom, now littered with Katie's vanities, into its former state of empty expectation. Only this hope induced them to be tolerant of Katie. It was very fortunate that she should look so nice in her small black bonnets, more so that John Macquoid should think it. The house was square, and had windows in all directions, but one could not put his head out of any window without seeing, right up to the hills and mists, the land that was the property of John Macquoid.

It would be a better match for Katie than the first, which had sent her home—if this were home—so poor. The sisters were now sitting up in the cold, with no intention of coming down, because John Macquoid's face, as seen through the staircase window, had worn an important look.

Katie had reason to be glad, and they had reason to be thankful.

'I do hope she will see it in the proper light,' said Bella. 'But I never understood her; she is so uncertain. Do you think she could possibly'——

Jane interrupted her. She was not eager to suppose that Katie could be so foolish, but she was very much afraid.

'It is a great compliment, and the best thing that could happen. It is not likely that she will be so imprudent.'

'Oh dear no. But very probable!'

They started: the door was opened wider, and Katie walked straight in.

She was a young thing, this widow; so small, and bright, and hasty, that it was a good while before one understood that her eyes were steadfast. The hair was very fluffy round her face, and her hands helped a great deal when she was talking. One would call her excitable and be nearly right—and yet know very little of her. Just as she walked in, her cheeks were red, which they were not always.

'It was thoughtful of you to take William out of his frame,' she said sharply. 'Did you know that Mr Macquoid was coming to—speak to me? How very anxious you must be to hear about it.'

This was Katie's provoking mood. The elder sisters gasped, and looked at each other blankly.

'You would very much like to know,' proceeded Katie, 'whether I courtesied and said I was much obliged to him, but I did not intend to marry; or whether I dropped a lower courtesy and told him I would make him—miserable. Which do you think?'

They gulped down their alarm, but did not attempt to guess.

'I am sorry you did not see him go,' Katie said, more slowly. 'If you had known, you could have inspected the back of his head as he walked down to the gate, and you might have found out from it how he felt. Is it not a pity that I knew you were listening for the door, and to disappoint you, let him out by the window?'

She had given herself away, and she saw it in their relief. The window was long and low, but for all that surely if John Macquoid had not felt much uplifted, he would scarcely have quitted the house in such a light-hearted fashion.

'We were sure you would consider James—and the advisability'—began both sisters, with a haste that showed much of their past anxiety.

'Oh, you were sure!' cried Katie bitterly. 'You said: "She must see that James does not want her, and we will not have her here for ever: we have made it quite plain that she is an interloper and must settle herself elsewhere." You have told me very often how rich John Macquoid is, and—and all the rest of it. All the time he was speaking to me I felt that you were sitting above and whispering, calculating whether I would answer to please you or to please myself. I thought of you, and of what you would believe if I spoke as I would like—and it nearly drove me wild. But I hope you are satisfied. I answered, "Yes."'

There was a noise in the passage down below. John Macquoid had come back, by way of the door, to fetch his stick.

Katie was going to cry. She would not break down and do it before the sisters, who looked too pleased at that yes of hers to care about anything else, or even to be offended; so she choked down the first sob, and rushed across the landing to her own room, slamming the door in a way that made James jump in his study, and reflect that his third sister was a trial in a quiet house.

Left by themselves, Bella and Jane drew long breaths of satisfaction, and began to talk about the wedding. Katie would have to be married from there, and the house was all too shabby. Fortunately John Macquoid had no relations; the guests could all be packed judiciously in the drawing-room—which was presentable—if they kept their elbows in.

So they conversed, and settled all that was required, while Katie crushed her face into the pillows of the big four-poster that would soon be empty, and cried late into the afternoon.

. . . . .

'I am glad it is a boy,' said John Macquoid, bending over something very small and ugly. There was a sister of Katie's in the room, and she pricked up her ears.

'Because of the entail?' said she.

Katie did not say anything. She thought that ugly bundle beautiful, and therefore her opinion on any subject was not worth much. She smiled a little upon her husband, and a great deal more upon the baby.

They had been married a year, and had got on comfortably, though John Macquoid was not demonstrative, and was perhaps a little too quiet for Katie—as her sisters thought.

'She is too flighty,' Bella would say, now and then, missing in her the proper dignity of a big proprietor's wife, or feeling offended at some slight neglect—Auchendrane was too near for perfect peace. When the baby came she added to the phrase: 'Too flighty to make a careful mother.'

But Bella was wrong in that. If she supposed that they would have to play the part of watchful aunts, saving the baby from its mother's carelessness, and superintending its early growth, she was mistaken.

'I have had another husband, but I have never had another child,' Katie said once; at which remark the aunts were shocked and sorry for John, deciding that the mother was extravagantly fond of little Johnnie. There was always something to find fault about in Katie.

'You are too much taken up with the boy,' said Bella, when Johnnie was two years old. 'He should come second, you must remember.'

Katie shook her fluffy head—as a warrior might his crest.

'Second to what? Oh, I know how you used to praise Auchendrane until I took it. Am I not kind enough to the property?'

She could not forget the line they had taken, and it made her voice sound bitter, when she found biting things to say.

'I am sorry for John,' said Bella, when they sat talking her over, as they did after every visit.

'She speaks as she does to tease us,' said

Jane. 'If she had not been very fond of him, she would have refused him for the sake of vexing us.' Bella was the sharp one of the two, but Jane was as often right.

The sisters were sitting at their window one afternoon. It was a most convenient window, looking out on the approach and commanding a fair long strip of road. A person sitting there could get half a mile's notice of any visitor, and prepare accordingly, which was an inducement to patronise the view.

Just now it was dull. Katie and John and Johnnie were in London, the big house at Auchendrane was empty, and no dogcarts whisked along the moor-road from Dalloch. It was not the shooting season.

'What is that?' asked Bella.

There was a speck on the far brown road, that grew and widened into a person riding.

'It will be somebody for James,' suggested Jane, peering out and drawing in her head regretfully. 'We need not change our dresses.'

'No,' said Bella getting up nevertheless. She must step down and see if James's room were tidy. Then she took another look and gasped:

'A telegraph boy from Dalloch!'

The messenger drew up after his ten-mile ride, and began to unlatch the gate, but before he could do it the two women ran flopping down the path and confronted him.

'What is it?' they cried, both breathless. He gave them the telegram. But people who are not used to such treat them as bombs and dare not open them; it was so with Jane and Bella, and they carried it in to James, because both were afraid to look.

It was a while before they found him; at last the tapping of a hammer helped them, and he was discovered at the back, mending the hen-house in a gentlemanly—that is to say, slow and unskilful—fashion.

'A telegram!' they gasped, holding out the buff envelope that frightened them so much. 'Open it.—Who is dead?'

James tore it open. Their nervousness affected him.

'"Katie has disappeared. Is she with you?—MACQUOID."'

## WORKING IN THE DARK.

MOST manufacturers will tell us that the first essential in a workshop is a good light and plenty of it; for one can hardly expect men to turn out well-finished goods unless this desideratum is secured. But there is one particular industry from which light is most jealously guarded, and in the workshops of which the sun's rays are never permitted to intrude, except on the rare occasions when a 'general clean-up' of the premises becomes necessary. The place referred to is the factory where photographic dry plates are made, many thousands of which are used daily by professional and amateur workers all the world over.

Amateur photography is now such a common pastime that it is hardly necessary to describe the appearance of one of these plates, but for the benefit of the uninitiated we may say that it consists of a sheet of glass, covered with a horny coating of gelatine which appears to be mixed with some cream-coloured pigment. This coating is sensitive to white light, and the image of any object formed by a lens upon its surface is rendered visible by the operation called development. The plates may however be handled with impunity in a deep red light; and it is fortunate that this should be the case, for were it otherwise photography would be impossible. A plate factory therefore is lighted by lamps, preferably electric, which are enclosed in lanterns of deep-red glass, and the light is so dim and insufficient for all ordinary purposes that the phrase 'working in the dark' may with fairness be applied to this industry.

The manufacture of dry plates dates back only a few years, the wet plate—which it was necessary for the photographer himself to prepare at the time of using—being employed almost universally up to the year 1880. Long before this time there were certain enthusiastic amateur experimentalists who believed in and made dry plates, of which the basis is gelatine, for their own use. But the professional photographer was conservative, and preferred to stick to the old methods. At length, however, his attention was suddenly arrested by the wonderful rapidity with which pictures could be taken on dry plates, and almost reluctantly he was converted to the new system. After this revolution in photography took place, a new industry was created in the manufacture of dry plates, and many factories were established. It is satisfactory to note that at many of these establishments the export is nearly equal to the home trade, English dry plates being famous all the world over as the most reliable made.

At most of the dry-plate factories admission to strangers is courteously but firmly refused, and, unless there is some very good reason why an exception should be made in his favour, it is impossible for a visitor to find entrance.

The writer of the present article was fortunate enough to carry with him such credentials as at once to mollify the hearts of those in authority, not only at one, but at several factories, and he is therefore in a position to give an exhaustive account of this work done in the dark. But from exigencies of space, as well as in fairness to those who desire secrecy for special methods, his remarks on the various stages of the manufacture must be brief.

The first room which opens its doors to us is fully lighted by big windows, which are opposite a long bench at which several girls are at work cleaning the glass as it comes from the glass merchants. We learn that at one particular factory the glass supplied, cut into sheets of assorted sizes, involves a bill of between two and three hundred pounds per month. At some factories the glass is cleaned by machine, being fed into it sheet by sheet by the aid of revolving india-rubber rollers, and receiving a good scrubbing with acid water from rapidly moving brushes. In either case the glass after being cleaned is placed in racks to dry, when it is ready to receive its light-sensitive chemical coating of gelatine emulsion.

The next apartment which we enter is the laboratory, where this emulsion is prepared, many gallons at a time; and on entering the double doors—one of which must be closed before the

other is opened, so as to avoid any glint of white light—we leave the day behind us, and enter upon a darkness which may be felt. But gradually, as the pupils of the eyes become expanded and accustomed to the gloom, we find that we can dimly trace the outline of red lamps. By-and-by these lamps look far brighter than they did at first; we can sufficiently perceive objects to avoid knocking against them, and in another few minutes we are almost comfortable with regard to our powers of observation in this gloomy place. We can see many bottles on a shelf above our heads, and various big pots around us: the bottles contain the chemicals of which the emulsion is made, and the pots are the vessels in which it is compounded. And now our guide gives us a short lesson in photographic chemistry. A warm solution of gelatine and water is charged with a certain quantity of bromide of potash, or ammonium. In another vessel is held a solution of nitrate of silver in water; and when these two mixtures are gradually combined with one another, with much stirring, a cream-coloured emulsion of bromide of silver—intensely sensitive to light—is the result. After this important mixing operation takes place, the compound is kept at a certain temperature to ripen, and is then cooled down to the jelly form, when it assumes the appearance, barring its yellow tint, of blanc-mange. This jelly has now to be washed in order to get rid of certain soluble salts which are not wanted, and which have been formed as necessary by-products of the mixing process. And in order that the washing water shall have free access to the compound, the jelly is pressed through a silver colander or sieve—some makers use coarse canvas—and comes out of the ordeal like so much vermicelli. After a good washing in running water for an hour or so, the strings of jelly are strained, heated up into liquid form once more, carefully filtered through swansdown calico, and the compound is then ready for coating the glass plates.

When dry plates first became a marketable commodity the plates were coated by hand, each one having a pool of emulsion poured in its centre, and gradually urged over its surface by a glass rod, the plate being afterwards placed on a flat, cold surface of slate to set. But ingenious machines were soon constructed to do the work far more rapidly and with greater uniformity, and machine coating is now the rule at all factories. There are two or three different machines, but they have all a family likeness, and differ only in detail; a description of one will therefore suffice for all. The warm emulsion is poured into a reservoir holding perhaps a couple of gallons, and from this receptacle it flows to a trough in which revolves a glass roller about the size of an ordinary kitchen rolling-pin. This trough and its roller are placed across a long narrow table which forms the bed of the machine. The roller as it revolves takes up a certain quantity of the emulsion, which at this stage of its career looks like, and is about the consistency of custard. A silver scraper just touches the wet roller, and from the scraper a linen apron depends which carries an even layer of the liquid emulsion to the glass plates which, by means of endless bands, travel in procession upon the level surface of the table. Boys, almost unseen in this dim light, are continually supplying plates of glass to the machine, and other boys, twenty-five feet away at the other end of the table, remove the coated plates as they one by one present themselves. In their journey the coated plates travel through a tunnel which is chilled with ice, so that the gelatinous mixture becomes firmly set, and the plates can be reared in portable racks without injury. As each rack is filled with plates it is put on a lift and taken up-stairs to the drying-room, where, by the combined help of steam-pipes and fans, the film of sensitised gelatine is rendered perfectly dry in about twenty-four hours.

The dry plates in common use by professional and amateur photographers vary in size between 15 by 12 inches and $4\frac{1}{4}$ by $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches, the cameras and other apparatus being made of standard gauge, and the plates being made to fit them. Unfortunately the foreign sizes are different, so that for export—unless it be to India or one of our own colonies—the plates must be made specially. It is not usual, however, to coat a smaller plate than that known as whole-plate—that is, $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $6\frac{1}{2}$; and to meet the large demand for smaller sizes—especially $4\frac{1}{4}$ by $3\frac{1}{4}$—this whole-plate is cut across twice by an automatic machine—the last-named size being known as quarter plate, and used more extensively than any other.

We next enter the packing-room. It is customary to pack the plates in dozens, each dozen in a separate cardboard box; but before this is done each plate is held up to a red lamp and well examined for blemishes. A scratch or a bubble will at once condemn it, and it is placed aside for after-treatment. The work is so well done that the spoilt plates are less than one per cent. of the whole, a wonderful result to arrive at considering that the plate, while its coating is wet, is a very ticklish thing to handle, and also considering the paucity of light used to work by in its preparation. The plates are usually packed face to face in fours—each four being wrapped in chemically pure paper. Thus each cardboard box holds three packages, and the lid is secured by the printed label which is pasted over all. When once boxed up the plates can be handled in white light with impunity; but of course when the user places them in his apparatus he must carefully protect them from white light.

A rival to glass as a support for the emulsion has recently been introduced, and what are known as celluloid films are coming into common use, especially among tourist photographers. These films are about one-sixth the weight of glass plates, and therefore commend themselves to travellers to whom every extra ounce of luggage is a serious consideration. Celluloid is a horny, flexible, and transparent substance, which is made for photographic purposes in two forms, either in flat sheets, cut like the glass plates already adverted to, into standard sizes, or in the form of a long ribbon which can by means of rollers be exposed in the camera to the influence of the lens, a length at a time. Such a ribbon impressed with as many as fifty pictures can afterwards be cut up into convenient lengths for ease of development. It may also be mentioned that this same ribbon-like material, technically known as rollable film, is used in the apparatus for projecting upon a screen what are known as 'living pictures.' In this apparatus several hundreds of pictures are used

per minute, the combination of the whole giving the effect of movement, as in the Zoetrope and other older contrivances. The pictures for Edison's Kinetoscope are also of the same nature, and take this same form.

It will be seen that the coating of these plates and films for photographic purposes is now a very important business, and the calls upon the manufacturer seem to increase rather than diminish. For even if it be true that the present craze for cycling has reduced the number of amateur photographers, fresh uses for light-sensitive material are constantly coming forward. It is curious to note that the beautiful art in which brilliant light is one of the first essentials, is bred, as it were, in a darkness which is almost that of night. And it might seem that for the operators this condition of working is very hard. But it is certain that they soon become accustomed to the gloom, and some there are who consider that the eyesight receives a rest thereby, which will happily postpone the use of spectacles for several years beyond the usual age when such helps to vision become indispensable.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

By Guy Boothby.

### CHAPTER XII.—A FATEFUL NIGHT.

The sun was high in the heavens next morning when I woke from my heavy sleep; but late as it was, I believe, had circumstances permitted it, I could have rolled over and continued my slumber for another five hours without waking. Whether it was on account of my two long rides, or whether it was my fall upon the battlefield that had done it, I cannot say; one thing, however, was quite certain, I ached in every limb as if I had been beaten with bludgeons from head to foot. When I crawled from my bed I was as pitiable a wreck as a man could well be. With the exercise of considerable patience, however, I managed to dress myself, and then went off to find the doctor in order to discover what sort of report he could give me of the king's condition. I caught him in the act of leaving the bedroom after his mid-day examination of his patient. He held up his finger to warn me not to speak, and then led me down the corridor as far as the Fountain Courtyard. Here he stopped, and we sat down together on the seat by the water.

'I took the liberty of looking in upon you about eight o'clock this morning, my lord,' he said, 'but you were sleeping so soundly that I thought it would be a pity to wake you. I knew you would like to be told at once that there is a slight change for the better in His Majesty's condition. He is sensible once more, and his temperature has dropped considerably since I saw you early this morning.'

'Thank God for His mercy!' I said from the very bottom of my heart. 'Your news makes a different man of me. Heaven grant the improvement may continue! You think more hopefully of the case now than when I last saw you?'

'I trust we may *soon* have reason to think more hopefully of it,' he answered cautiously. 'But so far the improvement is so very, very slight that I should not be justified in being too sanguine. He is up now; he may be down again in half-an-hour; so that you must not build too much on what I tell you. There is one thing, however, of which I *will* assure you, if it will afford you any satisfaction, and that is that if doctoring and nursing can do it, he will be saved. I can say no more.'

'You have said quite enough,' I answered, taking his hand and gripping it in mine. 'You have given us good proof of your devotion, and you know, I think, that we have the greatest possible confidence in you. By the way, who is with the king now?'

'His wife. She has just relieved me.'

'Have you comforted her with your good news?'

'I have told her just what I have told you,' he answered. 'I think it has done her good. She wanted a fillip badly. This morning early she broke down completely, and if it had not been for the Princess, I don't know what I should have done with her.'

'God be merciful to her in her hour of trouble!' I said, and as I did so he rose. We shook hands, and then he went his way back to the sick-room, while I went mine across the courtyard to the barracks in search of Prennan.

I found him in his quarters putting the finishing touches to his arrangements for the coming expedition. He rose when I entered, and shook me warmly by the hand, at the same time complimenting me upon my improved appearance. In return I questioned him as to his preparations for the surprise we proposed springing upon the enemy.

'Everything is in readiness,' he answered. 'Du Berg will receive his despatches, all being well, in an hour's time, and will be certain to march to the rendezvous forthwith. There remains, therefore, only one matter to be settled.'

'And what is that?' I inquired. 'We must leave nothing undecided, for when all is said and done we are playing our game against overwhelming odds.'

'It is the question as to who shall lead the expedition to-night,' he answered. 'I should like to do so myself above all things, but His Majesty has intrusted the command of the citadel to me; and if by any chance what we hope to do to-night were to fall through, and the enemy were to seize the castle during my absence, I should have failed in my trust, and should be disgraced for ever.'

'Why should I not take command?' I asked. 'It is true I am not much of a soldier, but in this case I think I could do all that would be required of me. At any rate I could try. And I think my devotion to the king is beyond question.'

'That is exactly what I was hoping you would say,' he answered. 'If your lordship would take command, I should let the men go with an easy conscience. I shall send Denton with you as your second. He is a steady, reliable officer, and I am quite sure will assist you to the very best of his ability.'

'He will prove of great assistance to me, I have no doubt,' I said; 'and now tell me at what hour we had better start, and how many men I am to take with me.'

'You will leave here not a minute later than seven o'clock, or, in other words, just as dusk is falling. I find I cannot spare you more than five hundred men, but under the circumstances, they should prove sufficient for the purpose.'

'Very good. You may rely upon our doing the best we can to give a good account of ourselves.'

When I returned to the palace I found that it was time for tiffin, and having prepared myself for it, I made my way to the anteroom where it was our custom to wait until the meal was announced. I found it empty, but I had not been there very many minutes before the Princess Natalie entered. I moved from where I was sitting by the window to offer her a seat, and my steps must have revealed my identity to her, for she said at once, with an air of entreaty that was inexpressibly touching:

'Lord Instow, I have been looking forward to this opportunity of seeing you alone, for I want you to tell me the real truth about my brother, without hiding anything from me. I have asked the doctor, but he only tells me that he is doing as well as can be hoped, and expects me to rest content with that. You will see that such an answer gives me no real idea as to what is the matter with him. And as you know, I love him so dearly, and I am so frightened about him.'

I took her hand, and led her to a seat near the window. Never had I seen her look more beautiful, and certainly never more sad. In the present crisis her infirmity seemed more than usually cruel. She was filled with such a desire to help, she possessed such a stock of tenderness and devotion, and yet by reason of her blindness she was debarred from doing anything.

'Natalie,' I said, 'I will tell you the truth. Marie is ill, very ill, there can be no doubt upon that point. But he is better to-day, and the doctor is, I fancy, a degree more hopeful. You are aware how delicate he has been these three years past. Well, the plain truth is he has overtaxed his powers lately, and this illness is the result. What a terrible time this is for you I know, but you must endeavour to cheer Olivia, and she must try to cheer you. You will be brave, will you not, for all our sakes?'

She tried instantly to look happier, and the effort almost brought the tears into my eyes, so brave and yet so ineffectual was it.

'They tell me you are working yourself nearly to death to save my brother's kingdom,' she said, after a moment's pause, laying her hand upon mine as it rested on the arm of her chair. 'What a good day it was for us when Marie first met you!'

The touch of her soft hand, and the music of her voice sent a thrill through me like quicksilver, and one that presently settled in my heart, making me long, with a greater desire than I had ever yet felt, to tell this sweet girl, what I had known for upwards of a year in my own mind, yet had never before dared to put into words, and that was how fondly and how truly I loved her.

'I wonder if you will always think the same,' I said, more for the sake of gaining time for thought than for any other reason.

'Why should I not?' she asked, turning her face with its poor blind eyes up to mine. 'You are goodness and kindness itself, and I shall always honour you and be grateful to you. And so will poor Marie if he is spared to us. Oh, Lord Instow, think what his life means to me! Ask yourself if anything should befall him what my fate will be. I shall be left alone—quite alone in all the world.'

This was too much for me; so without any more hesitation I placed my arm round her, and drew her to me.

'Natalie, my love, my queen,' I cried, 'you must not say those cruel words. As long as I live you will never be alone in the world—for I love you, and have loved you ever since I first saw you, and I ask nothing better from the future than the right to protect and care for you. Natalie, say you love me in return and will be my wife.'

She nestled in my arms, her beautiful head lying upon my shoulder. I could feel that she was trembling violently. But she was strangely silent. This frightened me, and I bade her turn her face to me.

'You do not love me,' I cried. 'I was wrong to speak to you in that fashion.'

This brought her speech back to her as quickly as I could wish.

'You were not wrong,' she answered. 'I love you with my whole heart and soul. It seems to me I have loved you always.'

I kissed her upon her pure sweet lips, and called her by the sacred name of wife. Oh Heaven, what happiness was mine! I had nursed my passion so long in secret that it seemed to burst forth into greater flame by reason of such confinement. How the remaining interval passed before tiffin was announced I have only a confused recollection. I remember telling Natalie of the expedition I was to lead against the enemy that evening, and assuring her that she need have no fears for my safety. Then Olivia entered and was told the news; and the remembrance of the loving way in which she kissed us both and wished us every happiness, although her own heart was strained nearly to breaking pitch by her anxiety, even at this distance of time comes back to me like a touch of pain.

I am ashamed to say that in spite of the sorrow under which we were labouring on account of the king's health, in spite of the grave position of the kingdom, I spent the remainder of that afternoon in an earthly Paradise. It was Natalie who listened to my plans for bringing about the salvation of the Médangs; it was Natalie who gave me the locket she wore round her own soft neck, for a talisman that was to bring me back in safety to her. The sun, sinking below the hills, and the long shadows of night drawing across the plain, found us together on the battlements, and it was not until an hour before it was

time for us to start that I went to make my final arrangements with the Governor.

Almost punctually on the stroke of seven an officer entered the palace to inform me that the troops had fallen in. I accordingly bade my sweetheart and sister farewell, and with a curious mist before my eyes, and a feeling in my heart that had never been there before, took my place at the head of the force under my command.

'Good-bye, my lord,' said Prennan, shaking me warmly by the hand. 'The prisoner, who is to act as your guide, is handcuffed between two men as you see; nevertheless I should still advise you to keep your eye upon him. You have the pick of my garrison, and I wish you every possible success.'

I reciprocated his wish, and then, the gates having been opened, gave the word of command, and in the gathering gloom we marched out and down the hill.

Of the march that followed there is little to tell. On leaving the city our way lay through the jungle for the first ten miles by means of well-defined paths. Then the road became somewhat more intricate and finally it struck me as being a mere matter of guesswork on our guide's part. He, however, seemed quite confident, and as his life depended on the result, I was the more prepared to trust him.

It was a strange experience, and one not to be easily forgotten, that march through the jungle. After we had left the path proper it was in some cases as much as we could do to force a passage through the dense masses of creeper, the interlacing bamboos, and the thick grasses that barred our way. The sounds of the forest were also curious in the extreme. As we pressed forward it was to the chattering accompaniment of half-awakened monkeys; while with every stroke of the *parang*, startled birds flew from their shelter in the bushes, and went whirring into the darkness. Now and again a deer would spring up almost from under our feet, and be gone again before one had time to realise he was there, while more than once we heard a tiger making his peculiar cry at no great distance from the line of march.

When we had been pushing our way on for what seemed an eternity, I gave the command to halt, and with the assistance of a match examined my watch. It was exactly a quarter past ten; so thinking we should be somewhere near our destination, I called the guide up and interrogated him.

He replied to the effect that in less than a quarter of an hour he would bring us to the pass; and warning him again that his fate would be summary if he deceived me, I ordered the march to proceed.

His statement proved to be correct, for well within the time stated we found ourselves approaching a range of hills that towered up into the moonlit sky. The ground had been slowly ascending for some time prior to this, and there could be no doubt that we were now close to our destination. A few moments later we left the jungle, and, climbing a small stretch of open land, found ourselves at the entrance to a long pass, or as it might be more correctly termed, gully, in the hills. From the bottom, which was scarcely a hundred feet wide, the walls rose almost sheer on one side to a height of perhaps two hundred feet, on the other to a height of fifty; in the latter case there was then a peculiar description of plateau from which the hill rose again, this time on a gentler slope, for another eighty or ninety feet.

Halting my men at the mouth, and taking Denton with me, I hastened along the pass, noting its peculiarities and adaptabilities for my purpose as I went. In something like twenty minutes I had reached the farther end, had learnt what I wanted to know, and was ready to turn back.

On rejoining my command, I divided it into three parts. One—the strongest, I placed under Denton at the head of the pass, in order that it might command the exit. The second, which I proposed to take charge of myself, I established on the plateau half-way through the gully. The third I stationed almost at the farther end, just where it would best be able to cut off the retreat.

As soon as they were in their several positions, and I had satisfied myself that they were not discernible from the bottom of the pass, I gave my final instructions to the officers in command of each party. These were to the effect that not a shot was to be fired until they saw the rocket—which I had brought with me for that express purpose—go up. After the discharge of a second rocket not another cartridge was to be expended. Then I placed the signal in position, and afterwards lay down, with the prisoner beside me, in charge of his keepers, to await the course of events. I had no intention that he should have an opportunity afforded him of giving his friends the alarm.

For nearly two hours we lay concealed, all the time awaiting the foe's appearance with an anxiety no one who has not taken part in such an affair could realise. The moon dropped lower upon the hill, the night wind sighed like a lost spirit among the rocks and long grass, a night bird hooted from a tree, and once or twice jackals cried to each other from across the pass. It was dreary work, rendered perhaps more so to my mind by the semi-treacherous nature of the business we had come to accomplish. Had it been possible, I would rather have given the foe battle in the open, man to man; but one moment's reflection showed me the madness of such a proceeding. On the other hand I remembered that the force in question was marching against us with a similar purpose in view, and when all was said and done we were only taking care of ourselves. At the best 'twas fine argument for both sides, and one had to take it at one's own valuation.

Almost as my repeater struck half-past eleven, an officer whom I had stationed at the end of the pass came to inform me that the enemy had entered it. Next moment there burst upon my ear the sound of voices, and with a suddenness that startled me the advance guard of the enemy appeared in sight. Scarcely more than fifty yards behind them came the main body, chatting and laughing without any thought of a surprise. I waited until they were exactly opposite me, and then, crouching behind a rock, in order that the tiny flame might give them no warning of our position, I lit a match and set fire to the rocket. With a long hiss and a trail

of sparks it rose into the air, and at the same instant two hundred and fifty rifles rang out, followed an instant later by a similar number.

Anything like the horror and confusion of the next few minutes no man could possibly imagine. The terrified troops in the gully below knew neither what to do nor which way to turn. Their ranks were completely disorganised, while volley after volley was being poured into them from the hillside above. They tried to advance, but were met by Denton's fire; they tried to retreat, only to find themselves assailed by the third party; and all the time my detachment was raking them from mid-between. The air was filled with cries and curses, the rattle of rifles, and the shouting of orders. Dante's *Inferno* would not have compared with it. When I imagined the time had come, I discharged the second rocket and the firing instantly ceased.

As soon as I thought I could make myself heard, I shouted in a loud voice, in French:

'Lay down your arms, and your lives will be spared. Fail to do so, and I open fire once more.'

When sufficient time had been given for this command to be executed, I ordered what remained of the force to march down the valley in the direction they had come. This was done by all able to move, and so nicely had our arrangements fitted in, that almost at the moment they reached the mouth of the defile Du Berg's force entered the plain on the other side.

Half an hour later we were shaking hands upon our success. With the loss of but three men killed and five wounded we had cut up a force of nearly a thousand, killing two hundred, wounding upwards of three hundred more, and capturing the balance with all their arms and ammunition.

It was then arranged that I should take charge of the prisoners and wounded and convey them back to the capital; so when my force had rested, I set off on my return journey. It proved a harder task than it had been going, but I was so elated by my success that I would have undertaken it had it been twice as difficult.

It was well on towards evening when we reached the capital. The news had preceded us, and enthusiastic to the last degree was the welcome we received. Crowds lined the streets through which we passed, and when we entered the citadel itself the climax was reached. Prennan received me in the courtyard with the garrison under arms, and as soon as I had seen my convoy safely inside the gates, I greeted him. I could feel the grip he gave my hand for hours after. But there was another welcome I was waiting for, and when I entered the palace that welcome I received. Frightened, however, by what Natalie told me of the king's condition, I left her and went in search of the doctor. I found him awaiting me in my own sitting-room.

'What news have you to tell me?' I asked as I shook him by the hand. 'How is the king?'

'Worse,' he answered sadly. 'Much worse. He has been almost continually delirious since you left, and now shivering fits, or rigors as we call them, have set in. Knowing his constitution so well, I cannot understand what they mean.'

I groaned aloud.

'Tell me candidly your opinion,' I said, resolved to come at his meaning. 'Do you anticipate the worst?'

The young doctor nearly broke down as he answered:

'God help us! I fear I do.'

## SOME REALISTIC STAGE-EFFECTS.

The sphere of the stage-manager has widened since the days when Mr Vincent Crummles considered the introduction of a pump and two tubs on the stage a notable achievement in realism. A drawing-room scene is now furnished with almost as much care and expense as if it were actually an apartment in the West End, while the inevitable attack in a modern military drama is incomplete without the aid of a complement of Maxim guns.

Where there is such close adherence to reality, part of the credit is due to the upholsterer and the ordnance manufacturer. It is in the invention of subtle devices by which the spectator is completely illusioned, frequently by means which he would hardly suspect, that stage-craft is raised almost to the level of an art.

Spectacle and drama naturally afford the widest scope for realistic effects. In T. W. Robertson's military comedy, *Ours*, however, there are certain 'effects' introduced which for forcibly conveying the desired impression by thoroughly legitimate means have never been surpassed. The artistic way that the climax is worked up at the end of the second act—the departure of the troops for the Crimea—is enough to stir the patriotism of the most phlegmatic Briton.

We see only a London drawing-room, with four or five of the *dramatis personæ* looking from a balcony window at the various regiments which are supposed to be passing in the street below. But we hear the brass and fife bands playing the farewell marches, the sharp peremptory commands of the officers, the continuous tramp of the men as they file steadily past. Little wonder the scene affected even the indolent Hugh Chalcot, and made him suddenly resolve to join his friends in seeking the fortune of war. Yet that impressive tramp, tramp, of marching soldiery is simply produced by a couple of assistants behind the scenes, who 'mark time' on the boards, and another couple who do the same in a shallow box containing cinders.

In the next act are introduced some telling 'winter effects.' Here we have the interior of a rudely constructed hut, occupied by the English officers at the seat of war in the Crimea; this is a built-in scene with a 'practicable' door, the only entrance to the hut, on the right hand side of the stage. At the beginning of the act the wind is heard shrieking and moaning outside, and when any one enters or leaves the hut he opens the door just sufficient to let him pass through, then quickly closes it to prevent it being blown inward. In the momentary opening of the door we hear the wind shriek louder, and catch a glimpse of the white waste outside, with the snow driving in clouds against the door.

Rather elaborate preparations are necessary to faithfully reproduce this effect. The outside of the hut door is first profusely covered with pads of cotton-wool. Then there is placed opposite to

it, in the side-wings, one of the large riddles used by builders' men to sift sand and lime, and which resembles the frame of an ordinary door strung with wires. Two men stand behind the riddle with a plentiful supply of bran and salt mixed, which, every time the door is opened during the progress of the storm, they toss rapidly through the wires, aiming always at the door. The wires cut through the bran and salt, and give the compound the flakey appearance of drifting snow, the bran being used to soften the heavy swishing sound of the salt.

To further emphasise the severity of the Crimean winter, when Hugh Chalcot, late the lounger about town, rises yawning from his couch and prepares for his morning toilet, he finds that the water in the bucket has frozen over-night. Now, no stage-manager would for a moment think of putting real ice in that bucket; he has choice of two simple and inexpensive expedients by which he can produce the desired effect even in the dogdays. He may cover the bottom of the bucket with a layer of sand, place a common dinner-plate on the top of the sand, then fill the bucket three parts full of water. Or, instead of the sand and plate, he can fix two cross-bars of thin wood between the sides of the bucket, above the surface of the water. 'Ice, as usual!' remarks Chalcot, as he taps the plate—or the laths—with a crowbar, to convey the idea that the substance is ice. When a more vigorous blow breaks the obstruction, and the water splashes over the sides of the bucket, the illusion is complete.

Shipwrecks on the stage are invariably depicted as occurring at night, or in the obscurity accompanying a thunderstorm; doubtless with the twofold object of heightening the impression and concealing the means by which it is attained. A thrilling incident in a certain sensational American drama is the passage through a stormy sea of a small boat, containing three of the characters, who are making their way to the lighthouse. To the spectators in front the slow and perilous progress of the tiny craft looks wonderfully realistic, but when seen from behind it has rather a funny aspect. The 'raging billows' are agitated by scene-shifters stationed at the wings, in the manner usually employed in shaking carpets. The 'property' boat is a mere profile—the model of one side of a boat—which the actors behind it grasp by the gunwale, and sway vigorously up and down, while they walk leisurely across the stage, their feet hidden by the raging billows aforesaid.

Playgoers who witnessed the early artistic productions of *Les Cloches de Corneville* may remember that, in the scene representing the 'Crusaders' Hall' in the haunted chateau, the variegated colours of the stained-glass window were reflected on the floor, apparently cast by the light of the moon shining through the window. But on the stage the poetic effects of nature are not always reproduced by the agency that would most readily suggest itself to the uninitiated. Although the window was a painted transparency, lit from behind by limelight, to convey the impression of clear moonlight outside, this illuminating medium did not supply the cast shadow; limelight, so employed, would have been too powerful for the purpose. There was therefore set in the side-wings a magic lantern, containing a slide painted in exact imitation of the stained-glass window, and so focussed that the picture was reflected on the floor just where the coloured shadow of the window would naturally fall.

An instance of the care bestowed by Sir Henry Irving in perfecting even a minor illusion is shown in his dressing of the part of Mathias in *The Bells*. The first scene represents the interior of the burgomaster's house; the time is winter, and through the latticed window the snow is seen falling thick outside. The privileged visitor behind the scenes on a night when *The Bells* is produced will see, placed near the side-wings, a tub containing soap and water, which a boy keeps stirring into a fine creamy lather. Before Mathias appears on the stage, all cloaked and booted, he steps into the tub, and the boy splashes the soapy lather over his person. The next minute the burgomaster enters his house, and, having presumably come through the snow-storm, he is covered with the white flakes, which gradually melt and disappear in sight of the audience in a way that natural snow could hardly hope to excel.

Even at the beginning of his career the eminent Lyceum manager displayed his genius for inventing original effects. While the youthful member of a provincial stock company, he was on one occasion cast for a mock supernatural character in burlesque. With the object of making the character appear to have long claw-like fingers, he painted the back of his hands with dark streaks, that ran upward from the space between each finger. To render the illusion more consistent, his fingers were never closed while he was on the stage, but always spread out against his dark-coloured costume. Old playgoers who saw the actor in this part describe the effect as singularly weird and sinister.

Water can be imitated on the stage in a variety of ways. In one of the set scenes in Mr G. R. Sims' play, *The Lights o' London*, showing the Regent's Canal by night, the villain throws his accomplice into the water, and, immediately after, the hero leaps in to rescue him. Each time the body disappears in the 'turgid stream'—represented, of course, by an open trap, with a soft mattress conveniently placed in the cellar below—a handful of salt is tossed up through the open trap, to imitate spray splashing off the surface of the water.

An ingenious contrivance has been used on the continent to simulate a stream of water trickling from a fountain. A transparent glass tube, spiral or corkscrew shaped, and gradually thickening towards its base, is fixed between the mouth of the ornamental dolphin above and the bottom of the basin, which is covered with a sheet of glass. Concealed in the framework of the fountain is an automatic appliance by which the glass tube is set revolving, giving it all the appearance, even at a short distance, of a jet of running water.

To exhibit a life-like and apparently well-fed dragon, measuring some twenty feet from his crested head to his flapping tail; to induce him to roll his fiery red eyes in their sockets, and snap his huge jaws regularly every two minutes, while he drags his body tortuously along the stage, may seem an incredible, not to say dangerous, experiment. Yet the dragon we saw at a London theatre a few years ago might have been safely

introduced as a domestic pet into any household. Terrific as he looked, his body was only the wrapper that enclosed a number of cleverly drilled little boys, who, closely following one another in a crouching posture, directed the movements of the monster.

But when they stage Wagner's operas in first-class style, they give us a dragon that 'goes one better,' for he actually belches smoke. *Mephistopheles* has been known to make his first appearance before old *Faust* in a cloud of vapour, tinted a weird green by the skilful manipulation of the lime-light. A real steam-launch puffing real smoke from a real funnel, and darting hither and thither in a tank of real water, was some time ago a feature in an up-to-date play of society life. Then, in a set-scene with a built-up cottage, a picturesque effect is sometimes obtained by showing a wreath of smoke issuing from the chimney. The method by which this effect is produced contradicts the proverb, 'Where there is smoke there is fire,' for a quantity of hot water poured upon a shovelful of quicklime will create smoke enough to simulate the smokiest of chimneys. The possibilities of smoke or steam as an aid to illusive effect have not yet however been exhausted. Probably the day is not far distant when some enterprising manager will introduce behind the footlights—but, we hope, no farther—a realistic imitation of a London fog.

## THE PLAZA OF SANTA MARTA.

### A STORY OF THE CUBAN INSURRECTION.

By H. Bindloss, Author of *Rising of the Brass Men*, &c.

Two men, ragged and travel-stained, lay sleeping the deep sleep of utter weariness on the bare floor of an old Spanish tower in the island of Cuba.

The one with his head resting in the angle of the wall and a newly healed scar showing white upon his sunburnt forehead, was Charles P. Marshall, an American journalist on the staff of a paper which supported the cause of the Cuban Insurgents, and indeed of revolutionaries all the world over, with the usual vigour of a transatlantic journal. He had made part of a campaign with the Insurgents, in search of accurate details, which he had got, more in fact than he cared about; and eventually, together with his companion, Don Jaime de La Costa, a leading revolutionary, fell into the hands of the Spanish authorities when the troops stormed Lagunitas entrenchments.

'Ola compañero, wake up—it is already dawn.' With these words ringing in his ears, the American raised himself stiffly on one elbow and gazed sleepily about him. Then memory came back with a pang, and as his eyes fell upon the set face of La Costa he realised that this was the last time either would wake from sleep, for both lay under the sentence of death.

By degrees the gray light grew clearer, until at length a single golden beam streaming through the narrow window quivered upon the rough masonry; and dragging himself towards the barred opening, for he was aching in every limb, Marshall looked out upon the sunrise—the last sunrise he would ever see.

Beneath him lay broad fields of sugar-cane, rolling away in lush green waves before the morning breeze towards a wall of misty mountains which rose against the eastern sky. Here and there flat-topped, white-walled quintas nestled among groves of orange and nispero trees and broad-leaved bananas; while the faint air that entered the cell seemed cooled with dew and heavy with the fragrance of flowers. Under the feathery palms which fringed the broad high-road, the white dust lay moist and still, and out of their blue-green shadow came the tinkling of mule bells and a clear voice chanting the chorus of a vintage song; while the merry laughter of children echoed across the wet sword-blades of the sugar-cane.

The American ground his heels into the boards. The world seemed very good that morning—a place of light and sunshine; and yet before the rising sun had crossed the meridian, he, now so full of life, would be flung like a dog into a shallow trench, amid bubbling quicklime—and he shuddered at the thought.

'This is what you get for interfering in other people's troubles—yellow fever, risk of drowning, a wound when the troops stormed the trenches, and now—ugh—a white wall and a firing party,' he muttered half aloud; and La Costa, who was proud of his knowledge of English—or rather American—answered:

'Ah my frent, it is the fortune of war—all the same in fifty year—and we die in a good cause.'

Even then Marshall could not but admire the soldierly grace of his companion, as the latter flung his arms above his head, showing his broad chest and long straight limbs—a fine type of the old Spanish blood, the American thought; and he tried to smile in reply.

But it was an unsatisfactory ghost of a smile, for the journalist had no desire to die just then—in a good cause, or otherwise. Besides, having seen the Spanish troops, mostly poor hill peasants, torn from their homes by a ruthless conscription, dying like flies in pestilential swamps, and dropping out of the ranks in scores on every scorching march to die by the wayside, yet bearing starvation and sickness with heroic fortitude; he was by no means so sure as he was in the beginning that the revolutionary party monopolised the virtues of courage and endurance. Neither was he so absolutely convinced of the goodness of the cause. After all, he thought, La Costa was right; it would be all the same in fifty years, 'ready, present, fire,' a well-directed volley, the sting of a bullet—and afterwards darkness and oblivion. Then the fear came that it might not be a well-directed volley; for he had seen some ghastly sights that campaign; men, half slain by the bungling aim of recruit battalions, done to death by rifle butt or bayonet thrust. Anyway, there was no escape now; he must make

the best of it, and if the insurgent could take things philosophically, he would too. Presently the Cuban also approached the window, and pointing to a distant hillside where tall palms rose clearly against the morning blue, observed :

'There are our friends, the Martinez column. It is not far, and yet they do not know—and to-day we die. *Ay de mi!*'

After this came silence, and, for what seemed hours and hours, the American sat with his head in his hands, until there was a hammering at the door, and a Spanish soldier stood on the threshold, beckoning with his finger. Their time had come ; and pulling himself together, Marshall stepped out into the glare of tropic sunlight.

Half a company of Cazadores Canarios, conscripts from the volcanic rocks of Teneriffe and Grand Canary, marched in front with fixed bayonets, and half a company followed behind ; the nickel buttons of their dull green uniforms and the brass medallions on their clumsy kepis glinting in the sun.

When they reached the little town, the narrow streets lay baking in fervent heat. A cloud of hot dust, stirred up by the tread of marching feet, powdered the Cazadores, turning their green to gray ; and every flat azotea roof and narrow side-walk was crowded with white-clad citizens, all revolutionaries at heart, who scowled at the Spanish troops from beneath their broad-brimmed hats.

The sunlight flashed back from slippery stones and white walls, and Marshall pushed his battered straw hat down on his forehead to shut out the dazzling brightness and the eager gaze of the crowd ; but La Costa drew his crimson sash tighter round his ragged garments, and swung his costly Panama to the ground, as a low murmur of sympathy and pity rose from the spectators, while the eyes of the women grew dim, and many a swarthy Cuban felt a choking in his throat.

Then the murmur changed into a fierce growl of hate and defiance, and the crowd pressed forward, their hands upon the hafts of their long knives.

A hoarse voice raised the cry 'Viva la Cuba! Viva La Costa! Viva los Americanos!' and it echoed from man to man down all the winding street, until the listless air seemed full of the sound ; but the front rank of the Cazadores swung their bayonets to the charge, and the march went on.

Steadily the line of bright bayonets and dull green uniforms pressed on between rows of stern faces and pitying eyes, past gardens filled with fragrant flowers, and booths piled high with luscious fruit. At last in front of the Alcalde's house, where the Spanish flag hung in drooping folds of blood and gold, a creaking mule-cart lumbered across the way, and the perspiring troops halted to let it pass.

Then, with Spanish courtesy, the crowd opened up, and a woman came forward, followed by a dark-haired little girl, carrying a heavy vase of wine and a bouquet of heliotrope. As the child passed between the soldiers, a sergeant thrust his rifle barrel in her way, but a young lieutenant put it aside with his sword, and smiled down upon her as she went fearlessly forward, and, lifting her olive-tinted face, handed La Costa the wine.

The Cuban took it from her and stood bareheaded in the fierce sunlight, a picturesque scarecrow of a man, unkempt and ragged, but with the grace of Old Castile showing in every movement. Then, after touching the vase with his lips, he passed it to Marshall, and picking the child up, kissed her on either cheek as he took the flowers from the little brown hand.

'Pobre La Costa, pobre Americano, dele uno tambien (give him one too),' she said, and placing her gently on the ground again, with a 'Gracias, niña mia,' he smiled as he handed the American a spray of the scented blossom.

Marshall felt his eyelids quiver, and a kind of gasping sob rose from the crowd ; but at a sharp word of command the dusty troops moved forward down the winding street. A cracked bell began to toll, and as its harsh vibrations rose on the heated air, a deep silence fell on the spectators, the jingle of arms and tramp of heavily shod feet sounding hollow and strange.

'It is the good priests of Santa Marta ; they say the mass for our rest,' said La Costa quietly to his companion, crossing himself as he spoke.

By-and-by the troops swung out into the wide sunlit Plaza, where, at the head of a scanty battalion of Cazadores, a little stout colonel of infantry waited their coming. 'Stand the dogs there.—You have ten minutes to make ready, and then you die. First you shall see where you lead your followers,' was all he said in answer to Marshall's protests that he was an American citizen, and the two were rudely thrust back.

The scene was a striking one. Three double lines of Cazadores formed the sides of a hollow square, the front rank facing outwards towards the restless crowd, the rear turning inwards with rifles at the shoulder. A seething mob surged to and fro beyond. Every flat housetop swarmed with spectators, while against the white wall of the church of Santa Marta, which formed the fourth side of the square, stood four ragged peasants with handkerchiefs bound round their eyes, whose crime might have been the destroying of bridges or possibly the supplying of starving fugitives with food and shelter. Every weathered tile, and the gray house-leeks along the red roof, stood out with sharpness against the azure. The intense sunlight lit up every detail of the stained white clothing of the trembling wretches who waited their end, the lofty cross over the gable of the church throwing a black shadow upon the hot flags at their feet.

'Curse that bell—will it never cease?' said the officer as the monotonous jarring note filled the Plaza with its vibrations. Then La Costa turned towards the crowd, but before he could speak, a sergeant smote him in the face with the hilt of his sword-bayonet and the blood flowed from his mouth.

An angry cry and a hiss broke from the mob, and they surged wildly forward, snatching out their knives, only to recoil again before the flashing line of steel as the Cazadores bayonets came down at the charge to the level of their breasts.

Now the time had come, and there was no possible escape, the American felt all hesitation drop from him, and, like one in a dream, watched

the troops who formed the third side of the square unfixing bayonets and bringing their rifles to the hip. Presently a low arched door opened in the wall of the church, and as the odour of incense drifted out, mingled with the sound of the organ, a priest in his vestments stepped forth from the shadowy interior and strode towards the colonel.

'Stop—in the name of the church—it is sacrilege—and thou shalt do no murder,' he said fearlessly; but the plump colonel only laughed, cruelly answering:

'I do justice and not murder,' then turning aside disdainfully gave the order: 'Take that man away.'

Two Cazadores forced the indignant padre back, and a great hush fell on the crowd. Breathing hard, Marshall listened to the sound of the chanting and the drone of the organ, while the harsh tones of the bell grated on his quivering nerves. Then the rifle barrels flashed in the sunlight and came home to the shoulder with a rattle—the colonel dropped his sword point, and a voice called 'Tira!'

A crackle of red flame blazed out, followed by the crash of a volley as the rifle muzzles jerked upwards, and a heavy wreath of blue smoke rolled across the faces of the crowd. Marshall felt the blood stand still in his veins, and for a moment dared not turn his head. When he did so, he saw one of the peasants fallen on his knees tearing with both hands at his side. Two of his comrades lay face downwards on the hot flags, motionless heaps of tattered clothing; and a fourth, with the blood trickling from him, and his face gray like ashes, leaned back against the wall, his head slowly drooping forward, and his limbs quivering beneath him.

A howl of rage like the snarling of a pack of wolves, a cry of deadly hate that boded little good to the oppressors when their turn came, rose from the mob, and Marshall saw the stout colonel shudder as he listened; but the glittering wall of steel met them, turn which way they would, and they stamped and fumed in impotent fury.

The American lost his head with horror and indignation, and in the most powerful Spanish he could muster cursed the colonel before all his men, concluding: 'Brutes—cold-blooded murderers of unarmed men! A civilised nation cannot look on and see helpless peasants propped against walls and shot like wild beasts. Wait a little, and you will hear the roar of American guns, and see the Stars and Stripes over Havana and Matanzas!'

A yell of 'Bravo Americano!' rose from the frantic mob; but the colonel looked on unmoved. 'What does he say?' he asked a lieutenant. 'Ah, it is so. All the English are mad, and most of the Americans too.'

Biting his lips, the journalist lapsed into silence, feeling that at last he could understand desperate men using dynamite with awful effect on crowded troop trains, and when a sergeant of Cazadores gripped his shoulder, he turned upon the man so fiercely that, unarmed as he was, the soldier dropped his hand.

Then the colonel pointed with his sword, and Marshall closed his eyes when he heard a hoarse voice say: 'Two files forward and finish the dogs,' and in spite of his own peril he turned sick and faint as he heard a long-drawn 'Ah!' rise from the crowd, and the sharp clash of bayonets against the stones—he knew what it meant, for he had seen such things before.

Side by side the two men walked forward at a signal from an officer, and when they turned in front of the church, a sergeant came forward with cloths in his hand, but the Cuban waved him back.

'Good-bye, my friend. We have fought a good fight together—and to-day we rest side by side—it is well,' said La Costa, as after the manner of the Spaniards he threw his arm round the American's shoulder, then took the place pointed out.

With dry lips and parched throat, Marshall drew himself up and glanced at the Insurgent who stood bareheaded in the sunlight, erect and proud, holding the flowers lightly in his hand, and his eyes filled as La Costa caught his look and smiled. Then, with defiance in his gaze, he turned and faced the rifles. There was a clicking of levers, and the empty shells rattled out upon the stones—the breach blocks closed with a clatter, and for a few moments there was a harrowing pause, while the troops waited the word to fire.

Suddenly Marshall felt the blood stir madly in every pulsing artery, for above the continuous drone of the organ a rattle of riflery rang out, somewhere behind the town, followed by a sound he knew so well, the continual 'rip-rap, rip-rap,' of repeaters.

'Winchester rifles, thank Heaven!' he shouted aloud. 'Must be the Martinez column,' then his voice broke off suddenly, for he remembered that in a few minutes more it would matter little to him whether the Insurgent forces arrived or not.

A confused murmur rose from the crowd, which swayed to and fro like the waves of a sea; then there was a great clattering of hoofs down the stony street, and presently two mounted officers broke through the mob, striking right and left with the flat of their swords to clear a passage, and reined in their lathering horses by the colonel's side.

A bugle-call echoed through the Plaza; the square of green uniforms broke up and swung round, changing into a long line of fours; and while the astonished prisoners tried to collect their scattered senses, the last files of the Cazadores swung out of the Plaza at the double, and, their footfalls growing fainter and fainter, disappeared down a narrow street.

Marshall rubbed his eyes to see if he were asleep, but there was no mistaking the ceaseless rattle of the Winchester repeaters, smuggled over from the United States for the use of the rebels, or the feeble return fire in the deeper report of the Spanish rifles. Then a great shout rose from the crowd: '*Viva la Cuba!—Viva la revolucion!*'

It was all so strange and sudden, that now the peril was past, the American felt as weak as a child, and dropped limply against the wall, hardly daring to believe his ears, and looking about with vacant eyes.

A scantily-clad, sun-browned peasant woman crept softly forward, and throwing herself down on the scorching stones, rocked to and fro over

a crimson-stained face which lay still and white upon her lap, and answered neither word nor sign to her despairing cries and bitter tears.

A priest came out of the shadowy doorway, and touching her shoulder, lifted the woman gently to her feet, while a procession of dark-robed clerics carried their silent burdens away, the crowd opening up and standing bareheaded as they passed, and Marshall shivered as a woman's piercing shrieks rang in his ears.

Presently the distant sound of marching feet rose from the streets beyond, drawing steadily nearer and nearer, to a running accompaniment of *Vivas!* and shouts of delight, until it swelled into the measured 'tramp, tramp' of a large battalion, mingled with the clash of steel sheaths and the jingle of arms.

At last the enthusiastic mob split up, and amid bursts of cheering, the head of the Insurgent column swung into the Plaza through a rolling cloud of dust. On they came, four by four, and company by company, swarthy, sun-scorched men, ragged and tattered, powdered with dust and grimed with smoke; line after line of broad-brimmed Panama hats and red sashes defiling out of the narrow streets; and as the ragged companies wheeled into line across the broad Plaza the American could hardly repress a smile at the curious collection of arms. Some carried Winchester repeaters, some Spanish military rifles, others breach-loading shot-guns, or single barrel muzzle-loaders; while a few had nothing but a big cavalry sabre belted round their waist. The journalist knew however that, although appearances were by no means in their favour, this same battalion had beaten the best of the Spanish troops in the open field.

Meantime there was a pandemonium of laughing, shouting, and cheering, for, with true Spanish versatility, the feelings of the citizens had changed from horror and hatred to the wildest merriment and enthusiasm. An eager crowd drove forward along the face of the line, thrusting bunches of luscious fruit and vases of wine before them, as they struggled to be first with their gifts; and poor peon labourers gaily invested their last centimo in *copitas de caña*, and only laughed when the swaying of the mob spilled the liquor from the quaint cylindrical glasses before they could reach the side of the thirsty soldiers.

At last the leader, with his toes sticking through the end of his worn-out shoes, strode forward, pushing aside the enthusiastic group who forced their gifts and attentions on La Costa and the American, grasped their hands, saying: 'Comrades, I salute you,' and caught the Insurgent in his arms. Afterwards the journalist was heartily glad to withdraw with him for rest and shade into the cool patio of the Alcalde's house, that worthy having been ejected with scant ceremony.

That night a banquet was spread beneath the broad leaves of the bananas in the wide patio, and though there was not much to eat—there never is in the track of marching troops—there was abundance of wine, the splash of fountains, and the scent of jasmine and heliotrope. La Costa and the American occupied the place of honour, but amid all the wild merriment, the shrieks of the poor peasant woman, as she saw her murdered husband carried away, rang in Marshall's ears; and he shuddered at the ruddy wine, for his nerves were shaken, and the ghastly scene in the Plaza rose up before him in all its grim details. It does so yet at times, in the silent watches of the night.

## TORPEDOES IN ACTION.

THERE are probably many persons who remember the scare created in the fleet which sailed under Sir Charles Napier to the Baltic in 1854, by the 'infernal machines,' which the Russians were said to have strewn thickly along the approaches to Cronstadt. The British sailor was ready enough to fight against weapons with which he was familiar, but these treacherous submarine 'devils' frightened him; and the consequence was that 'gallant Charley' and his ships gave Cronstadt a wide berth. We remember inspecting one of these 'infernal machines' which had been dredged up in the Baltic. It was a cone of galvanised iron, sixteen inches in diameter and twenty inches in length, containing a charge of ten pounds of gunpowder, with an apparatus for firing by sulphuric acid. The machine was the invention of Moritz Hermann Jacobi, an eminent Prussian physicist, better known to fame as the inventor of electrotyping. But this was not the first torpedo. As far back as 1777, during the American War of Independence, David Bushnell of Boston, father of the once well-known 'Independent theologian,' invented an explosive machine which was to send the whole British fleet to the bottom. He tried his invention, under favourable circumstances, against the British frigate *Cerberus*, but the attempt to blow her up was an utter failure, and no more was heard of David Bushnell and his terrible torpedo.

Twenty years later another American, Robert Fulton, the remarkable genius to whom we practically owe the steamboat, invented a submarine explosive machine with which he experimented successfully on the Seine and the Thames, but both the French and English governments declined to adopt his patent.

From that time till the Crimean War the torpedo remained in abeyance, and so trifling was the damage done by the Russian 'infernal machines' that naval experts dismissed them from their calculations as practically useless.

But in the American Civil War the torpedo came once more to the front, and this time it came to stay. It is to the ingenuity and enterprise of the naval officers of the Confederacy that torpedo warfare owes its remarkable development. The want of material and appliances for shipbuilding in the Southern States drove the Confederates to have recourse to the torpedo as the only means of coping with the Northern Monitors, and it was a despised and derided invention of Robert Fulton's which they first

adopted to render the torpedo effective. Fulton had designed a submarine boat, the object of which was to glide unseen beneath the keels of hostile ships, whence, without attracting attention, holes could be bored in their bottoms. The strange craft was rejected by both the British and French governments, to whom it was offered. But the United States, during the war with Great Britain in 1812, gave him an opportunity of showing what his submarine boat could do. Fulton's boat was despatched against the *Ramillies* three-decker, as she lay off New London. The submerged craft was run successfully under the *Ramillies*, and her crew commenced boring a hole in the bottom of the big ship, but want of air compelled them to come to the surface before their task was completed. The alarm was given, and the chance was lost. No other opportunity of assailing a British man-of-war presented itself, and the submarine boat was relegated to the limbo of failures.

But the idea was not lost or forgotten. In 1863 Theodore Stoney of Charleston built a submarine boat, cigar-shaped, fifty-four feet in length and six feet in diameter, propelled by a screw worked by steam, and fitted with a spar torpedo. When she was submerged only her funnel and steering tower were visible. She made a night attack on the Federal war-ship *Ironsides*, but, though she crept up unobserved and fired her torpedo, she failed to sink the *Ironsides*, which, beyond receiving a violent shock, sustained no serious injury. The concussion of the discharge almost sent the submarine boat to the bottom, but she just managed to keep afloat, and was taken back to Charleston.

The next attempt made by a submarine boat of similar design was one of the most heroic incidents of the war. So faulty was the construction of this boat that on every one of her five trials she went to the bottom, carrying her crew with her. Yet, though certain death apparently awaited all who ventured in her, there were found men gallant enough to volunteer to take her against the Federal war-ships lying in Charleston harbour. On the night of 17th February 1864 the ill-fated craft, manned by two officers, Captain Carlson and Lieutenant Dixon, and five men, set out on her desperate venture. Every man on board of her must have known that the odds were a hundred to one against his escaping alive, but they went gaily out on their errand of death. Success crowned their daring effort: they fired their torpedo under the keel of the Federal Monitor *Housatonic* and sent her to the bottom. But their success was purchased at the cost of their lives. The submarine boat sank, and carried her little band of heroes with her. Two years later, when divers were sent down, they found the ill-starred vessel with her dead crew in her, every man at his post, lying close to the hull of the enemy she had destroyed.

There are still enthusiasts who believe in the submarine boat, despite the disastrous experience of the American Civil War. The latest design, launched a few months ago, seems in *theory* to have surmounted many of the difficulties with regard to steering under water, and ascertaining from below the surface the whereabouts of an enemy, which have hitherto, in the opinion of naval experts, rendered such craft useless in actual warfare. But whether this new design will fulfil in practice all that is claimed for it in theory is extremely doubtful. The French navy has four of these submarine boats, two of which are *said* to be capable of doing six or eight knots at a depth of from forty to sixty feet, and launching torpedoes with precision. But our own Admiralty has no faith whatever in these craft.

The Confederates succeeded in destroying, by means of torpedoes, thirty-two Federal war-ships, of which four were ironclads; but in the majority of cases these results were obtained by stationary or floating torpedoes, and not by boat attacks.

Mr H. W. Wilson, in his admirable and fascinating book, *Ironclads in Action*, tells us that 'the Confederates employed a particularly deadly engine, which was called a 'coal torpedo.' It looked like a lump of coal, but was really a block of cast-iron, containing ten pounds of powder, and would, when placed in the fires of a boiler, at once explode, bursting the boiler. Such a torpedo might be planted with effect in stores of coal at a coaling station, in case it was certain that they would fall into the enemy's hands.' Clock-work torpedoes were also employed, and one of them was used at City Point, James River, on 9th August 1864. It was placed on board a barge, which was loading with ordnance stores for the Federal army, by two Confederates disguised as workmen, with the remark that the captain had ordered it to be put there. It exploded, and destroyed a large number of barges and vessels.

Even more dastardly and treacherous was the trick played by the Peruvians in the war against Chili in 1880. On two occasions they sent adrift boats, apparently laden with fruit and vegetables, but beneath this innocent cargo were two or three hundred pounds of dynamite with clock-work exploding apparatus. On the first occasion the captain of the Chilian war-ship *Loa* seized the boat as a welcome prize, and towed her alongside his ship, with the result that a terrific explosion occurred, sending the *Loa* with half her crew to the bottom. On the second occasion the cruiser *Covadonga* met with a similar fate. But surely there should be a protest, a stern and unanimous protest, from all civilised nations against such diabolical modes of warfare. There must be limits placed to the old principle that 'everything is fair in war;' and those limits should be definitely settled in the interests of humanity.

The experience of the American Civil War gave great encouragement to torpedoists, and when, in 1868, the Whitehead torpedo was produced, its enthusiastic admirers were confident that a new era in naval warfare had commenced. For here was a torpedo which no longer required to be towed alongside the ship it was intended to destroy, but was itself, in fact, a small ship, propelled by its own engines, driven by compressed air, capable of being sent direct to its mark from a distance of many

hundred yards, at a speed of twenty and even thirty knots, and charged with an explosive that would sink the largest ironclad afloat. Improvement followed upon improvement, until it was thought perfection had been reached in the latest development of the Whitehead, with a theoretical range of eight hundred yards, a speed of thirty knots, and an explosive charge of two hundred pounds of gun-cotton. Torpedoists declared that the Whitehead had revolutionised naval warfare, and that the day of big battleships was over; for what was the use of building monster ironclads which could be sent to the bottom in an instant by a single torpedo fired from a boat not a hundredth part their size? It was seriously stated in 1886 that the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*, the two great armoured battleships then on the stocks, would be the last of their class, because the torpedo had rendered such ships useless.

And what has the torpedo done in action to justify such extravagant expectations? Considered as a weapon of offence to be included in the armament of a fighting ship, and designed for use against ships in motion, it has so far proved an absolute failure. There are twenty-seven recorded instances of the use of the torpedo against ships in motion and in *not one* of these was a hit made. In every case has the torpedo missed the object at which it was aimed, and it has sometimes been a source of more danger to the ship firing it than to the enemy against whom it was fired. In one instance, that of the *Huascar*, in the war between Chili and Peru, a Lay torpedo turned and came straight back to the ship which discharged it, and she would probably have been 'hoist with her own petard' had not one of her officers leapt into the water and, at the risk of his life, diverted the course of the machine. At the battle of Yalu, in the recent war between China and Japan, the Chinese battleships were only too glad to get rid of their torpedoes anyhow, for the presence of these loaded weapons on a ship, with shells bursting about her decks, constituted an unexpected and appalling source of danger. The Chinese ironclad *Chih-Yuen* is believed to have been sunk by the explosion of one of her own torpedoes, fired by a Japanese shell. And the Japanese battleship *Matsushima* narrowly escaped a similar fate. Moreover, the Chinese torpedo-boats, which, in theory, were to have dashed in among the enemy under cover of the smoke and confusion and work fearful havoc, did absolutely nothing —did not score a single hit even at close quarters. No doubt they were not as smartly handled as they might have been or as they would have been by highly-trained European sailors. But then they had such a chance as torpedo boats will probably never have again in a naval battle. For gunpowder, with its accompanying smoke, may be considered a thing of the past, and, with a smokeless explosive in universal use, what becomes of the chance of the torpedo-boat? It could be seen approaching, and could not live to discharge its weapon under the awful hail of projectiles which the quick-firing guns would pour upon it. Smokeless powder and the quick-firing gun have sounded the knell of the torpedo-boat as an agent of attack in battle on the open sea. So far the torpedo has done nothing in action against moving ships to justify the extraordinary claims made for it, and we are of opinion that the gun will still, as heretofore, be the dominant factor in deciding naval engagements.

But it does not therefore follow that the torpedo is a negligible quantity in future naval warfare. For, though unsuccessful against ships in motion, it has scored some remarkable successes against ships at anchor. In the last war between Russia and Turkey the Russians made considerable use of the torpedo for night attacks upon the Turkish ships, and one or two of their naval officers showed great daring and resource. But only in two cases out of seven did they succeed in sinking Turkish ships, and it is safe to say that had the Turks kept a proper watch, and run out torpedo-nets to protect their ships, the Russians would not have had even that small measure of success. Besides, there were no quick-firing guns in those days, otherwise the Russian torpedo-boats would not have escaped as they did.

In the little war between France and China in 1884 the French used their torpedoes with cruel effect upon their contemptible foes, and sank three Chinese ships in two attacks. But it was no credit to succeed against such an enemy, and had the most ordinary precautions been adopted, or the commonest skill and courage been displayed by the Chinese, the French torpedo-boats would not have had the ghost of a chance of effecting their purpose.

In the Chilian civil war of 1891, between the Balmacedists and the Congressionalists, the former, with two swift and well-armed torpedo-gunboats, attacked the ironclad *Blanco Encalada* in Caldera Bay and sank her. But here again it was the gross negligence of the captain of the ship attacked which facilitated the disaster. He was accused of being ashore at the time at a banquet. Whether this were so or not, it is certain that no precautions whatever were taken against surprise, and the ship fell an easy prey to the two torpedo-gunboats, which got within a hundred yards of their victim before the alarm was given. As this was the first instance of the successful employment of a Whitehead torpedo in war, it may be interesting to quote some of the details given by Mr H. W. Wilson in his *Ironclads in Action*. He says, 'The *Blanco* was struck on the starboard side, near the dynamo room. The shock was tremendous. Every light in the ship was extinguished, one of the eight-inch guns was thrown off its trunnions, and a large number of men were killed. Portions of iron and machinery flew about in the engine-room, and killed or wounded six engineers. The only one who escaped was carried by the violent rush of water up a ventilator.' Two minutes after she was struck, the *Blanco Encalada* went down with a large hole blown through her bottom, fifteen feet by seven, as measured by the divers; and 182 officers and men out of her crew of 288 perished with her.

Another success was credited to the torpedo in 1894, during the civil war in Brazil

between the supporters of Marshal Peixoto and those of Admiral Mello. The last hope of the latter, when the rest of their fleet had surrendered, rested in the formidable sea-going turret-ship *Aquidaban*, and torpedo-boats were despatched to attack her by night as she lay in the bay of Santa Catherina. They stumbled upon her in the dark by a fluke, and if she had not suddenly lighted up and fired on them, they would never have found her. Unprotected by torpedo-nets and ill-supplied with quick-firing guns, she was so injured by the torpedoes discharged at her that she foundered as soon as her engines started, but all her crew escaped. The odd thing was that the torpedo-boats scuttled away, believing that they had failed, and it was only by accident that they learned next day of their success.

The latest instances of night attack by torpedo-boats are those made by the Japanese upon the remnants of the Chinese fleet, which, after the battle of Yalu, took refuge in the fortified harbour of Wei-hai-Wei. The Japanese had captured most of the land defences before they made their attempt on the ships. The first two attacks failed—the boats were discovered, and had to beat a hasty retreat. The third was more successful; the boats got in unobserved, but the intense cold, ten degrees below zero, clogged the tubes with ice, and so numbed the hands of the men that they could scarcely tell what they were doing. One, however, out of the many torpedoes discharged found its billet and sank the ironclad *Ting-Yuen*. On the next night the torpedo-boats made their final attack. Four Chinese ships were struck by torpedoes; of these one was kept afloat till the next day and then sank, two were disabled but not destroyed, and the fourth, the *Lai-Yuen*, turned turtle. For four days her wretched crew could be heard battering at her sides, and shrieking for help. But they were hermetically sealed up, and before a passage could be cut through the ship's bottom to liberate them they were all dead from suffocation. The injuries to the torpedo-boats were not serious. In the four attacks only one boat was sunk, and the loss of life did not exceed thirty. But this was due to the utter demoralisation of the Chinese and not to any exceptional skill or dash on the part of the Japanese.

There is nothing in any of the instances we have given to alter our fixed opinion that, with proper precautions, a fleet at anchor may be rendered perfectly safe from torpedo attacks by day or night. With nets out, with 'destroyers' patrolling the approaches, with the search-light ready to flash out at the first alarm, with quick-firing guns prepared in an instant to throw a ceaseless hail of projectiles weighing from twelve pounds to eighty pounds, and with smokeless powder, what chance is there for a torpedo attack to succeed? And the admiral or captain who would neglect such precautions in the face of an enemy would deserve to be shot for gross and culpable dereliction of duty.

But whilst we hold that the value of the torpedo in naval warfare has been grotesquely exaggerated, we do not say that it is useless. Torpedo-boats will probably have a part to play in any future war, though not the prominent part their enthusiastic admirers have assigned them. Mr Wilson thinks that they will be to a fleet what cavalry is to an army. 'It is not likely,' he says, 'that torpedo-boats will be sent against intact battleships whose quick-firers are in good order, and whose gunners are unshaken. The boats' time will come towards the close of the battle, when the fight has left great masses of iron wreckage: when the targets have lost their power of movement: when their crews are diminished in number, and wearied by the intense strain of action.' Then, like swordfish round a dying whale, they will have their huge antagonist at their mercy. But surely this is the time for the 'destroyers' to swoop down upon the torpedo-boats, and scatter them like chaff; and those swift harriers will be unworthy their name if they cannot save a battleship in distress. In any case we predict a bad time for the torpedo-boats.

## A HUMAN SOUL.

A WISE man walked by the river,
And the water spirit's sigh
As she yearned for a soul, it moved him,
And he answered thus her cry:

'Can you smile when your heart is aching?
Remember when others forget?
Laugh lightly, while hope is taking
Its final farewell of you; yet
Meet the world, and strive on to the ending
Of life, be it ever so drear;
Firm in faith, without falter, unbending
With never a sigh or a tear?'
'All this I can do,' said she.

'Can you face your life if left lonely,
While another has gained his rest,
And you have the memory only
Of one who was truest and best?
For ever to you the world's brightness
Then passes away for aye;
The sun will grow cold, and no lightness
Can pierce through that darkest day.'
'All this I can do,' said she.

'Can you pause to do deeds of kindness
In the midst of your deepest woe?
For grief, it must not bring blindness
To the trials of others below.
You must ever strive on, and your sorrow,
Though heavy and sore to bear,
Remains till the dawn of that morrow,
When pain it is no more there.'
'All this I can do,' said she.

Made answer the wise man slowly,
'If this be so, and thou
Canst bear grief, yet help the suffering,
Thou hast a soul even now.'

FLORENCE PEACOCK.

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## CHRISTMAS POULTRY.

By P. Anderson Graham.

To a student of character and manners, there are few things more amusing than a walk past the poultry-shops in Leadenhall or Smithfield Market on Christmas Eve. By then the rich and well-to-do have rejoined their families in the country to hang the mistletoe in hall and weave the holly round the Christmas hearth. In middle-class suburban homes pianos are tinkling, and the dancing and merriment have already begun. But there is a residue of poor who have no distant friends to visit, and no money to spend on railway fares, yet to whom the approaching holiday is the solitary one of the year, and who only now begin to choose their Christmas dinner. And this is a very serious matter. By pinching and saving, a sum, scarcely ever amounting to more than half-a-sovereign, has been amassed, and how to make the most of it requires deep and serious consideration. Mere common sense would answer quickly enough that a leg of frozen mutton at, say, five shillings would provide a solid foundation, and leave a nice balance for accessories.

But the genuine Cockney labourer scorns the idea. The appropriate dish for the day is goose, and he will have it reason or none. Turkey is for the genteel, but goose for the democracy. A stranger might very well think it out of the reach of these crowds waiting about in the biting winter air. They are ill-shod, scantily clothed, and a sharp-set look in their faces seems to intimate that they have missed a meal in order to complete the work of saving. Nevertheless they show no impatience. By watching, you will soon learn that they cherish a high ideal of goose, and do not mean to be put off either with a thin gosling or a tough old gander. A mental selection is very soon made. You may see two 'mateys' or a man and his 'missis' deep in consultation, which ends by their fixing upon, say, an eight-and-sixpenny fowl. But to give that sum is out of the question. Well they know the way of the poulterer. He has all his stock on view, and will make a strong effort to sell out before closing-time, sure that the demand will be small for days after. So these poor purchasers make up their minds to wait for a fall, and they often linger from dusk till near midnight in the determination to get value for their money. As long as there are customers the salesman makes no change, but as the more respectable classes become satisfied, a lull comes in his business. 'All this row for seven-and-six,' he cries at last, and the sale is stimulated for another hour or two; but the mass still hold back—they want more than half-a-crown for the beer, gin, and other anserine concomitants. But in due time another lull comes. 'Six-and-six,' cries the salesman, and then there is a rush. 'I'll have that one, guv'nor,' 'This is mine,' 'And mine,' 'And mine,' shout as many different voices, showing that each had made his selection beforehand. One cannot help recalling Jean Macalpine's famous exclamation: 'To see thae English belly-gods! Set roast beef and pudding on the opposite side of the pit of Tophet, and an Englishman will make a spang at it!'

Curiously enough, we learn by inquiring of the large dealers that, unshaken as the popularity of the goose remains, it is not bred so largely in England as it used to be. Most of these fat birds come from Holland, and a great many from France. The reason probably is, that we have curtailed the conveniences for keeping them. Of old it was a familiar thing in rural England to see a rheumatic crone driving her geese in from the common, but that was before the extensive enclosures took place. Waste has been reclaimed, and mere and moss drained, till the poor at all events are not able to maintain geese. And there is a long-standing prejudice against water-fowl on the part of the fishermen. As early as 1620 this entry occurs in the Tweedmouth Court Rolls: 'We ffind yt whosoever within the town of the Spitle shall keep any ducks or drakes after Martinmas next shall pay a fyne of vis. viiid.' In these days of angling clubs and strictly preserved waters, a quiet but none the less effective pressure

is put upon those who are inclined to utilise rivers for a similar purpose. When the British farmer does go in for rearing geese, or indeed any other kind of poultry, he is rather unsatisfactory, for he will not take the trouble to discriminate between the classes, but sends up big and little, good and bad, in one consignment, and is grieved and astonished if he does not obtain a uniform price for them. On the Continent the work of collection has been reduced to a system, and the sorting is very carefully done.

The number of chickens sold at Christmas-time far exceeds that of any other bird, and of them it may at least be said that they are home-grown. Every year we pay the foreigner over four million pounds for eggs, but the imports of game and poultry are not worth an eighth of that sum. Occasionally our dealers have recourse to the French market, but Parisians are great epicures in regard to fowls, so that the best fetch a price which it will not pay the London dealer to give. A number come from Russia and Austria-Hungary, and the New Zealanders have for the past few years been sending us frozen chickens, but not in quantities sufficient to affect the home market. The British consumption of fowls is very largely on the increase, but it is extremely difficult to form an approximate guess at the extent of the growth of the industry that supplies the demand. Our Board of Agriculture does not include such 'small deer' in its annual statistics. In 1884 and 1885 attempts were made to do so, but they were soon discontinued. As the information is regularly collected in Ireland and in France, there seems to be no good reason for not doing so in Great Britain, now that fowl-keeping has become of such importance. If we were to take the favourite district for fowl-rearing as typical of the rest of the country, the business would seem to be advancing by leaps and bounds. This is the famous Heathfield district of Sussex, which practically supplies London with 'Surrey fowls,' as they are called in the trade—the name Surrey being apparently given on the principle adopted by the Aberdeen builder, who put up a straight row of houses and called it a crescent, and on being asked why, replied because it wasn't one! Ten years ago about £60,000 worth of chickens were sent away every year from Heathfield station, and now the value is reckoned at £140,000. As much as forty-seven tons of chickens have been despatched in one week from a single station. Of course this is an exceptional district, with a great name for fowls, and in which there are families with whom rearing and fattening has been a business for generations; but it is a lucrative trade, and one that might be carried on all over the kingdom.

The first point to be considered by those who wish to go in for chicken-rearing on an extensive scale, is the breed of fowls most suitable for the purpose. On this there has been much controversy. Those who believe in blood and fancy are the objects of ceaseless war at the hands of Mr Tegetmeier, the well-known authority of the *Field*, who holds that 'breeding for points' is mere ruin, from the utilitarian point of view. He is specially indignant at the manner in which the English game-cock has been developed into a sprawling, long-legged, thin-chested abortion. But the best authorities on this practical matter are the leading salesmen, who learn from their customers exactly what kinds are most in demand. Even they are not fully agreed. Take, for instance, the question of colour. An objection continually urged against the Orpingtons is, that although they fulfil the conditions as to size and plumpness, they are black-legged, and consequently do not look well on table. Some go so far as to say that a dark leg is indicative of coarseness, instancing the Minorca as a case in point. The Minorca is an excellent bird for laying purposes, as good as the Leghorn itself, but it certainly is no table-fowl. On the other hand, Mr Bellamy, a well-known poulterer of Jermyn Street, says that his fashionable customers attach no importance whatever to the colour of the leg, and buy Orpingtons as freely as any other. But it is worth noting that the Sussex farmers will not keep them. The Orpington comes to a great size, but it matures too slowly for their purpose. The ideal fowl must be capable of being fattened at a very early age, otherwise it will not be sufficiently tender. In the opinion of Mr Brooke, a leading salesman of the Central Market, and a pastmaster of the Poulterers' Company, as well as a most successful exhibitor at those shows of dead poultry started by Sir Walter Gilbey, the best of all is a cross between the Dorking and Indian Game. Undoubtedly the latter, in appearance as well as in taste, resembles the wild pheasant more than any other domestic fowl. The cross is hardy and vigorous, and stands the process of fattening extremely well. A chicken bred from a yellow-legged Indian Game and a white-legged Dorking almost invariably has a white leg and the five toes characteristic of the Dorking. For experiment' sake Mr Brooke kept a careful record of the progress made by his prize birds. Of seven cockerels, the largest bird gained 14 oz. in seven days. It weighed 8 lb. 6 oz. on the 21st of September, and 9 lb. 4 oz. on the 28th of the same month, and when killed on the 9th of October weighed 9 lb. 6 oz. after being plucked and cold. The average gain made by the birds in a week was 9½ oz. Of two pullets, one grew from 6 lb. to 6 lb. 12 oz. in the same time, and the other 5 lb. 6 oz. to 5 lb. 13 oz. At the show the larger of these two birds weighed 7 lb. 6¾ oz. plucked and cold.

There is nothing very difficult or abstruse in the process by which these large fowls are produced. Except for spring chickens, the natural mother is the best: but of course those who wish to net the fancy prices to be had in March are obliged to use incubators for hatching out in November and December. In the chicks two things are necessary: a strong constitution and a crop. It is very important to watch over their early days. Many people fail because they begin at the very start to feed their birds by rule of thumb with so many regular meals a day. But this is opposed to the way of nature. Any one who has observed nestlings must have been struck with the frequency with which the parents carry

food to them. From early daylight of a summer morning till dark, a pair of thrushes have been observed to carry food to the nest once every five minutes, taking an average. Young pheasants and partridges peck almost continuously, except for brief intervals when they stop to sun themselves on a bank. The secret of rearing in captivity the more delicate nestlings is to copy this plan, and feed often and with but a little at a time. One reason for insisting upon this with domestic fowls is, that if they fall away at first, they never seem able to recover the lost ground. A good start is of the very first importance. They come on very quickly with a diet of bird-seed—always assuming that they have a good range for picking up green food. If there are gardens or other grounds to be protected from the scratching of the hen, a good plan is to tether her to a peg. This is much better than the common method of caging her in a barred coop. She grows quickly accustomed to the tether, and begins scratching for her youngsters almost from the moment she is first set down.

The birds should not be over-fed at first. Indeed, it is most important at every stage never to surfeit them, or give more food than can be digested. At the age of three or four months, according to the condition of the birds, the work of fattening begins in earnest. Cramming has been carried to great perfection of recent years. For a week or two the fowl is allowed to feed itself in order that it may 'get a crop.' Then more resolute measures are taken. A generation ago it was done by hand. The feeder made little pellets of food about the size of acorns, which were dipped in milk and forcibly thrust down the gullet. Now the French plan is being more and more adopted in England. A fatting-room—the largest perhaps in the country—was visited by the writer not long ago. Originally it had been an old straw barn, but was now fitted up with tiers of tiny stalls just large enough for a chicken to turn in. Here the birds have nothing to do but sit and grow fat. The cramming apparatus is a kind of pump on wheels, containing a reservoir filled with food of the consistency of paste, and made of Indian and barley meal mixed with milk. This is squirted through a thin tube when the treadle is pressed by the foot. The attendant takes each fowl in his arms, gently opens his mouth with his hand, and thrusting the tube down its throat, into the crop, pumps in a supply of food. It is done so quickly that an expert can feed forty dozen birds in an hour. Experience has taught him the exact quantity. A beginner is liable to make two serious mistakes. He may easily burst the crop if he does not know exactly when to stop, and he must learn to keep the bird's neck on the stretch; if he does that, the tube passes down without meeting any obstruction; but should there be any slackness or twisting, there is great danger of hurting the throat. Success largely depends on taking care that one supply of food is digested before the next is given. The fowls are crammed twice a day—once between seven and eight in the morning, and once about dark. If the condition of the crop shows that digestion has not taken place, the bird is not fed; and if the stoppage continues, a purgative is given. When sour food is left on the stomach it soon begins to show the consequences in a dark, unhealthy-looking skin, which contrasts markedly with the bright pink flesh of a fowl in good condition.

A very practical question that arises is whether the process of fattening is profitable in itself, and considered apart from any incidental advantage arising from the distinction of winning prizes at a Christmas or other show. The answer is a decided affirmative. We do not say that the price realised for a fowl specially, and at extra expense, prepared for exhibition would cover the outlay upon it, but that is an exceptional case. He who looks only to the ordinary market would stop at a certain point. Mr Brooke gave the writer a most instructive case in point. A number of live fowls were sent to him from the country in the usual way of business. They were, as nearly always happens with the feathered stock of the British farmer, very far from being in top condition, and the few sold realised only eighteenpence apiece. Whereupon he sent them for a fortnight or so to his fatting establishment, and had them returned, when they realised two-and-ninepence. To secure this substantial advance in price, he had laid out only threepence each in food. That is typical of many transactions. The farmer, probably some small holder, might just as well have had the extra profit in his own pocket. Nothing special was done—nothing, that is to say, which the poorest labourer might not do for himself. The food given and the methods employed are within reach of all.

But the great hindrance to the development of this trade lies in the unmethodical collection. No doubt this in its turn is due to the irregularity of the industry. In the Heathfield district the one branch of the calling has grown up side-by-side with the other. The 'carriers' charge one shilling a dozen for collecting, conveying and delivering to market, and the chickens are consigned to salesmen, who get rid of them on commission. A similar plan has been adopted in Kent, where an important poultry trade has grown up during recent years. But elsewhere there is no system at all, and the isolated individuals who see their way to make a good thing out of poultry sooner or later give it up for want of a market. The only chance is when a number of people are living together, so that it will really pay the higgler to make a regular round among them. This is where the French beat us so thoroughly in regard to eggs. So perfect is their system of collection, that French eggs often command in the London market better prices than English. Nor is this altogether as irrational as it looks. One day last spring, while discussing this very point with one who has done much to revive the home poultry business, an experiment was suggested. We went to an ordinary suburban shop and purchased twelve French eggs and twelve so-called new-laid country eggs, setting each clutch under a broody hen. The result will not surprise any one who has carefully looked into the subject. In due time seven Frenchmen, but only five English, appeared—pretty strong evidence that the foreign eggs were fresher than the home produce! The reason simply is, that the collection is erratic. Few of the ordinary country-people know that by steeping an egg in lime-water it may be kept fresh for months. Eggs are simply laid aside, and the cadger gets perhaps one new laid and two that have been a

fortnight on the shelf. In that lies the root of the whole matter; and it is hopeless to expect any great expansion of our poultry-keeping till system and regularity are introduced into our method of collection.

## THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

### CHAPTER XIII.—THE END.

SOMETIMES when I lie awake now and, looking back upon those dreadful days of suspense, think of all we suffered on the king's account, I am tempted to believe that it must have been a nightmare, and that it never could have really happened. Our anxiety was quite beyond expression in words. For three days, after my return from the defeat of the enemy in the jungle, we waited hour by hour for the dread news that we knew would shatter all our hopes and bow us to the earth in the keenest sorrow of our lives. Even the good tidings that came to us from the front, telling us of Du Berg's continued success against the foe, scarcely moved us beyond a mere expression of congratulation, so wrapped up were we in our own more direful concerns. And yet I am wrong in calling it our own, for our sorrow was not confined to the palace, but was shared by the whole country at large. Day and night the great gates were besieged by inquirers, who did not content themselves with one visit, but returned again and again to ask for later news. If any proof had been wanting of the love entertained for the king by his people, this would surely have furnished it. Men and women of all ranks and ages—nay, even little children, thronged the portal continually, and went sorrowfully away on being informed by the sentries that they had still no satisfactory news to impart. Some of the scenes were pathetic in the extreme, and once I remember being compelled to turn my face away in order to hide my emotion when a tiny babe, whose age could scarcely have totalled five summers, clad only in a shirt which barely sufficed to cover half his brown little body, made his way up the hillside and appeared before me, bearing in his hand the root of a plant which he had heard his mother say would infallibly restore the king to health. I took it from him, and conveyed it to Olivia, who wept over it openly.

At sundown that selfsame evening the king became conscious, and asked for me. The doctor having given his permission, Olivia came in search of me, and found me sitting with Natalie upon the battlements. I rose immediately his request was made known to me, and accompanied my sister downstairs to the sick-room.

Nerved as I was to find a change in the man before me, I was quite unprepared for the terrible picture he presented as I entered the room. His face, which was always thin, now resembled that of a skeleton covered with a dead white skin, from which his dark eyes stared like lumps of coal. He seemed, moreover, to have shrunk to half his former size, and this in less than a week.

As soon as he saw me he made a sign to his wife to leave us alone together. Having given me the strictest injunctions on no account to let the invalid tire himself by too much talking, she went out of the room.

When she had shut the door behind her, I approached the bed and took the king's hand.

'Instow,' he said, but so feebly that I had to put my ear close to his mouth in order that I might catch his words, 'I want to talk to you while I have time. I am very ill, and God alone knows if I shall ever be better. In case I should not'——

He paused for breath, and it was nearly half a minute before he could continue.

'In case I should not, I want you to promise me that you will take care of Natalie,' he said. 'I know you will look after Olivia and the boy.'

'You need have no fear,' I answered, with a lump in my throat that almost prevented me from speaking. 'I will guard them all as long as I have life. I ought to tell you that I have asked Natalie to be my wife, and that she has consented.'

He closed his eyes, and I heard him mutter, 'Thank God!' Then opening them again, he looked at me and squeezed my hand so feebly that it was like the touch of a little child.

'It is what I have always hoped and wished should happen,' he said. 'Now, if God wills it, I can die happy.'

'But you are not going to die,' I said, roused out of the quietude I had resolved to display by his words. 'You are going to live and make your country, that loves you so devotedly, the place you dreamed it would some day be.'

He did not answer, save with a look of unutterable longing.

'What news have you for me about the war?' he asked after a little interval.

'The best,' I answered. 'Your army is everywhere victorious. Du Berg has defeated the first and third sections, and I completely annihilated the second within thirty miles of the city two nights ago. There are already signs that the enemy are preparing to discuss terms of peace. I prophesy that in less than a month it will all be settled.'

'You do me worlds of good,' he replied. 'You used to laugh at my boasts; but I knew what my people would do when they were put to the test.'

Seeing that he was growing excited, I informed him that I should not allow him to talk any more, and as I did so, as if to put a stop to our interview, the doctor entered the room. Approaching the bed, he felt his patient's pulse.

'Why, what have you been doing?' he asked. 'You're fifty per cent. stronger than you were this morning.'

'I have had good news,' he answered feebly, and a moment later bade me 'good-bye.'

On leaving the sick-room I proceeded to Olivia's boudoir, expecting to find her there. To my surprise, however, the room was empty, and though I called, thinking she might be in the room adjoining, she did not answer. The window leading into the veranda stood open, and I passed through it into the cool air outside. My whole existence seemed numbed with the intensity of my anxiety. I could think of nothing but the condition of the man I had just left, and the consequences to his kingdom if he were taken from us. Then something, what I shall never under-

stand, induced me to cross the square towards the cathedral.

With a feeling of awe, almost indescribable after this length of time, I entered the building to find a curious service proceeding. The altar was a blaze of light, and praying before it was the king's chaplain, the brave padre whose pluck had enabled us to act so promptly in saving the citadel; while kneeling on the stone steps behind him again, her head bowed upon her hands, was a woman whom I recognised at once as my sister Olivia.

Without hesitation I went softly up the aisle and took my place beside her. At the time the priest was praying for the king's life with an earnestness that touched me to the heart. The strange old building was wrapped in deepest shadow save where the lights of the high altar shone so brilliantly, and the padre's voice echoed in the darkness with a most weird effect.

When he had finished his prayer he turned towards us, upraised his hand, and gave his blessing. We remained as we were for a few moments, then we also rose and left the church. Once outside I gave my sister my arm and led her back to the palace, intending to find Natalie and place her into her charge as soon as possible. She was quite exhausted and almost beside herself with grief.

Having surrendered her to my sweetheart's tender care, I went to the sick-room and asked the doctor to call me at once should any change take place in his patient's condition. This he promised to do.

When I *did* get to bed my dreams were not good, and I had much better have been waking. One moment I was galloping after the king across the battlefield; the next I was riding with him for dear life to save the citadel; then I was in Venice and in India; and after that, by the rapid transit existing in the land of dreams, fighting the foe tooth and nail in the jungle of the Médangs.

It must have been well on for morning when I was awakened by some one who was violently shaking me by the shoulder.

Having just been dreaming that the French were attacking us, I sprang up in bed and seized my assailant by the throat. I soon saw my mistake, however. It was the doctor.

'My dear fellow,' I cried as soon as I realised this fact, 'I must apologise a thousand times for my rudeness. I took you for a Frenchman. I'm really exceedingly sorry.'

'Don't mention it, my lord,' he answered, like the good fellow he was. 'You have not hurt me in the least.'

'What has brought you to me?'

'I have come to tell you that I have made an exceedingly important discovery,' he said.

'A discovery! What on earth is it? Does it concern the king?'

'It is a matter of life and death to him.'

'Then what is it? Tell me while I dress.'

I jumped out and commenced my toilet, while he sat, pale and heavy-eyed, upon the bed watching me.

'It is this. I am beginning to believe that after all I was mistaken in my first diagnosis of his Majesty's case. Two years ago I told him I considered him consumptive. I said I thought his lungs were affected. I advised him to go to Europe at once and consult a first-class specialist. He did so, with the result that my opinion was confirmed. Since then the disease has lain comparatively dormant — I must confess, much to my surprise. Now, however, the excitement of the last month, the amount of exertion he has taken, and, more probably than all, his fall on that eventful night are forcing what I verily hope and believe has been the cause of all the trouble out of his system. Have you ever heard his Majesty refer to his having been shot at one time or another?'

'Never,' I answered. 'If he was, I certainly cannot remember his having told me about it. You know the extraordinary life he has led. But what makes you ask such a question?'

'Because he carries a scar that tells me that at some time or another he has had a bullet in his system. I can find no mark of an exit; therefore it is logical to conclude that unless it was withdrawn by the hole it made on entering, it is still in his body.'

'And in that case the result would be what?'

'Well, that is rather a difficult question to answer offhand. It may mean nothing, it might mean everything. If it struck the chest wall, as I suppose it to have done, it might produce just the phthisical symptoms I spoke of a few moments since. If the presence of the bullet did not trouble him, it would probably, if not certainly, become encysted, after which he would, in nine cases out of ten, think no more about it. Years would go by, and phthisical symptoms, or those resembling phthisis, would develop, until he would come to believe himself in a decline. Then some violent exertion, culminating, say, in long rides and a fall from his horse, would be likely to cause the bullet to move; after which matter would form, and pain in the side, such as his Majesty has been complaining of during the past forty-eight hours, would ensue. Rigors would next set in, thereby proving indisputably the existence of a foreign element, and the case, from being medical, would then become a surgical one.'

I stopped midway in my dressing and stared at him for some seconds, so much surprised as to be unable to speak. When I recovered myself I cried:

'For heaven's sake, man, think well before you raise such hopes. Do you mean that if you can remove this bullet there is a possibility of his recovering and being a strong man once more?'

'Under God's pleasure, I do,' he answered almost with a shout. 'At the same time, however, Lord Instow, I do not withhold from you the knowledge that the operation, though simple enough in itself, is a dangerous one to attempt with one so weak. It may kill him, it may cure him.'

'But suppose you do not operate. What will the result be then?'

'He will die. In that case there is no hope at all for him. Now what am I to do?'

'Good heavens, what a position to place a man in!' I said. 'What can I answer? If I say, "Operate," and he dies, I shall feel like his murderer; on the other hand, if I withhold my consent he will die, and I shall feel equally guilty. Do you give it as your professional opinion that the operation should be performed?'

'I do,' he answered. 'That is my irrevocable opinion. I shall always think so.'

'Then let it be so,' I replied. 'As far as I am concerned, I consent. But before anything definite is settled we must have a meeting of the council. If they agree, the responsibility is off our shoulders. But they must be consulted first. How long a time can elapse before it is done?'

'It must be done in a few hours, if it is to be done at all,' he answered.

'And who will do it?' I asked.

'I shall operate myself,' he replied, 'assisted by a native surgeon from the town.'

'Very well. In that case I will give you the council's decision within an hour. In the meantime not a word to the queen! If she were alarmed without cause I should never forgive myself. She is in a very low state as it is.'

'She shall not know, believe me.'

He left me, and as soon as I had dressed I sought out the Governor, and begged him at once to call a meeting of the king's council. When the members had reached the palace and were assembled in the council hall, I placed the matter before them. The doctor was called in and examined, and after he had reiterated his opinion, consent was given to the operation being performed.

How the rest of that miserable day passed I do not know. Prior to the arrival of the doctor and his assistant, I drew Olivia into her boudoir and told her everything, trying to put it before her in as favourable a light as possible. She heard me out with a face that was white to the very lips, and when I had finished dropped into a chair and covered her face with her hands. I knelt on the floor beside her, and did my best to comfort her, but she would not hear me.

'If he dies,' she said, removing her hands, and staring straight before her with eyes that were wide open and yet seemed to see nothing, 'it will kill me. I could not live without him now. O Marie, Marie, my darling, my husband, I cannot let you go from me!'

I tried to tell her that the operation was not so serious as she imagined, but the half-lie died upon my lips unspoken. It was not the operation that was so dangerous—it was the inability of the weak patient to recover from it. Throughout that long morning I sat with her, and it was only when the clock had chimed midday that I surrendered her to Natalie and went to my own apartments. Half-an-hour later the native assistant came to inform me that the operation had been successfully performed, and that the king had recovered from the anæsthetic administered to him.

Upon hearing this I hastened to the queen's apartments and told the ladies the good news. It did me good to see the brightness come back to Olivia's eyes once more, while the pressure of Natalie's hand in mine told me what she felt upon the subject. Half-an-hour later a second bulletin was issued stating that his Majesty was progressing as favourably as could be expected under the circumstances. In this fashion the afternoon went by; bulletins were issued every hour, but it was not until nearly dusk that I saw anything of the doctor.

Then I was sitting in my own room endeavouring to make myself believe that I was reading, when I heard a body lurch nearly against my door. Thinking some one had been taken ill in the corridor outside, I crossed the room and looked out. There I found the doctor leaning against the wall, looking more like a ghost than a man.

I led him into the room and helped him to a chair. No sooner had I got him to it, however, than he sank heavily down and fainted dead away. After I had brought him round again, which was a matter of some time and difficulty, he drank a tumblerful of almost neat spirit, and then declared that he felt himself again.

'Fancy my going off like that!' he said. 'I am more like a baby than a man. I deserve to be treated like a child for the future.'

'I am not going to hear you abuse yourself,' I answered. 'You have done the work of two men lately, and now you are suffering for it. But tell me how you left the king, and who is with him.'

'He is asleep,' he answered, 'and his wife is there. I found the bullet, and he will do now, Lord Instow; I pledge my reputation upon it. Recovery will be slow, but it will be sure. When, however, he gets about again he should be a new man.'

'God save the king!' I cried with such enthusiasm that it made even the doctor smile.

And now, to make a long story short, I may say that the case turned out as the doctor predicted. The king's recovery was very slow, but it was also very sure; and in a month from the day upon which the operation was performed he was so far advanced in health as to be able to leave his bed. By this time there was the best of good news to tell him. The preparations for the Treaty of Peace were well advanced, and the date was already fixed upon which the prime minister and a second member of his Majesty's council were to meet the representatives of the French in order to discuss it. It did one good to see the joy it gave the king to be able once more to enter upon matters connected with the government of his kingdom; and if one wanted greater pleasure than that, it was only necessary to watch the love and tenderness with which he was treated by his wife. Her devotion to him was extraordinary; she had gone near to losing him, and now that Providence had sent him back to her, as it were, almost from the brink of the grave, it seemed as if she could not do enough for him. It was a happy group that, morning after morning, sat with books or work, in the sunshine, upon the palace roof. The blackness of the past was slowly giving way to the brightness of the present, and a knowledge of this fact was discernible on every face.

Since the king's recovery rewards for past services had been showered in all directions. Polacci had been raised to the dignity of Deputy-Governor of the citadel, A-mat had been appointed special body-servant to the king, the padre was made a bishop, Du Berg received the equivalent of an English peerage, Prennan's step was confirmed, and the Chowmung received a grant of land to himself and his heirs for ever. Even the horses which had carried us so well and bravely on that terrible night were not forgotten, but were pensioned off for the rest of their equine existences.

'And now, Instow,' said the king, when he had finished reading the list, and I had given him my opinion upon it, 'I am perplexed by one thing. I fancy I have been unjust, and I want you to help me to make it right with the person I have injured. Will you do so?'

'You must first give me the facts of the case,' I said, half suspecting what was coming. 'If it lies in my power, I think you know me well enough to feel sure I will help you.'

'It concerns yourself,' he answered, with a smile. 'You have been my guardian angel, if I may so put it, ever since I first met you. To you I owe my wife, my life, and even my kingdom and my happiness. You have done more than all the rest of my friends put together, and yet you are the only one who goes unrewarded. What am I to do to set this right?'

There was the sound of a soft footstep on the stones behind me, and I turned to find Olivia and Natalie approaching us. I waited until they had come up, and then took Natalie's hand.

'If your Majesty really wishes to reward me,' I said, 'there is one way in which you can do it, and, as far as I can see, only one. It is by giving me the hand I am holding now.'

'With all my heart,' replied the king. 'If she is willing, you shall have her, Instow, with ten thousand blessings on your heads.'

He kissed his sister affectionately on both cheeks, and then shook me by the hand. Having done so, he walked to the wall and looked down at the plain below. . . . But not before I had seen that his eyes had filled with tears. That they were not tears of sorrow I felt quite certain.

. . . . . .

Three months have passed since the interview just described, and we are in Japan, standing on the deck of my yacht in Nagasaki harbour. The king is beside me at the bulwarks, and Natalie, Olivia, and the baby are seated a little farther aft. In a few minutes we shall be saying good-bye to the land of the Chrysanthemum, and our ship's head will be pointed once more in the direction of the Médangs. Indeed, Wells is already on the bridge with the handle of the engine-room telegraph in his hand, the quarter-master at the wheel beside him, and the cable is just beginning to come aboard. A crowd of *sampans* and other native boats have been round us all day, but even they are beginning to draw off, and very soon we shall have said farewell to one of the loveliest harbours in the world.

We have been absent from the Médangs ever since peace was signed, nearly three months ago, and now our holiday is over and we are starting for home with his Majesty quite his old self once more. Or rather, to be correct, I should say not his old self, for he looks stronger than any of us have ever yet seen him.

Suddenly he turns from his contemplation of the boats alongside, and says very seriously to me:

'Instow, my brother, do you know what day this is?'

'The 24th of April, I believe,' I answer.

'Of course,' he replied. 'But I mean what anniversary it is?'

'I am afraid I cannot tell you that offhand,' I say. 'What is it?'

'It is two years to-day,' he observes, 'since we sailed from Venice to the rescue of my kingdom. How much we have gone through since then!'

'Indeed yes,' I continue. 'Your Majesty has won your wife, you have a noble heir to follow you, and in the meantime you are seated more firmly upon your throne than ever.'

'Thanks to you! I shall never forget how much I owe you, Instow.'

Before I have time to answer, Olivia, with her child in her arms, comes along the deck and stands beside her husband. Seeing Natalie alone, I go aft to her and lead her to the bulwarks.

I describe to her the scene before me, and when the anchor is aboard, the screw revolving, and the vessel's head is pointing for the open sea, I draw her closer to me and ask if she is happy.

'More than happy, dear,' she replies, with a little squeeze of my hand, that, like most lovers' endearments, is more expressive than any words, and needs no answer. The yacht speeds upon her way, mile after mile drops behind us, and before long the blue hills we had been admiring all day are only a faint smudge upon the horizon.

By the time dinner is over and we have sought the deck again it is almost dark. On the eastern sea-line the moon is rising, throwing a broad bar of gold athwart our track. We make quite a family group as we stand at the taffrail watching it.

'What a lovely night it is!' says Olivia, linking her arm in her husband's, and looking up into his face as if she believed him to be responsible even for the beauty of the evening.

'It is a good omen,' says some one, and the sentiment is echoed by the group.

In a mock-heroic fashion, I strike the rail before me.

'On, on, good ship,' I cry; 'on, on, for the happiness of all my life awaits me at the other end.'

'And pray what may that be?' asks a meek little voice, which I recognise nevertheless as Natalie's.

'My marriage,' I answer promptly.

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## THE 'RECORD' IN DEEP-SEA SALVAGE.

The passenger steamship *Catterthun*, of 2200 tons, the property of the Eastern and Australian Steamship Company, left Syring on the afternoon of Wednesday the 8th August 1895, on her voyage to Hong-Kong, without any premonition of her impending fate. At 2.25 on the following morning she struck heavily on a submerged reef, and after staggering on a course towards the nearest land, she went down, as was subsequently ascertained, in the open sea about three or four miles from Seal Rocks Bay, on the mainland of New South Wales, in thirty fathoms of water. There was a lamentable loss of fifty-four lives, that of the captain inclusive.

In the present instance our interest is not with the main narrative, but with the recovery of the nine thousand golden sovereigns which formed part of her freight, the greater portion of which has been regained from the depths by an extraordinary feat of deep-sea diving. The underwriters on this gold, the Sydney agency of

the Alliance Marine of London, the New Zealand Insurance Company, and others, having decided to pay as for a total loss, met together with a view to discuss whether they might not as well have a try to get back their own. An affirmative having been scored with much unanimity to this proposition, no time was lost in giving it practical effect; and on the 19th August, within ten days of the loss, an expedition, consisting of the steamers *Stirling* and *Mermaid*, under the control of Captain John Hall (underwriters' surveyor of Sydney), proceeded to the locality of the wreck as far as it could be conjectured. With a minimum of difficulty which seems surprising, the sunken rock upon which the *Catterthun* first struck was found. The evidence given by the survivors before the Marine Board of New South Wales, after the occurrence of the wreck, estimated that she had kept steaming ahead with a course towards the shore, about twenty minutes from the moment of contact with the reef; but Captain Hall's skilled judgment led him to the conclusion, from a study of subsidiary incidents, that this interval must have been considerably underestimated; and acting upon that conclusion, and following up the scent with untiring tenacity for three or four days, he at last succeeded in localising the remains of the ill-fated steamer in a position coincident with the theory which he had formulated for his own guidance. The method adopted was that of trailing a heavy steel hawser as nearly as could be judged on the bed of the sea; and on the fourth day this hawser encountered a check, which led those on board the expeditionary steamers to the hopeful conclusion that Act I. of an interesting adventure was near its termination. Diver Briggs volunteered a descent in his ordinary diving-dress, well knowing, however, that, so equipped, it was beyond his power to make bottom. He proceeded to a depth of twenty fathoms, and on his return to the upper air, reported having had a view of the *Catterthun* which, although indistinct, left no doubt whatever in his mind that Captain Hall had located his 'quarry.' 'It was like looking at a vessel through a thick mist,' observed Briggs. The object of the preliminary voyage was completed by this discovery inasmuch as it was known beforehand that any appliances then in the colony were inadequate as a means towards the recovery of the treasure. Bearings with points on the coast having been taken with as much accuracy as circumstances permitted, the vessels returned to Sydney.

The certainty of making the wreck again when wanted removed from the minds of the underwriters any lingering hesitation as to what to do next, and accordingly, upon the advice of the divers, a couple of Heincke's diving-dresses of the best quality adapted to deep-sea work were promptly ordered by cablegram from London, further operations pending their arrival being, of course, in abeyance. It was not until May of the present year that, by the receipt of this new and practically perfect equipment, the intercepted efforts were resumed. On the 4th of that month the steamers *Sophia Ann* and *Mermaid* left Sydney for the 'Seal Rocks,' again under the command-in-chief of Captain Hall—Mr Minnett, an interested underwriter, also constituting one of the voyagers—with all necessaries and with about twenty hands on board. From the bearings previously taken, the exact *locale* of the wreck was spotted on 8th May; but it was found that the anchors of the search-steamers were too light to hold, owing to the great depth and hard bottom, and a tender in waiting had to be sent to Sydney for heavier ground tackle. On the 11th, after some disappointing failures to get firm moorings, one of the divers got on to the bows of the *Catterthun;* but owing to threatening weather, he was signalled to return promptly to the surface, and having done so, the vessels made for the shelter of Seal Rocks Bay.

A persistent run of adverse weather, coupled with the strength of the coastal current, made further progress impossible, until on 1st July the divers got a wire rope fast to the *Catterthun's* bridge. On the 2d they brought to the surface the bridge compass and compass-case, with some unimportant gear; but the main interest centred upon the discovery of the treasure-chamber, a short description of which at this stage is indispensable to a proper understanding of the more serious difficulties of the enterprise. This chamber was neither more nor less than a sort of exaggerated iron tank, the only access to which was by a man-hole in its top side, approachable from the chart-room; or perhaps the more convenient explanation would be to say that the *roof* of the iron tank formed the floor of the chart-room. The cover of the man-hole was secured against amateur treatment by two of Chubb's patent locks. It is almost superfluous to observe that the divers had familiarised themselves beforehand with these details, and that a plan of the ship was under constant reference. Now it was resolved to shatter the man-hole cover by dynamite electrically fired from the *Mermaid's* deck, a process which, after some irritating delays, owing to inefficient detonators, was at last more or less successfully accomplished, although, as we shall see later on, some formidable difficulties still remained. Soundings were taken, which placed the bottom of the tank-chamber at 27½ fathoms from the surface of the sea; and the nature of the service undertaken by Briggs and May will be more accurately gauged when it is remembered that the pressure upon the human fabric at this extreme depth—which will be better understood if we translate 27½ fathoms into 165 feet—indicated from 70 to 75 lbs. to the square inch, and that eleven or twelve minutes at a time at the side of the hull was about as much as could be endured without a revivifying trip to the upper air.

No sooner had these more or less preliminary and quasi-experimental descents been concluded than disappointing delays again arose, partly

owing to the weather, and partly to the coastal current already referred to; but those who had undertaken the task were not to be daunted. The current—a thing of capricious and intermittent activity—was indeed the most formidable thing with which the divers had to contend. 'When the current is running,' observed diver Briggs, 'it bears on the air-pipe, and the strain is so great when we get any distance down that we cannot keep hold of the line. Standing on the *Catterthun's* deck is then quite impossible.' The effect, in short, was to bend the air-pipe into a semicircle.

Another spell of heart-breaking weather compelled the postponement of further effort until 4th August, on which day it was found possible to attach a strong line to the now mutilated tank-door. The line being attached to the *Mermaid's* steam-winch, a sufficient purchase was obtained to remove the remains of the door, and to permit access to the treasure within. Briggs again descended on 6th August, and sighted the boxes of gold in their receptacle, but a continuance of rough weather and strong currents for quite another week led to fresh disappointments. Captain Hall now broke down through ill-health, believed to be attributable to no other cause than an overcharged sensibility under a very trying set of circumstances, and the active responsibility became transferred to Mr Minnett, assistant underwriter of the Sydney branch of the New Zealand Insurance Company, as representing the underwriters generally; and under his control operations were resumed on 17th August, with a determination to force events to a conclusion whatever might befall. Nine times on that day did the two intrepid divers, taking their lives in their hands, descend to that almost cruel depth, Briggs remaining in the *Catterthun's* chart-room on this occasion for fifteen minutes and nineteen seconds; and although he five times succeeded in getting a grip of one box containing five thousand sovereigns, it as many times slipped away again. At this point some further detailed explanation becomes unavoidable. The boxes of treasure—for convenience of access at the port of arrival—were made to rest inside the tank upon a sort of extemporised shelving of rough wooden scantling, which, becoming disrupted by the dynamite charge, had the effect of landing them, still happily intact, among the *débris* at the bottom of the chamber. The problem was how to get hold of them. The man-hole, true to its name, was made, and was just big enough, for 'man,' but *not* for man *plus* diving-dress. The plan of attack adopted was therefore to get a grip of the cases by means of long-handled augers, not made the more easy by the fact that when you had your auger long enough to screw into and haul up your prey close enough to the entrance, the other end found an obstacle in the ceiling of the chart-room—a description which, be its imperfections what they may, will convey to the reader's mind the difficulties which faced these men at every turn. To resume. Briggs having returned to the surface, May now descended, and at last succeeded, by desperate effort, in getting the five thousand sovereign box into a kind of basket net prepared for the purpose, and which he promptly signalled those above to haul up, he himself remaining at his post to see it started all clear. Both man and box reached the surface in safety to the music of a cheering welcome. Poor May was, however, in a terrible state of exhaustion. 'It looked,' as a gentleman on board remarked, 'almost like recovering a corpse;' but generous care at the hands of his fellow-expeditionaries restored him in a few hours to his normal vitality. On the 18th August two dives were made by Briggs, with the result that four of the smaller boxes were sent up. Descents, with occasional interruptions from both sea and current, continued to be made until the 20th, inclusive, on which day Briggs, having brought a box to the surface—the seventh in all—with £250, it was resolved that enough had been done for both honour and profit, and the vessels were promptly headed for Sydney, with the respectable salvage of £7942 out of a total shipped of £8957. Considerable minor parcels of gold were believed to be on board, chiefly in the possession of Chinese passengers, but the difficulties and dangers of searching for these in unknown parts of the wreck were thought disproportionate to any probable salvage results. Consequently no effort was made for their recovery.

Numerous fish, sharks inclusive, were reported as having been seen. One shark, of aldermanic dimensions, had created a kind of freehold for himself on a part of the deck inconveniently close to the chart-room door. Once or twice this gentleman assumed an obstructionist attitude, rather to the discomfort of the divers; but, from their description, his action seems to have taken the form more of resenting an intrusion upon his hearth and home than of any vicious disposition to breakfast upon his aggressors.

The wreck was reported by Briggs and May as covered with barnacles and shells, and in rapid process of disintegration. No trace of passengers or their belongings was observed.

The *Mermaid* had been elaborately fitted by the British Electrical Engineering Company with appliances for illuminating the sea-depth by electricity, as a provision against contingencies, but although used experimentally on one or two occasions, they were found in practice to be practically a superfluity. The efficiency of the experiment was, however, regarded rather in the way of a triumph, having regard to the enormous pressure upon the deeply submerged vacuum-glasses.

The only deep-sea recovery approaching this one in point of interest is that of £90,000 out of a total of £100,000 (or the equivalents thereof in Spanish) from the *Alphonso XII.*, wrecked and sunk off Grand Canary in or about 1885. The depth of water in the latter case was quite a fathom in the diver's favour; but the circumstances of weather, current, and remoteness from all land shelter which attached to the case of the *Catterthun* may fairly be claimed to stamp it as so far the 'record' performance—to use the phrase of the day—in this department of enterprise.

Underwriters estimate the cost of recovery of the sunk treasure at about forty-five per cent. of the amount of the policies. The divers, it is understood, received, in addition to being 'all found' in the course of the operations, fifteen per cent. of the amount brought up. Well indeed have they earned it! Nor would it be fair to close this paper without adverting to the fact that Mr Gordon Dixon, the chief representative in Australia of the Alliance Insurance Companies of

London, was from start to finish one of the active spirits of an enterprise which, for sustained pluck and steadfastness of purpose, reflects the greatest credit upon every one concerned.

## THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MRS MACQUOID.

II.

It was strange: it was unaccountable. Katie had gone out early. 'All by myself, for a treat,' she said. It was the first time she had not taken Johnnie, and the reason was that she was going to get him a surprise. She would take him for a drive in the afternoon.

Afternoon came, but no Katie, and the servants wondered. Johnnie was crying feebly for his promised drive, and she had never yet disappointed Johnnie. He was crying for her at night when John Macquoid, who had been out all day, came home to dinner and walked past the nursery to his dressing-room. He stopped and put in his head.

'What is the matter, little man?' he asked. The nurse—one of Johnnie's many nurses—said he was crying for his mamma.

Probably Katie would fly home presently, in a great hurry and bother at having been detained. He passed on, dressed, and came down, but was too hungry to put off dinner.

The hours went on. It was bed-time, surely. And still no Katie. Her husband grew alarmed, all kinds of fears took hold of him, and he ran up to her rooms to look round vaguely. All was ready for the mistress who had never come; the hot water was cold in the jug, and the dinner-dress, a flimsy thing that a touch might crumple, lay spread for the wearing. On the floor were Katie's little slippers, and a scent that reminded him of her floated faintly over all. With an anxious hurry that he had not time to reflect on and think absurd, he started towards the toilet-table, almost prepared to see—after the manner in books—some fatal note stabbed through with a hat-pin on the pin-cushion. But there was no such thing, and he laughed harshly at himself for the stupid fancy.

The laugh rang strangely in the empty room; and—where was Katie?

There was no trace of her that night, no sign of her in the morning. It would be difficult to count the searchers, difficult to imagine the alarm of Katie's husband.

She had a queer knack of finding her way about, which made her quite independent, and accordingly made all inquiry harder. The detectives called in made a point of looking about the premises. No lady ever yet ran away without leaving some good-bye letter—with a clue—they told each other and John Macquoid; but when they had turned the house upside down and questioned the household rigorously, they came to the conclusion that this lady had. Unless there had been an accident.

Katie's husband started off with a set, white face. He had looked in the papers shuddering, and had seen nothing; now he went from hospital to hospital, passing slowly and fearfully through the accident wards. There were many women in these hospitals, all lying in the same still way, their limbs moulded death-like under the white sheet, and their faces sometimes hidden; and many were unknown. It cut his breath to glance up the wards and see farther on some ghastly shape that might be—Katie.

At one hospital they brought him to a woman who had been run over on the same day that Katie disappeared, and he lagged in a kind of terror; then hastened, in a revulsion of eagerness, to follow close. Her face was bound up beyond all knowing, and a terrible uncertainty took hold of him. The eyes were closed. Was not that brown hair Katie's? Stooping over the bed, he tried to see the face that was marred and bandaged. Could it be? The nurse lifted one of the nerveless hands from under the coverlet, and he looked at it eagerly. There were no rings on it, none on the wedding finger; and it did not look like Katie's little hand.

'No,' he said, and passed on farther. Going home his hansom had to cross the river, and he leaned out with a sort of horror at the waters that looked so black. Did they hold the truth? He could not shake off the terrible idea.

The detectives did not loiter. They kept asking information, putting questions that angered Katie's husband past all bearing. One went down to Scotland, getting no help there; the others pervaded London. But nowhere was there any sign of Katie.

Then John Macquoid turned his face from London and came north, taking little Johnnie. He rode over from Auchendrane on the moorland road where Katie had driven so often when the heather was in bloom, purple on either side, to see Katie's family.

James was dazed. He could not attempt to fathom the matter; it was, as Katie herself had always been to him, incomprehensible.

John Macquoid walked into the faded drawing-room, where there were photographs of Katie, or had been, for they were bundled hastily out of sight, and her eyes shone out on him no longer from the dim corners of the room. He did not wait to consider the attitude of Katie's sisters; they were her sisters, and, as such, the first women to help him in his need, to listen, and to be kind.

'Give me some help!' cried John Macquoid. 'You are her sisters, and you know her. You can tell me what you think—and fear.' But their lips were closed.

'Whatever you think, it is better to speak it fairly,' he said at last, with a sharp tone that had not yet broken through his sorrow. 'I will tell you what I fear. Either my poor Katie is dead'—the sisters did not look as if they thought so—'or she has left me. I remember some words I overheard just after she said "Yes" to me—words that I did not then think or care about, but that haunt me now. Did she marry me for the sake of—outer things? Was her heart buried with her first husband, and awakened rudely to the knowledge of being bound? Then I can understand; I can fancy how a dislike, that she did not let me see, grew upon her day by day; how when Johnnie was a baby, her first and only child, she might for

a time forget it; but only to feel it suddenly again with a strength that was unbearable, until she gave in to the impulse to be free—to belong wholly to the dead—or die. You can tell me if this is true?'

They did not answer directly. Then Bella spoke: 'Did you meet Captain Rose in town?' Her question was curiously irrelevant, but she put it carefully.

'I don't know. Yes,' said Macquoid, staring at her. Bella coughed, but she did not speak any further. If ever there were a damning silence, this was one.

'Why do you ask?' said John Macquoid; but she would not say. He looked at her keenly.

Jane folded her hands and spoke; each word was like the dropping of cold, hard water. 'We can tell you nothing,' she said. 'Katie has never trusted or confided in us much. We do not know anything of her past that is not quite open to any person. She had a different mother. This disgrace has overwhelmed us, and it is well that we live out on the moors, where we do not need to look into people's faces, and where it is therefore less painful that we—cannot. We feel for you, John, and we feel also for ourselves. But do not ask us to feel for—Katie.'

'How can you speak of disgrace? *I* spoke of none,' said John Macquoid; 'and I will tell you what I believe: that your sister must be—dead.'

'Dead to us, you would say,' Jane said, without a falter. 'She is no longer a sister of ours: do not speak of her. Would you like one of us to go with you and take care of poor little Johnnie at Auchendrane?'

John Macquoid rose up to go. His voice was as hard as her own, and his eyes were angry. 'Thank you,' he said. 'If you are no sister of hers, you can scarcely be Johnnie's aunt.'

. . . . . .

The mystery gave talk to many. But it was no nearer solution when the talk was done; when all the world settled to another subject, and only John Macquoid of Auchendrane remembered. Macquoid was peculiar, people said when they thought about him; not when he was with them, speaking and looking like any other man, but when his broad back was turned, and small scraps of bye-information drifted to their ears.

The motherless years passed over Johnnie's head, and most thought that it would be good for Johnnie to forget he had once a mother; some things are fittest to be forgotten, they would remark. But John Macquoid did not think with them. He did not even think with the aunts, which was foolish, as who but they should know best the character of their sister?—the sister they never mentioned.

Two days in the year he kept as anniversaries—one Katie's wedding-day and his, and the other the day she left him. On that last day a black sash was tied round Johnnie, and in the gloaming Macquoid took the boy on his knee, and showed him his mother's picture with the fluffy hair and the steadfast eyes. He spoke softly, telling little stories of the lost mother, as one tells stories of the dead. On the wedding-day Johnnie came down to dinner with his hair brushed long and curly, and sat like a lady at the end of the table, lifting up his small glass when bidden to drink mamma's health. And when the child went up to bed John Macquoid sat down and wrote a letter.

It was a cry to Katie if she lived to come home to him—to him and to her child. Written in a dream, with only longing and little hope to inspire its words, it was like a message to the dead. He hardly hoped she would hear it; he did not think it would reach her surer than the call that died in the night and found no echo. But he sent it to the principal papers, and he dropped his head on his hands and prayed it might find her—if she lived. All was dark, and there was no light anywhere.

Between these days he was much the same as of old. He shot as well and he rode as straight, nor was he as gray as one might expect. Indeed, more than one young woman wished to herself that there were some certain news of Katie, or wished that she were a myth, while wondering casually whether her own frocks became her.

One such was Eleanor Strom, and Eleanor was comely. Those who saw Johnnie refuse to hug her on one occasion were sure she would be—eventually—his step-mamma. Children have nearly as much instinct—if it were only known—as dogs; and John did like Eleanor Strom as much as anybody.

In the sixth year of his wife's disappearance Eleanor sat on the heather near Auchendrane. It was a shooting-party. There was an old lady roaming about with a gun and short skirts, so it was all quite proper.

'I am going to town to-morrow,' said Eleanor Strom. She thought John Macquoid looked sorry as he asked if it were business or pleasure that took her there.

'Both. It is clothes,' said she. These clothes were to make her—charming.

In the sixth year of his wife's disappearance John Macquoid received a telegram from his solicitor, asking him to come up to London on important and pressing business. As he read over the brief words a sudden hope leaped into his eyes; but it faded out dully as he remembered a certain deed that was quite sufficiently important to make such a journey called for by a solicitor who fussed. It was only that.

Johnnie stopped behind. He had been taking him about wherever he went, but this was to be a short stay, and it was not worth while unsettling the little chap. He drove to the station early, and there in the train—but not in a 'Ladies Only'—was Eleanor Strom and her bags and boxes.

There were friends on the platform, friends with handkerchiefs and umbrellas, and some with dogs. They were crying noisy good-byes and waving their hands: all friends of Eleanor Strom. As John Macquoid appeared the look on Eleanor's face spread itself to theirs. It was a look that meant more than a look should do if there is no foundation. Eleanor hoped there was some, and her friends asked John that she should be taken care of. Their second or third good-byes were a little cheerier.

It should not be difficult, after all these years, and no sign whatever, to prove that Mrs Macquoid was not in the land of the living.

And so John went half-heartedly up to London.

. . . . . .

It was raining. The wet made the whole air clammy, and emptied the streets of all who could keep out of them. But Eleanor Strom had some clothes-requirements that could not wait, and she dashed by in a hansom as John Macquoid walked across the pavement from his, and faced the solicitor's door-plate.

'He is going to start inquiries,' thought Eleanor, sticking her fine new bonnet far out into the wet, and seeing the gilded letters with eyes that no rain could blind.

'It is that deed, I suppose?' said John, when he had been taken into the private office. The solicitor looked queerly at him.

'Can you stand a shock?' he said.

There was strength in those square shoulders and in the squarer chin. 'I can stand anything,' said John Macquoid; but his face was paler, losing the colour struck into it by the rain.

'Then go in there,' said the other quietly, pointing to an inner door. John Macquoid got up, and two strides took him up to the threshold. But the lawyer stopped him there. He was a nervous man, and had apparently spoken in unprofessional hurry to shirk something which should be got over first.

'I must explain matters to you—and prepare you,' he began, uncertainly. 'It is a painful business'——

'Let me know the worst,' said John Macquoid hoarsely, but he did not wait to hear it, seeing that many long words would reach him first. He opened that door, and shut it.

'*Katie!*'

It was she—she truly, as she had always been; thinner and paler, less bird-like in her look, but with the same steadfast eyes. She put out her hands, but did not seem sure if he would take them, and greeted his cry with, 'O John, John!' in a shamed and piteous voice.

Katie herself. That was all her husband could understand. She was there; he was holding her, crushing her against the heart that had beat so sorely all these years: and he had not thought of a question yet. For a while neither could speak; then Katie lifted her head.

'John—you will marry me at once?' she said.

He stared at her. Was she—mad?

She saw his wonder and dropped her eyes. 'Did he not tell you? Do you not know?' she asked.

'He has told me nothing. I—I think I would not wait,' said John Macquoid.

Katie's face, that had been so very pale, was crimson. She took his hands in hers, for they were encouraging to hold, and began to tell her story.

'I went out by myself that day,' she said, 'and I was thinking of the surprise I was going to get for Johnnie. I did not look where I was going, and all at once I ran into somebody, who looked up at my "Pardon!" and caught my arm. It was William, my first husband—William!'

She shuddered at the recollection, and went on bravely: 'In South America they make—mistakes. He was not dead, and he had come back for me. I did not faint; I had no time for that. I looked at him.

'"Come over into the Park," he said, "and I will tell you everything." He took me across the street; I could hardly walk alone—and while we were crossing I made up my mind. It was like an awful dream, a vision of grinning horses' heads, of shouts and flashes, and of him beside me, touching me, the greatest horror of all. Through the quick nightmare, oh, my dear, my dear! I thought of you. I was not your wife then—I was nothing. And what was Johnnie? My little child, my poor little luckless child! I could not faint or die while I had him to think for. The wheels were flashing and whirling past, and his hand was on my arm. The street was wide'——

She shuddered once again; but her voice was quiet. 'I thought: "I could die now easily if that would help; it would only be dropping under that wheel, waiting for these dark hoofs to strike life out of me. But then—my husband with me, and my other—husband—seeking, it would all become, surely, plain; and shame would be left to Johnnie. I will do what is harder." For I felt it would hurt you less if I left you without one word. If you loved me you might think me dead, and grieve, but not so bitterly as if you knew. If you did not care for me as—I did for you—and, John, I was not always sure—you would think evil of me and feel only anger. And you would have Johnnie. There would be no blight on his life, and it would not hurt my darling—so it would pain you less.

'I did not die—and we had crossed the street. The flowers stared in my face as William told me how it had come about, and why he had been so long. It was like other stories that we read in books and call impossible till we see them in the papers, or feel them terribly in our lives. He had been going north to find me, and—thank God!—he had seen me first.

'I looked at the flowers that were so bright—for I could not yet bear to see the face that I thought forgotten—and I said: "Since these years in your life are blank to me, we must blot them out of mine. If you will not let it be so, let us say good-bye. But if you will take me now, telling no soul that knows us, asking no question—I will come." I think that he guessed, because he consented, and took me.'

'Go on,' said John Macquoid.

'There is nothing after that; only pain,' said Katie. 'There were few women out there. He needed me. And I was glad to be in a strange, strange country, where there was no one thing I knew to make me drop down and sob. I was always looking in the Scottish papers for a word of you and Johnnie; my heart would be sick till I had seen what there was—and was not. And your cry reached me, oh, my dear, my dear!—the cry that I dared not

answer. It comforted me that you called for me, and hoped, and had less to bear than I—and you had Johnnie. Then my—husband died.'

'And you are'——

'Let me finish. I strengthened my soul to come home to you. But oh, the fear and the doubt that crushed me, more bitter than the old hopelessness! You would believe my story—for I had proof—but how much might you not be changed? Even the words of the cry that reached me from over the sea could not give me courage. It might be some other Katie for whom the words were calling; I, who had taken them to myself, might be only thought of with scorn, or else quite forgotten; and there might—in six dragging years—well, be somebody you had grown to care for. O John, the terror of that fancy! But I thought of Johnnie. For his sake you would marry me, and in Scotland his wrong would be righted; he would be your heir. You must love him, your own child, who had so long been all yours only. For his sake I must come straight home to you. And, John—when I look in your eyes—I know that I have—come home.'

That was all her story.

They were married. Not as before, with gifts and speeches, and a crowd of faces to look at Katie—the marriage words were spoken to them only, and they could hear and know them better in their hearts. Then they went home to Johnnie.

## TIMBUCTOO.

For centuries Europe has dreamed of a great and wealthy city in the heart of the Soudan—a centre of Moslem influence and the 'hub' of African commerce. Wonderful tales of the riches and beauty of Timbuctoo have been brought to us across the desert by the caravans which, century after century, have traversed the long route to and from the North African seaboard. Mungo Park lost his life in trying to reach this mysterious city, the first European to enter which was probably Major Laing, in 1826—though this is disputed by the French. Anyhow, Laing's observations were lost to us, for he was murdered on the return journey, and it has been reserved for a Frenchman to give us the most graphic and realistic picture of the Saharan city that has yet been presented.*

To reach Timbuctoo is now a very different matter from what it was in the days of Park and Laing and Barth. The French 'sphere' now includes it, and from St Louis, the port of Senegal, the French have a service of steamers up the Senegal river to Kayes, the port of the Soudan, from which a railway is being carried across to the Niger, upon whose broad bosom there is extensive canoe-traffic right up to Timbuctoo. Thus in about six weeks from leaving London one may embark at Bammaku, on the Niger, and in another week or two enter the mysterious city, whose veil has been lifted in the European scramble for Africa. There is much to see by the way, for the Upper Niger, more like an inland ocean than a river, presents an infinite variety of scenery and of human types. Our object just now, however, is not to describe the great African highway, which is to the Soudan what the Nile is to Egypt. Great as is the interest of the upward journey, everything falls before the surprise of the traveller on reaching Jenne, which is situated on one of the numerous tributaries of the great river, and is called the 'Jewel of the Valley of the Niger.' It is necessary that we should pause here, for Jenne is also the 'Mother of Timbuctoo.'

This is the picture presented to M. Dubois as he gazed from the prow of his canoe-barge: 'A vast plain, infinitely flat, without a touch of relief; no village nor any other sign of humanity, only now and again some trees at long intervals, showing as dark spots upon the yellow-green expanse. In the very midst of this solitude is a circle of water, and within it, rising victorious (like the summit of the palm-tree amidst the sands of the desert), is reared a long mass of high and regular walls, erected on mounds as high and nearly as steep as themselves. A forest of projections crowns them with terraced roofs, palms, gable-ends, stairs, and dome-like trees; a whole smiling life salutes me from the height of this little island.' Then, as the boat approaches the town, the banks and walls stand out in larger proportions, and a harbour is disclosed, with large boats quite different from, and superior to, the canoes seen lower down the Niger. For Jenne is a great place of shipping and of ship-building, as well as of commerce. It is a town more in the European than in the African sense. That is to say, it has regularly laid-out streets of brick-built houses, not higgledy-piggledy arrangements of mud-huts; and these houses are neither Moorish nor Arabic in architecture and character, but distinctly Egyptian. How comes this fragment of old Egypt in the Valley of the Niger? The story is a long one; but, briefly, the city of Jenne owes its foundation to the Songhois, or Songhays, who are believed to have migrated from the Nile Valley in the seventh century. They wandered westward, and after one hundred and twenty years reached their westernmost limit—and there arose the city of Jenne. To this day the inhabitants preserve the type rather of the Nubian than of the West African negro, and they speak a language quite different from any of the Soudanese dialects. We need not follow here the rise and fall of the Songhay empire, as revealed in the manuscript records which have been brought to light. Suffice it to say that when the Moors overran the country in the seventeenth century its prosperity began to decline, and after two centuries of misrule and marauding it is hoped that a new and better era has now set in, under the protecting arm of France. The comparative isolation of Jenne has preserved it from the destruction that was the fate of so many of the Soudanese towns, and it remains to-day

* *Timbuctoo the Mysterious*, by Felix Dubois. Translated by Diana White. (London: William Heinemann.)

practically as it was in the days of the Songhay empire. The inhabitants say the city was never taken and never pillaged.

This strange fragment of the old world has been for centuries one of the great commercial centres of Islam. It is situated in an extremely fertile district on a branch of the Niger. In place of the primitive barter between village and village, the people of Jenne built up a real commerce. They formed business firms with agents all over the Soudan, and had travellers who regularly went round for orders on commission. They built fleets of cargo-boats, and they established branches at Timbuctoo, there to intercept the business of the great Saharan caravans.

What are the objects in which they trade? In their great warehouses, which are the ground-floor of their Egyptian dwellings, are great stores of rice and millet and other cereals, jars of honey, blocks of karita, bags of spices, piles of onions, cakes of indigo, baskets of kola-nuts, the fruit of the baobab, iron bars from Mossi, ostrich feathers, ivory, gold, civet-musk, lead from the mountains of Hombouri, marble bracelets such as Niger people love, antimony (used by the negresses to darken and increase the brilliancy of their eyes), native fabrics, linen and woollen cloths, and yellow, black, and blue draperies. Also slaves—in which there seems as large a traffic as in anything. We learn, too, that there is no specialisation in trade. Each merchant sells everything, from slaves to spices, and from cloth to cereals. They do not themselves go to market, but send an agent with a small stock of samples, while they remain in their own dwellings and counting-houses. The great merchants have their own boats for the transport of cargo, and there are also 'tramp' boats for charter by the small traders.

The merchants of Jenne were not long in appreciating the splendid geographical position of Timbuctoo — especially as they were much in need of salt, only to be obtained from the caravans. So they sent agents there, and some of them built houses which they occupied for business purposes during the height of the caravan season. In fact, Jenne was the real fount and origin of the commerce and wealth for which Timbuctoo gained the reputation. Timbuctoo, has been known for centuries all over the world, while the name of Jenne is quite unfamiliar to most of us. This is explainable by the fact that the caravans from Morocco, Tuat, Tripoli, and Tunis stretched across the desert to Timbuctoo, but never went farther west. They had no need to do so, for they found at Timbuctoo all they wanted, including merchants eager to buy their camel-loads of food, and European cloths and hardware, and salt. Besides, beyond Timbuctoo they found a country intersected by water-channels and periodically submerged, in which their camels would have been totally useless. Thus at Timbuctoo the camel-traffic and the canoe-traffic met and was exchanged.

Timbuctoo is not on the Niger. Leaving Jenne, and regaining the main channel of the great river, one may by boat in eight or ten days (according to the season and the possibility or otherwise of night travelling) reach Kabara, which is the port of Timbuctoo. Landing there, one finds a sandy stretch of desolate country, said to be so infested by robbers that no one crosses except under convoy. There is now a daily escort of twenty soldiers, under whose protection the stream of people, camels, and donkeys sets to and from the river and the city.

As we gave M. Dubois' picture of Jenne as it first presented itself to him, so now let us give his first picture of Timbuctoo as he approached it across the desert: 'A dark silhouette, large and long, an image of grandeur in immensity—thus appeared the "Queen of the Soudan." Across the space everything looks simple and severe: the forest is dwarfed out of sight, and nothing diminishes the vast landscape, which is lighted by the throbbing glare of the veritable sun of the desert. Truly she is enthroned upon the horizon with the majesty of a queen. She is indeed the city of imagination, the Timbuctoo of European legend. Her sandy approaches are strewn with bones and carcasses that have been disinterred by wild beasts, the remains of the camels, horses, and donkeys that have fallen down and died in the last stages of the journey. The cities of the East are invariably encircled by their bones, and the roads across the desert are lined by their bodies. The details of the distant shape grow clearer by degrees. The illusion of walls produced by the distinctness with which the town stands out from the white sand disappears, and three towers placed at regular intervals dominate the mass. The terraces of square houses are now distinguishable, giving an appearance of depth to the outlined mass, and renewing the first impression of grandeur.'

This is only the exterior appearance, however, when distance lends enchantment to the view. To enter the town is to encounter as great a surprise as on entering Jenne, but of a wholly different sort. Here in Timbuctoo we step into what seems a mass of crumbling ruins, without a vestige of the fabled splendour. What in the distance seemed city ramparts turn out to be a mass of deserted houses—with roofs fallen in, doors gone, and walls broken and tumbling. In what were once the streets are piles of earth and masses of *débris* suggestive of wholesale destruction.

Struggling through the ruins, the traveller comes to the market-place, but instead of prosperous traders and eager customers he finds only a few women with little baskets selling insignificant wares. What has become of the universal commerce of the 'Queen of the Soudan'—of the wealth and prosperity of Timbuctoo?

Only after a few days' quiet residence and observation is the mystery explained. All this appearance of ruin and poverty is assumed for a purpose—to deceive the marauding Tuaregs. There is plenty of life and movement among the ruins, and behind the rigidly closed doors a large business is still being conducted—secretly, in fear of the descendants of the very people who founded the city in the dim and distant past. Just as Jenne was Egyptian, so was Timbuctoo Arabian in origin, but its greatness was largely due to the Moors who, driven out of Spain, went wandering up the Niger. Its misfortunes have been due to wandering and marauding tribes of the same race, the portion of the Berber race known as Tuaregs, whose form of Islamism became a belief in talismans. From the time of the first settlers the place became a station for

the caravans, and the population steadily increased. But it did not become a town worthy of the name until the merchants of Jenne (which had been founded three hundred years earlier) came and showed the people of Timbuctoo how to build houses of baked brick. They also built a mosque, and a temple which afterwards became the 'University of Sankoré,' as M. Dubois somewhat fancifully calls it. Timbuctoo then grew rapidly in importance and in prosperity, until in the seventeenth century the Moorish blight fell upon the Soudan. Then the Tuaregs and other nomadic tribes increased in their aggressions and their power of evil—the caravan trade began to fall off under the fear of the robbers, and the population of the city dwindled. By the beginning of the present century Timbuctoo was practically in the hands of the Tuaregs, who 'bled' its inhabitants nearly to financial death. It is only now slowly recovering, we are told, under the protection of the French flag, and the commerce which of late years has been conducted behind locked doors because of the ever-present marauders will once more be seen in the market-places.

Timbuctoo is essentially a place of exchange—an entrepôt—where meet those who travel and traffic by camel, and those who do so by canoe. It is the point of junction of the Arab with the Negro world. It is at the outlet of a labyrinth of Niger water-channels on the verge of the desert, and is described as 'like a port with bonded docks situated on the coast of an opulent continent, with a sea of sand stretching before her upon which the fleets of the desert come and go.' Hither comes all the commerce of the desert, and across the desert come the long caravans of the Moorish and Algerian merchants of the far north. These bring the produce of Morocco and Algeria and Tunis, with European cloths and arms and hardware, and, above all, loads of salt; in exchange for which they take back gold and ivory, ostrich feathers, raw leather, wax, incense, indigo, gum, and such other produce as the Soudan and the Niger basin can offer. Now all this traffic passes through Timbuctoo, but does not belong to it.

The camels discharge their cargoes into the canoes, from which in turn they load up for their homeward journey. Timbuctoo is only the place of trans-shipment, and its inhabitants are the brokers and intermediaries in the trade. For the rest, they make profit by providing board and lodging for the caravans. These, of the large sort, may include from six hundred to one thousand camels, and from three to five hundred men, carrying goods to the value of £30,000 or £40,000. They arrive twice a year—December to January, and July to August. But smaller caravans of sixty or one hundred camels are arriving constantly all the year round, so that there is an unceasing supply of strangers to be provided for. It is said that from fifty to sixty thousand laden camels reach Timbuctoo every year by different tracks across the Sahara. To the stranger merchants hospitality is offered by the inhabitants, and the understanding is, that for the first three days the entertainment is free, and that on the fourth day payment begins, while the landlord acts also as cicerone and broker. Under the crumbling ruins are many shops richly furnished with the fabrics of Europe and the Soudan and the products of the district. There are certain brokers who devote themselves exclusively to gold, or cattle, or salt, or textiles, and occasionally the richer merchants of Timbuctoo will rig the markets by buying up the 'spot' supplies of the chief articles of commerce just before the caravans or fleets are due. In the time of its greatest prosperity Timbuctoo does not seem to have had a larger resident population than about fifty thousand, and we judge that the present population is about a third of that number.

But now we begin to understand why this comparatively small city has acquired such a reputation through the centuries. The caravans from the north had many weeks and months of weary trudging under a burning sun through a waterless desert. They are nearly dead with thirst and fatigue, when, 'one morning three little black spots show upon the burning horizon. The camels cease to grumble—they roar; and as the three minarets grow clearer, Timbuctoo displays her majestic form. Behold her gardens, her palm-trees, and her gleaming waters! The town is three times as large as it is to-day, and the streets are fresh and cool under the shade of the great trees, and they seethe with the life of its fifty thousand inhabitants. In place of the solitude, abandonment, and misery of to-day, it presents the traveller with a satiety of everything desirable. With abundance of water and shade, it represents the saving help of the Word of God, the charm of the word of man, the wealth of gold and ivory, the sweetness of honey, and a profusion of smiles. I have been told that men went temporarily mad upon seeing it for the first time.'

Such was Timbuctoo, and now that we know the secret of its influence, there is no room left for wonder that tales of its splendour spread even into Europe, and grew as they spread. So wondrous became the tales, that we have grown accustomed to think of the fabulous city of Timbuctoo as something akin to the fabulous country of Prester John. But though exaggerated it was no fable, and even in her present squalor the 'Queen of the Soudan' possesses the elements of a new era of fortune; for her geographical position is unique—on the threshold of the Soudan between the eastern and western Niger, 'two arms which embrace the whole of Western Africa.'

## TOMATOES AND THEIR PRESERVATION IN ITALY.

THE perfection to which the tomato or love-apple as grown in England has been brought is the result of the care and perseverance used in tending it.

The island of Guernsey is famous for its culture of tomatoes, which are sent in large quantities to the Covent Garden market by the steamers which leave the island daily for England. Most of this fruit is grown under glass, and requires constant attention.

This is not the case, however, in Southern Italy, where it grows in splendid profusion, nature being its best gardener. It thrives best in moist ground and in places exposed to the sun. In many a humble balcony boxes of tomatoes flourish, with their long branches trailing down through the rails, heavy with their abundant fruit.

The seed is sown in the month of March, and

when the plants are young they must be frequently watered; but when they begin to flower they are left to themselves till the fruit is ripe. In warm and sheltered places the tomatoes ripen in the month of June, but the height of the season is in July and August. Its name in Italian is 'Pomodoro,' or golden apple, though the colour is certainly not golden, but bright red.

Tradition in Italy says that this was the apple that tempted Eve, because of its beauty. It is one of the chief staples of food among the poor during the summer months, when the fruit can be bought for a soldo per kilo—that is, a halfpenny for two English pounds. The country-people make a good meal off tomatoes and bread; even babies in arms will hold out their little hands for them, tempted by their bright-red colour. Those who can afford it eat them in salad with oil and vinegar.

When the month of August sets in the tomatoes are in full perfection, and this is the time when they are fit for preserving, for they have ripened in the scorching sun, and, as a rule, they have not been exposed to the rain, which seldom falls in any considerable quantity till after the middle of August. Should the fruit have been much exposed to the damp it easily spoils when preserved.

In every house and cottage the preserving of tomatoes is carried on. Terraces, balconies, and even the flat roofs of the houses are half covered with plates containing the deep-red substance. Near the doors of the houses tubs and basins are to be seen filled with it while the process of preserving is going on. There are two kinds of tomatoes: the large ones, which sometimes grow to an immense size, are round, and often somewhat flat; the small ones, which are of a different quality, slightly pear-shaped. The former give a stronger flavour to the preserve, which accordingly goes further; the latter, however, contain more juice, and can therefore be more easily pressed through a sieve. This kind of tomato is also dried for winter use, and bundles are hung from the rafters of the ceilings in the houses of the poor, and also outside against the walls of their balconies, while the weather continues fine. Though the skin is much shrivelled, and they are somewhat tasteless, they retain, in some degree, the flavour of fresh fruit.

After gathering, the tomatoes intended for preserve are spread out for some hours in the sun till the skin has somewhat shrunk. They are then passed through a sieve, so that they may be freed both of seeds and skins. As they contain a large proportion of water, the substance which has been passed through the sieve must be hung in bags, from which the water exudes, and soon a pool of dirty-looking water is formed beneath each bag. Strange to say, it is in no way tinged with red. The mixture which remains in the bags has the consistency of a very thick paste. It is then salted, the proportion being a little less than an ounce of salt to a pound of the preserve. The process now requires that it should be spread on flat plates, exposed to the sun, and stirred from time to time with a wooden spoon, so that the upper part may not form a crust, while underneath it remains soft. It is a picturesque sight when the women are to be seen flitting about on their roofs and terraces, attending to their deep-red preserve, their coloured handkerchiefs flung on their heads to screen them from the rays of the burning sun when it is at its fiercest. In the evening the contents of the various plates are taken in and stirred up together, for if moistened by the night dew the whole would be spoilt. After being exposed to the sun for seven or eight days, the same process being repeated each day, the preserve is finished and placed in jars for winter use.

Though it is used by all classes of persons, it is more necessary to the poor than to the rich, for the latter can make use of the fresh tomatoes preserved in tins. Tomatoes may be tinned whole, as we know from those usually imported into England from America. But in Italy the fruit is usually passed through a sieve, the pulp being then placed in tins, which are immediately soldered down, and then put in boiling water for five minutes. The original flavour is thus retained. The cost of a small tin is half a franc, so it is as a rule beyond the means of the poor. The price of the preserve is seldom more than eightpence a pound, and a little of it goes very far; but those who are thrifty take care to make it for themselves, the cost then being absolutely insignificant.

It is chiefly used by them for flavouring their maccaroni in the winter; in fact, there are few dishes which are not improved by a little tomato preserve, and it finds favour in all classes.

## A SONG IN WINTER.

A ROBIN sings on the leafless spray,
*Hey ho, winter will go!*
Sunlight shines on the desolate way,
And under my feet
I feel the beat
Of the world's heart that never is still,
Never is still
Whatever may stay.

Life out of death, as day out of night,
*Hey ho, winter will go!*
In the dark hedge shall glimmer a light,
A delicate sheen
Of budding green,
Then, silent, the dawn of summer breaks,
As morning breaks,
O'er valley and height.

The tide ebbs out, and the tide flows back;
*Hey ho, winter will go!*
Though heaven be screen'd by a stormy rack,
It rains, and the blue
Comes laughing through;
And, cloud-like, winter goes from the earth,
Goes from the earth
That flowers in his track.

Sing, robin, sing on your leafless spray,
*Hey ho, winter will go!*
Sunlight and song shall shorten the way,
And under my feet
I feel the beat
Of the world's heart that never is still,
Never is still
Whatever may stay.

A. ST JOHN ADCOCK.

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## SOME PECULIAR BEGGARS.

By Sir Richard Tangye, F.R.G.S., &c.

[The Editor has much pleasure in inserting this contribution by the founder of the Cornwall Works, Birmingham, who confesses to having read this *Journal* for the last forty years, and who can recall how he waited eagerly for the different issues of *Chambers's Miscellany*, which he also acknowledges to have read with pleasure and profit to himself. Sir Richard Tangye's own career, which is as interesting as any romance, is unfolded in his autobiography entitled *One and All* (Partridge & Co.). This is a Cornish motto, but the subject-matter is interesting to intelligent readers everywhere.]

According to Charles Lamb, 'the beggar is never out of fashion, he is not required to put on Court mourning. His costume hath undergone less change than the Quaker's, and he is the only man in the universe who is not required to study appearances. The ups and downs of the world, and the prices of stocks and land affect him not, neither do the fluctuations of agricultural or commercial prosperity concern him, or at the worst, but change his customers. He is not expected to become bail or surety for any one, no man troubleth him with questioning his religion or politics; indeed, he is the only free man in the universe.'

But 'the gentle Elia' spoke of only one class or type of beggars. Experience, however, shows that beggars are of various kinds; for, as in the old days there were footpads and mounted highwaymen, so now there are beggars on foot and beggars on horseback. Indeed, I have known them to come on begging expeditions riding in vehicles of various kinds.

On one occasion a man rode up to my house on a tricycle, and, premising that I knew his father, requested me to give him money to buy a horse, as he found cycling too hard work, and his doctor had ordered him to take equestrian exercise.

Another man, dressed as a gentleman, an entire stranger, sent in his card desiring to speak with me. When I appeared he greeted me with the greatest familiarity, as though he had been an intimate acquaintance, and at once proceeded to ask me to lend him a couple of pounds to take him to London. Of course I declined, and on showing him out, I found he had a cab at the door, the charge for which from the nearest cab-stand would have nearly paid his railway fare.

On another occasion a young man came to thank me for having rendered some pecuniary assistance to his brother while on a voyage to Australia, and promising to repay the loan advanced by me. Before leaving, the young gentleman requested and obtained a little loan on his own account, and the I.O.U. which he gave me in due form is, I observe, nearly twenty years old, and is still unredeemed.

Bampfylde Moore Carew was, like myself, a Cornishman, and he was styled the King of the Beggars. Now, if there be kings, there must be princes; and for princes of the begging fraternity, commend me to members of the clerical profession, although, it is only fair to say, they usually beg on behalf of others.

About thirty years ago a clergyman in an agricultural county, who was known to me only by name, applied for a donation to enable him to carry on some useful work among the poor of his parish. I acceded to his request, and every year since—indeed oftener than the year—I have been appealed to in the most urgent terms for contributions, sometimes to enable the good man to get a change of air, sometimes on behalf of the children, and again for the poor old people at Christmas time. Occasionally I would not respond, and then would come further most urgent entreaties; but these second appeals were always addressed by another hand, lest, being recognised, they should be put aside without being read. Wily old parson! To this day we have never met.

On another occasion a member of the profession called upon me at my place of business and

sent in his name. Now experience has taught me that when clergymen visit me in business hours, such visits are not altogether unconnected with financial considerations; and if from any cause I do not intend to give them anything, I usually send a message to that effect, after having ascertained the motive of their call, or else I go to them in the waiting-room instead of asking them into my office. On this occasion I went to the gentleman, and he proceeded to explain his object in calling, and I saw plainly that he expected a considerable sum. But having recently had some very heavy demands upon me for charitable purposes, I gave him only five pounds. My visitor took the money, and having looked at it, was turning away without a word, upon which I said, 'Mr——, you have forgotten to say good-morning.' 'I beg your pardon, Mr Tangye, I thank you very much;' and, like the young man in the parable, he was turning sorrowfully away, when I said, 'Now Mr——, shall I tell you what your thoughts were? You were thinking I ought to have given you fifty pounds at least.' And so he was.

Another time I had left my house and was walking towards the station, on my way to town, when in the distance I saw a clergyman coming towards me on the other side of the road. Instinctively I felt he was coming to my house, and walked quickly on, hoping to avoid him; but, crossing the road, he planted himself in front of me, remarking, 'Mr George Tangye, I believe?' 'No sir, I am not,' said I, and tried to pass him. 'Surely I cannot be mistaken,' he said; but I assured him he was, and pretended to be indignant at his want of belief in my disavowal. 'It is very strange,' he said; 'I know your face perfectly, having often seen you on the platform of the town-hall; but stay'—a bright idea occurring to him—'you are his brother?' This time I was fairly caught, but tried to get away on the plea that I barely had time to catch the train. 'Oh,' said my tormentor, 'here is an omnibus going to town, and I will go with you.' And he did, and got a subscription from me on behalf of the temperance society connected with his church, which was situated in a miserably poor part of the town. I continued the subscription for some years, but at the next general election my reverend temperance friend became one of the principal supporters and advocates of a brewer candidate for the representation of his district in parliament, and I withdrew my subscription, advising him to try and get it from the brewer.

I once received a communication inviting me to give to a fund for the extinction of the debt on a chapel in Cornwall, the appeal being signed by three persons styling themselves the 'Begging Committee.'

As a rule begging letters are not pleasant reading; but the most objectionable are those from persons who vigorously protest that they are not begging—indeed, that they would not accept charity; but being in want of temporary assistance, they would like a loan, at fair interest, purely as a business transaction. As a rule such people never intend to repay. But here is a man with no scruples on the point—he will either take money as a gift or as a loan, and this is what he says: 'I am a young man, twenty-five, wanting a start in life, which I can get if I can obtain a loan or gift of sixty pounds at once. I would rather borrow than beg, but do not wish you to think I would insult you (!). Hoping I shall not appeal in vain for a start in life, and asking for an immediate answer, I am,' &c.

Another man writes asking my help in clearing off the debt on the chapel, the trustees having got into arrears because 'the sermons do not come up to the requirements.'

A schoolmaster, who has fallen on evil times, asks me to lend him ten pounds to enable him to publish twelve pieces of music, which are 'sure to take.' He says, 'I am a Liberal, but have been staggered because of Mr Gladstone's sympathy with Bradlaugh, who is a very clever man, and would be a star in parliament if he were converted. Now, a gentleman in your position could easily have a day set apart in two or three places of worship for special and earnest prayer for Bradlaugh's conversion, which prayers may be effectual. Hoping to receive a favourable reply,' &c.

A man, describing himself as a 'monumental sculptor' in a considerable way of business, writes: 'The writer of the enclosed letter is a half-sister of mine, but I know little of her, as for years she has been an invalid. I am sorry to say, she seems a poor, thoughtless, helpless creature. I ask you in her name if her case comes within your kind benevolence?'

'A Workman' asks me to send him money to enable him to buy a pair of boots; but his letter was so saturated with tobacco that I declined, telling him if he could afford to buy tobacco he could afford to buy boots.

Here is a pleasant note from a worthy clergyman. 'When you kindly sent me a contribution towards the debt on my church, you were good enough to promise a further sum if I did not succeed in clearing the debt before Christmas. I am happy in being able to tell you that I shall not require further help, having received a cheque for the balance due, and a little over.'

An old gentleman, applying to me for a loan of twenty-five pounds, said he knew he should never be able to repay me; 'but,' said he, 'the furniture in my bedroom is worth more than that sum, and it is my own property, and I will give you a memorandum to that effect, so that when I am dead you can claim it.'

Some years ago a firm of auctioneers wrote to my solicitors informing them that they were commissioned to sell a property adjoining one of the public parks, and suggesting that the matter should be put before me in the hope that I should buy it, and thus 'add another to my many bounties to the public.'

> Give, give, be always giving;
> Who gives not, is not living.
> The more you give,
> The more you live.

Thus saith the leech's daughter.

Gratitude is not always shown for help rendered, but here is a genuine example of it, although expressed in peculiar phraseology: 'The humble petition of T—— O—— showeth that your petitioner his ever greatfull for your benevolence threw the sick vissiter in my illness and as on dutey bound shall ever pray.'

Various are the forms of begging. A good woman once sent me what she called 'an alliterative carol,' which ended with the following choice lines:

'Dear Sirs,

> If you think this carol a good 'un
> Please send a trifle for a plum-pudden.
> For Tangye Bros. a hearty cheer
> Xmas blessings and Happy New Year.'

Sometimes very curious reasons are given by persons seeking assistance. On one occasion a gentleman with a very Irish name asked me to help him, so that he might be able 'to form an evening class for the teaching of Gaelic in Birmingham.'

An 'Old Man of the Sea' once tried to get some money from me under the following circumstances. Being at Boscastle, I went on board a ship and had a little conversation with the captain. Next day he sailed, and a few days after I received a letter from him, in which he said he had come into collision with a ship, causing damage to the extent of eighty pounds. Would I help him, although a stranger? The ship was at Newport, so I asked my agent there to see the captain, at the same time telling him the man was a stranger to me. My agent asked the old salt why he had applied to me, having only seen me once; to which he replied he thought I had a *fork-out-able sort of face!*

I have looked in the Trades Directory in vain for the business of my next correspondent in want of assistance. Here is an extract from his letter:

'I am a young man, twenty-four years of age, a good scholar, and bearing a good character. My present occupation is that of a *translator* of boots and shoes, that is, a maker-up of second-hand boots and shoes, and I assure you, sir, it is an inconceivably poor one'—which, indeed, I can readily believe.

A gentleman once wrote me asking for money to enable him to buy some books which were necessary in order to prepare him for the ministry in the Church of England. I explained that I was a Quaker, and recommended him to persons belonging to his own denomination; to which he replied: 'I do not appeal to you for help as a member of the Church of England, but as a member of the invisible Church of Christ.'

But it is not always *money* that is asked for, many applicants being quite willing to receive relief in 'kind'—as for example, I was once asked by a man to supply him with a 'peg-leg;' on the same day another begged that I would give him a hat! and on another occasion a young woman asked me to provide her with a tooth!

It is said that 'Freedom's battle once begun' must needs be continued 'from sire to son,' and so it seems to be with beggars; if you once yield to their solicitations, it becomes very difficult to shake them off, for they appear to look upon your charity in the light of a vested right which you are not entitled to discontinue without their consent. I have recently received a letter from a man to whom I have occasionally given relief, and this is what he says:

'I am awkwardly situated in respect to a personal matter which I scarcely know how to explain. . . . I then had a good head of hair, but since that time it has ceased to grow, and for some years I have had to wear an artificial scalp, which is now withered, broken, and so worn out and shrunk, that I can scarcely keep it on my head. It has become absolutely necessary to buy a new one if I am to retain my work. The person who makes the article is—— of——. It must be well made and exact, and I shall have to go to London to be fitted, and wait at least a day to get it right. I ought to go up on Saturday, but I have not money enough. The article itself will cost quite two guineas.'

But where is the necessity for this scalping expedition? When the horse-thief was about to be condemned to death for his crime, he was asked by the judge what he had to say before sentence was pronounced. 'A man must live, my lord,' said he. 'I see no necessity,' said the judge, and proceeded with his duty. Nature has given many of us this tonsure, but we do not think it necessary to procure new scalps, a neat black skullcap answering all requirements.

A young man, writing to me from the Black Country, informs me that 'Poverty is a relative term and depends upon the constitution of men's minds. It is true I have always had enough to eat, and have never borrowed money or been in debt, but what of that? I feel *that* within me that makes me miserable until I have seen Niagara, and St Peter's at Rome. I understand music thoroughly, theory and practice, but have never seen an opera! I want to attend the concerts in the Birmingham Town Hall, and for years have *dreamed* of the "Festival." I long to hear the great organ of St Paul's and to attend a concert at the Albert Hall. But these are all forbidden pleasures, and this, sir, to a man like me constitutes poverty.' And after reading his letter, strange to say, I did not feel inclined to help him.

Here is a somewhat peculiar application. A man writes to me as follows: 'Sir, Having a whife (sic), who I may say, can neither walk nor talk, may I beg of you to help me to keep Her and myself from the Workhouse?'

I have before shown that some people are quite willing to accept assistance in 'kind,' but here is an individual who would prefer to take it in cash. The secretary of a village reading room, having applied to me for support, I offered to supply the room with the *Daily News*, but in acknowledging my offer he said he would prefer to have it in money, 'if it were all the same to me!'

'A widower with seven children' informs me that he is desirous of marrying his deceased wife's sister, but that she (prudent woman) declines to do so unless he can obtain a situation with two hundred a year; would I help him to such a berth?

A peculiarly shabby kind of begging is in vogue amongst certain manufacturers and merchants in some large towns, who are not ashamed to write to subscribers to hospitals and other charitable institutions, begging for tickets for people in their employment, on the plea that they do not subscribe themselves! In such cases I invariably point out that these applicants can have all the privileges possessed by myself, by subscribing on their own account.

As a matter of course, the number of applications for assistance to enable inventors to develop

their 'ideas' is legion, and I will content myself with giving one example in the words of my correspondent, who says: 'Having made an extraordinary wonderful discovery, and have succeeded in perfecting an Apperatus I have invented for the Discovering Lost Vessels, and observing by the papers that you are interested in the promotion of the Arts and Sciences, has induced me to hope that you will pardon the liberty I take as a working man in addressing these few lines to you in the hope that you will find the means to enable me to bring my invention out. I will now describe what my invention will accomplish; by its application even when all souls on board may Perish in the Wreck. Authentic information can be obtained of all future Wrecks, and the Certain Fate ascertained, also the Cause and date of the Disaster, and the place where the ill-fated vessell has gone Down, so that all valuable articles, monies, &c., may now be recovered, as also the Vessell if found not to be too much damaged.' My correspondent informs me that he has been in communication with the Admiralty, but that they will do nothing, and concludes with this postscript: 'I am informed by a friend of mine that when successfully brought out it would realise by Royalty alone, at least £100,000 a year.' That invention still remains in an undeveloped state.

How considerate some people are! Here is a tempting offer from an unknown correspondent:

'Dear Sir, I venture to suggest that you should appoint me to be your Almoner; I know you are a very busy man, but I have an abundance of time on my hands, and have been accustomed to dispensing the charity of others. Hoping to hear from you.'

So much for beggars of the middle and working classes: the ordinary street beggar belongs to an entirely separate and independent organisation. He has a language and a system of his own by which he informs his fellows of the 'rateable value' of towns and of the dispositions of individuals living on his line of march. Official investigations have shown that begging has been the profession of the same family for several generations in succession, and although they always protest they are anxious to work 'if they can get it,' a very casual examination of their hands reveals the fact that they never have used them in manual labour. Many of them manage to live uncommonly well. A beggar once called at my sister's house and declared, with a whine, that he was starving; my sister offered him the half of a loaf, but this he spurned and said in anything but a whining tone, 'I'm not *bread* hungry!'

A few years since a tramp was brought before the magistrates at Falmouth charged with begging, and was discharged on his undertaking to leave the town. Before leaving the dock this beggar was asked by a magistrate how long he had been in the town, and replied that he had been there three days. 'And how much do you consider Falmouth to be worth for your business?' 'Well,' said the fellow, 'I consider Falmouth is worth fifteen shillings if well peeked (picked); and I ought to have had another day.'

We don't usually look for 'poetry' in Government Reports, but in Mr Fleming's Report to the Local Government Board for 1894–95 the following stanza occurs; it was copied from the wall of a vagrant ward by the inspector:

'Here lies a poor beggar who always was tired,
For he lived in a world where too much is required;
Friends, grieve not for me that Death doth us sever,
For I am going to do nothing for ever and ever.'

A very objectionable method of begging is that adopted by secretaries and others on behalf of various charitable institutions. Their plan is to look through the subscription lists of other charities, and to persecute the more liberal contributors. Of course this is the easiest way, but a more just method would be to use such lists of contributors for the purpose of seeing what names are *absent* which should be there, and then to follow such people up until they recognised their duty. Of course this method involves labour, and invites unpleasant rejoinders from persons unaccustomed to giving; but, if persevered in, it would in many cases be productive of much good by opening the hearts of many who have been content hitherto to admire generosity in others, and who have never felt that there is as much joy in giving as in 'getting.' 'Beggars' of this description would do well to bear in mind that although there are many who give because they feel it their *duty* to give, there are perhaps more who give because it is the custom or fashion to do so, and when the latter class find themselves flooded with applications for money as a result of their liberality in a particular cause in which they are interested, they become disgusted and close their hearts and purses together.

It would be possible to extend these experiences *ad infinitum*, but I will close with an anecdote I once read of a rich man who too readily complied with demands similar to those I have described, and who came to grief and poverty in consequence. His friends made a collection on his behalf, and he spent a portion of the money in causing a monument to be prepared for his own grave. On the monument was a figure holding a 'chopper' in its hand, and this was the inscription beneath:

'He who gives away all before he is dead,
Let him take this chopper and chop off his head.'

## MY KAFFIR.

By John Arthur Barry.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAPTER I.

An ideal night in the Indian Ocean, with the stars looking as big as saucers, throbbing away up there in the blue from one horizon to the other; and the sea, a wondrous mass of iridescence through which the sharp fore-foot of the Cape Liner shears, sometimes with a noise like the tinkling of numberless little glass bells, at others with a hoarse rush that casts great blobs and flakes of living light into the air, to fall again in radiant showers of opalescent beauty into the creaming mass that glows and seethes under the bows.

The wind was right aft, and the fore-staysail, hauled down, made a comfortable nest on the fok'sle-head. In the folds of this I lay back and smoked, gazing now on the wonderful spectacle outboard, now up at the big lamp that hung from the fore-topmast-stay, looking mean

and yellow, by contrast, under the pure starlight, and wondered mightily the while whether I should ever find my Kaffir.

In vain I had attempted to raise a loan upon him in Melbourne, where, after a series of mischances, I had, one winter, found myself remarkably hard up.

What people I knew—very few—who had any money laughed cheerfully at my proffered security, and refused to invest. Even those who had no money—the great majority—laughed also. With one exception; he was a newspaper-man—at least he wasn't permanently on any staff—but was what is vaguely known as a 'literary contributor.' And he paid my passage in that White Star boat and gave me a few shillings over, leaving himself and his wife and family pretty well cleaned out until pay-night.

But Osborne had the spice of romance, accentuated in his case by dabbling in psychomancy, odic forces, and such stuff. Also, just then, he had constant employment, along the wharves, lumping cargo at one shilling per hour, and sixpence overtime. And he was, into the bargain, expecting a boom in the literary-contributor business. Evidently that was the only thing that made him uneasy at leaving Australia. He was afraid the boom might commence during his absence, and when he would be unable to take advantage of it.

'Anyhow, there's "copy" in the business, old man, if there's nothing else,' said he, as he ran over from the 'Loch Lee,' alongside which famous clipper he was slinging bales of wool, to say good-bye. 'Still, if I were you, in spite of the odic premonitions you have told me so much about, I wouldn't be too sanguine with regard to dropping across that nigger. Five years, you know, is a good time to have neglected him. Still, I have hopes. So long! And good luck!' Yes, it was almost five years to the day since, weary and disheartened by a run of bad fortune, I had come in with a prospecting party from Bechuanaland, and, perforce, taken a job with a Dutch farmer not far from where Johannesburg was, even then, growing into a city on the Rand of White Water.

My boss wasn't a bad sort of fellow—for a Boer. But if I had not been able to speak a little Dutch, I should never have stood a show of getting work from him. After a few months, it happened that he and some others made a long trek down to the Bay (Port Elizabeth). I went, too, and was glad of the chance, for I was getting tired of life on the grass veldt; tired of scabby mutton and square gin, and of having nobody to talk to but 'Aunts' and 'Uncles,' and big-headed young Dutch bucks full of gas and blow at the expense of 'Britishers.'

Camping one night on the Vaal River, a Kaffir, old and evidently very ill, came up and begged for something to eat.

But the Boers only swore at him for a black *schepsel;* and one of them gave the poor wretch a cut over the legs with his bullock-whip that made him jump again. Then he went away and lay down under a great, shady, broad-leaved tree some three hundred yards from our camp. After supper I carried him a quart of tea and something to eat.

But he was too far gone to do anything but sip the warm sweet stuff; eat he could not. He, however, was very grateful.

'You are a good man, *Bass*,' said he. 'Not like those Dutch *aasvogels* (vultures) over yonder. I am a Swazi, and thought to die in my own land, and lo, I die where I lie. But before I go I will make you rich. Never mouthfuls of drink shall be paid for like these. Listen, my son! Two moons ago I worked in the Company's Kraal, and dug for the white stones that shine in the dark when the white man polishes them, and are worth many cattle and many guns.

It came to pass that on a day I found four—four, mark you—all at once. Two were big as the biggest mealie-ears, and two were bigger again. Close beside each other they lay in the nest that they were born in at the making of the world, and there, my son, I found them, even I, old Goza, whom the Pale Man (death) hath gripped. And as I picked them up, so, one after the other, I swallowed them. And now they light up, may be, the darkness of my belly. But they are sharp and cold, I feel them even now!' And a grin passed like a sudden flicker of firelight into a dark corner across the wrinkled leathery old face as he patted his naked stomach.

'Ay,' he continued, as I stared at him, then gave him another mouthful of tea, 'I swallowed them. And high though the fence and watchful the guards, I escaped from the big Kraal. Take them, my son. Would that I had never seen them; very heavy they be in the new nest that they have made for themselves. Hearken! when I go, which will happen when the first light shines across the veldt behind yonder koppie,' motioning towards a peculiar flat-topped hill some quarter of a mile away, 'and the *aasvogels* have laagered-up and gone, turn back from them, and come here, and cut into me quickly, and take out the four white stones—stay, you may feel them even now!' And he seized my hand and pressed it hard against his stomach, and peered into my face with eyes fast losing their life and fire.

But I could feel nothing, and I said so.

'I can!' replied he, smiling grimly.

'Bury me where I lie, white man,' he continued. 'See, I chose the spot clear of roots, so that water may not follow them into the grave and give the jackals food before their time. Bury me as I sit, and facing the sun, so that my spirit may walk straight to its own land. Promise me this thing, my son, and on a day, not too distant, it shall be very well with thee.'

I promised the poor old chap of course, and he seemed as pleased as Punch; and as I left him he started humming a strange sort of chant. Listening for awhile, I went on, and turned into my hammock swung under the disselboom of our wagon.

Knowing, as I did, that almost all Kaffirs are liars of high degree, I didn't feel inclined to put much faith in the diamond business. Moreover, I had no wish to lose my passage, as assuredly would be the case if I lagged behind to dissect my friend. Also, he had chosen the most awkward possible time in which to die—just

as everybody was on the alert to inspan and prepare for the day's trek.

But perhaps the heaviest argument of all against the likelihood of the thing consisted in the fact of my having seen the fence he said he had climbed—the big barrier that the illicit diamond buyers had forced the De Beers Company to erect around their shoal of amalgamated mines—fourteen feet of galvanised iron with three barbed wires strained along the top of it. Why, a lizard couldn't have scaled it, much less a worn-out old Kaffir!—we call them all Kaffirs there, Pondos, Basutos, Bechuanas, Griquas, and the rest. However, as I turned over and fell asleep, I determined to at least go across in the morning, and if he had pegged out, as he said he would, bury him as I promised, diamonds or no diamonds.

I slept late, and was only awakened by old Oom Hendricks shaking me. '*Almachte!*' he growled, 'Arise, and don't let the blessed sun of the Lord God roast you alive!'

Until after breakfast there was no chance to slip away; for, like the others, I had my share of camp duty to perform.

But at last I managed to get over to the tree. Sure enough, there lay my Kaffir, already stiffening, with the flies beginning to swarm in black clouds about him.

However, going to the wagon, I got a spade and a pick, and despite the jeers and laughter of the Boers, when they saw what my intentions were, I planted the poor old beggar pretty deep, huddled up, and with his face towards Swaziland. Just at that time I didn't feel inclined to do any more towards proving my legacy.

Perhaps, as I trampled the earth upon him, some faint notion possessed me of returning in the future; for I took bearings from the big tree, noticing especially, as I did so, a curious triangular patch of white stone near the summit of the koppie.

But in Algoa Bay I got a ship and came across to Australia, and as the years passed the remembrance of the incident grew weaker; still, strange to say, at long intervals a sort of feeling would momentarily seize upon me, taking full possession of my mind, and urging me vehemently to go and dig up what was waiting for me under the old tree.

It was a haunting sort of sensation, quite too vague to define, a kind of small pressing inward voice that kept on telling me that I was a fool for neglecting such a chance of fortune. But as I noticed that the phenomenon generally occurred when I was hard up, I put it down to natural causes. Osborne, however, was otherwise impressed, ascribed it to 'a reaction of psychic will-matter,' and wrote a paper on it.

Indeed, if it had not been for that kindly enthusiast I hardly think I should ever have been bound Africa-ward to look for a five-year-old dead Kaffir.

And as I lay on the fok'sle-head and smoked, and thought of what an awfully forlorn sort of hope it was, growing more forlorn and more doubtful with every gliding heave of the big steamer that brought the testing of it nearer. I got up, and, knocking the ashes out of my pipe on the capstan, called myself a fool and several other things. It was the purpose with which I had started away that appeared so much more idiotic here, within eight hundred miles of Cape Agulhas, than it had done on Sandridge pier.

Amongst the saloon passengers was a Mr Johnston, formerly a free-selector in New South Wales. He had emigrated many years ago to South Africa; and there, after some time spent in hunting and digging, he finally settled on a large farm in the Transvaal, where in those early days good land was to be had for half-a-crown an acre.

He was a big, jolly, frank, outspoken man of about fifty-eight, a widower, with one child, a pretty girl of eighteen, who accompanied him. And he was now returning to his adopted country with a fine selection of stud rams and ewes for his flocks up there on the high veldt of the African tableland. In my former wanderings I had often heard his name mentioned as a 'suspect,' and an object of dislike to the Boer government at Pretoria. Indeed during the war he was more than once nearly shot out of hand, not only for his opposition to being 'commandeered,' but for the remarkably free way in which he aired his opinions on the subject of Boer and Basuto—Dutch liege though he nominally was.

Happening once to attract his notice by something I said respecting the sheep, whilst I watched him feeding them, we used often after that to have a yarn together.

With pretty Mary Johnston I also exchanged at odd times a word or two when she brought for'ard dainties for her pet-ewe. And one day, in very rough weather, the vessel, diving, took a tremendous sea over her fok'sle-head, and Mary, venturing alone along the deck, was caught by the rushing torrent, and swept like a feather into the main-rigging. Luckily, to escape a wetting, I had jumped upon one of the main-hatch sheep-pens. It was a long bound from there into the rigging; but in those days I was young and smart, and I managed it just as the weight of water was proving too much for her. Another minute and she would have let go and been carried overboard. It really was a narrow shave, so narrow that the skipper, watching from the bridge, grew pale and trembled, thinking that all was over, as his fingers pushed the telegraph to 'Stop.'

Old Johnston didn't say much. But I felt that if I should want a friend in Africa, I had one ready-made—perhaps a couple.

'Come up and see us, and stay with us,' said he, some days afterwards. 'I've got two places, you know, now. But I'm mostly at the old one, near Ermelo. Come whenever it suits you, and I'll promise you shan't be sorry; I've got to take these jumbucks right round by Durban in the coasting steamer, or I'd say come at once. But there's only Kaffirs at home. However, remember you're expected sooner or later, and the sooner the better.'

And when Mary shook hands with me, and timidly seconded her father's invitation, there was a look of shy pleasure and earnestness in her brown eyes that sent a curious thrill to my heart.

And presently, whilst we rounded the Green Cape Light, and glided slowly into full view

of the white houses lying cuddled up under the shadow of the mighty rock, old Johnston came for'ard again, and asked me point-blank if fifty pounds would be of any use, just as a loan, for a few months, or a year or so. Because, if that should happen to be the case, I had 'only to say the word, my boy.'

Of course they knew I wasn't quite a Rothschild, travelling steerage. But I had no intention of allowing anybody to discover how really hard up I was, least of all the Johnstons. So I merely thanked him for his kind offer, and said that I had enough for present purposes; which was strictly true — only the present was limited.

Curiously enough, when once ashore, I didn't seem to be in any hurry to seek the spot where lay my fortune. And, in spite of several recurrences of the impalpable sensation before alluded to, I stayed pottering about the town.

At last, in that snug hostel, the 'George,' I one day met an old mate who was just returning to the diggings after the inevitable spree. He knew, so he said, of some alluvial up Rustenburg way, and pressed me to accompany him.

So I went. The place turned out bare tucker. But, after a lot of knocking about, we did happen to drop on a patch that gave us a hundred pounds each by the time it was worked out.

Then Jack Williams, my companion, got a bad touch of fever, and we both cleared off to Johannesburg for a spell.

Being in funds again, I had quite forgotten my mouldering Kaffir, lying all the while not very far away, just on the edge of shade, and clear of root-channels, waiting patiently with his face towards Swaziland.

Then, one afternoon, returning from the hospital, where I had been to see how Williams was getting on, whom should I run against but Johnston.

The first salutations over. 'Come along,' said he, 'I'm off home to-morrow to the new place near Klerksdorp. Mary's there; and she'll be glad to see you. Come you must!'

For a while I hesitated. Williams I knew was going back to Capetown directly he got better; so that really there was nothing to keep me. Then I thought of Mary, and consented.

Early next morning we started in a buggy drawn by two capital horses.

During the second day's journey the country began to look changed, although it was faintly familiar; and I presently realised that we had struck very nearly into the old track over which I travelled with the Boers more than five years ago.

But so great were the alterations in the landscape, that for some time I was doubtful. Everywhere the ground had been rooted up by prospectors; then, after a bit, the mullock heaps disappeared, giving way to farms and fences dotted over the level grass veldt, with here and there plantations of blue gum saplings.

'Lots of colonials round these parts,' said my companion, pointing to the snug homesteads with a smile of satisfaction. 'We've secured amongst us most of this district—bought it from the shiftless Boers with their scabby flocks and lazy, dirty ways. No (in answer to my question), there's no gold been found, so far. These old shafts, back yonder, are where they've been looking for a lost lead from one of the big mines at the Rand—the Geldenhuis. But apparently it didn't come this way.'

## MINIATURE MACHINERY.

THE summer visitors who go to admire such stupendous works as the Forth Bridge, or the Manchester Canal, are justly struck by the vast magnitude of the operations, but few of them are aware that equal, and sometimes superior skill is shown at the other end of the scale. The one needs to be viewed through a telescope, the other through a microscope, before one can judge of its proportions and harmony.

Owing to the great increase in manufacturing operations conducted by machinery, we have of late years seen many models of steam-engines of various kinds in the shop windows: locomotives that will run on a table, or on the floor, dragging a tiny train of carriages and wagons; little steamboats that will make their way through the water as fast as one can walk; or little factory engines that may be attached to other machinery such as pumps or circular saws. These models have all the necessary fittings to enable them to do their work; but they are not *models* in the strict sense of the term, but rather miniature engines. By 'models' is understood an exact reproduction in miniature of something carried out on a large scale. In many cases, however, the model is made first from the designs projected on paper, and then it serves occasionally to correct defects hitherto unnoticed. Such models are very difficult indeed of execution, and exceedingly costly; hence they are confined either to the show-room or drawing-room of the engineer, or to the glass case of a museum.

Talking of museums, since the destruction of the Patents Museum at Washington by fire, there are two collections only where these models may be seen to perfection. One is the School of Arts and Trades in Paris; the other is in the South Kensington Museum in London. The latter is now supreme, thanks to the liberality of the heads of great industries and to the kindness of private individuals. This collection owes its origin to the painstaking ability of the late Mr Bennett Woodcroft, formerly librarian of the Patent Office. Thrust at first into a wretched leaky shed, the curiosities were packed away in such close order that, literally, there was not room to turn round—yet these overcrowded cases held the germs of all that has made England prosperous. They have now, however, been removed into well-lighted galleries that, I suppose, are as good as the British public will ever wish for in its national buildings.

There may be seen the engine of the boat that went by steam on Dalswinton lake a century ago, and a model of the famous *Charlotte Dundas*, made from fragments of the old steamer. But the chief attraction is the number of models of our great ocean steamships and

men-of-war. These models are all built to a definite scale of proportion, and down to the minutest external fitting, every detail is faithfully reproduced in its exact dimensions. Perhaps the most striking exhibit is a series of models representing the development of the transatlantic steamer, from the small, low-powered ship with which the service was commenced to the flying palace of to-day. This magnificent display is the contribution of one company alone, and the cost must be reckoned by thousands.

The making of these models is a business of itself, and is in the hands of a select few who have worked hard for the position they occupy. They receive high pay for their labours. The models just referred to have cost, one with another, seven hundred and fifty pounds each. That is not at all an unusual price to pay for a perfect exhibition model of a modern steamer, when executed in the first-class style affected by the professional model makers. In one case that I know of, no less than fourteen hundred pounds were spent on a model of a battleship, with the structure on which she was built and launched. The reader may well wonder why this immense cost should be incurred for a mere model, and why they should come to so much money. The answer to the first is that a beautiful model is a good paying advertisement, and is the best possible method of bringing any line of steamers well before the public, and giving them a favourable impression. I suppose most of my readers have been on board a steamer, when in the docks handling cargo, and they have in that case been somewhat astonished at her condition—the decks in the last extreme of dirtiness, water trickling every way, chains, ropes, and spars in seemingly hopeless confusion, and the whole in such a state of chaos and hurry that a landsman has small chance of getting from one end to the other of the boat without damage either to person or to clothes. All that is rectified before the ship gets to sea, and when she is once fairly under way there is not a more spotless or orderly thing in creation than a ship. Talk about woman's tidiness indeed! she needs to go to sea to learn what the word means. Now the model is in the state that exists at sea—everything in its proper place, and not a speck of dust to be seen anywhere; the decks white as snow, and fit for fairies to dance on. That is the use of the model; and now as to its cost. A great part of the details have just as much work spent on them as the originals, and the modellers have to work from the same plans as are used to erect the ship herself. There is no possibility of rectifying any error; the slightest mistake compels the defective part to be thrown away, and hence the utmost care must be used by the highly-trained men who do this work, lest one careless touch should condemn the whole.

So much for the models of ships. They are very beautiful to look at; yet, beyond advertisement, they cannot be used in any way. But there is another branch of the subject in which even more money is spent—the production of working models of engines and machinery. These differ greatly from the products of the toy-shop and the instrument maker, whose engines are made in the simplest possible manner. They have to be at the same time working models and models made to a scale of proportion—usually some fraction of an inch in the model represents a foot in the original: every part, every bolt, nut, screw, and so forth, must be in exactly the same proportion. Now, the production of a model that shall fulfil both these conditions—a scale model that is also a working model—is a task of supreme difficulty. As this difficulty, however, may not be intelligible to the reader, I will endeavour to explain it by saying that when some of the working parts are reduced below a certain size, they will not operate at all; and there are only two means of surmounting this obstacle—either to make the parts big enough as the toy-shop maker does, disregarding proportions altogether, or to execute them in such superlative manner as to reduce to the minimum the great drawback of friction. There are, however, some parts of a steam-engine that the toy-shop maker is compelled to leave out entirely, as their cost would be quite prohibitive. The actual number of these quite perfect models is very small indeed. They cost nearly as much as the big engines do; for there is the same amount of work to do, and it is of a much higher priced labour than is used in the large engine. The only reduction is that less metal is used, and less metal has to be removed from the forgings and castings to finish them. For my own part, I only know of about twenty of these absolutely perfect models, and their cost ranges from twenty to three thousand seven hundred pounds each, so the reader will easily see that their cost is prohibitive. One cost twelve thousand pounds odd; but that was quite exceptional. These models, however, have really no use; they cannot be used as advertisements to catch custom, because the general public does not understand them, and cannot afford to buy them.

There is, however, another class of models which are made expressly for the purpose of obtaining orders for the machinery they represent. I refer to the models of newly-patented inventions, in which a beautifully-made working model is quite an essential part of the business man's outfit. This also is a branch of work by itself, and is very well paid; for it involves more head-work than the others we have dealt with. Suppose a man invents a magazine gun and wants to sell some. No man can be expected to wade through a descriptive pamphlet, or a patent specification that looks like the Book of Numbers spelt backwards; but if the inventor has a working model in his pocket, he can whip it out, and show his customer at a glance what the peculiar features of his invention are. I think the idea is sufficiently clear from what I have said. Some of these models are made to go into the waistcoat pocket, and nearly all of them are made so small as to go into a little hand-bag. They have this advantage also that the curse of Babel does not affect them. Even if traveller and customer do not understand a word of each other's language, a few moments' dumb-show in operating the model makes everything clear.

Hence these models are much in demand, and are very valuable investments to a business man. This class of work used to be done entirely by watchmakers. So far as workmanship went, their models were very good; but they had not the knowledge of practical engineering to enable them to correctly follow out the ideas of an inventor—which, to put it mildly, are rather unintelligible, except, in the rare case that he is himself an engineer.

That it became a distinct trade is due chiefly to an accident that befell a man engaged in a large engineer's establishment in London some forty years ago. He was a very highly skilled mechanic, and was entrusted with very delicate work at good pay. But he had the misfortune to be attacked by a partial paralysis which deprived him entirely of the use of his legs, while it left his arms quite unimpaired. From that time he was confined to his chair; so, like a brave man, he determined to devote himself to such engineering work as was possible in that state. Even the small work he had formerly been accustomed to handle was now out of the question, and he therefore turned his attention to miniature models—I ought rather to say microscopic, for it was impossible to make out their parts without a magnifier. The work he turned out would need a volume to describe it. His masterpieces were two models—the engines of the *Warrior* ironclad, and the *Great Britain* steamship, ship and engines. The first-named model was certainly the most tiny pair of engines the world has seen, or probably will see. They stood on a threepenny piece, and that same coin balanced them in the scales. Every detail was there in its exact proportion, and it worked at a most amazing speed when simply blown with the breath.

The other model was equally unique as being the smallest steamship ever seen. The ship was eight inches long, and its screw propeller was scarcely larger than a pea. Its whole weight was an ounce and a quarter when ready for sea. The engines weighed less than half an ounce. It was a sight to see that tiny ship ploughing her way across a wash-hand basin!

Another man, eminent in this field of engineering, was Jabez James. One of his *chefs d'œuvre* has been frequently exhibited. It was a model of an engineer's factory. The whole was about a yard and a half square. It was not finished in the style of his other work, and therefore those of my readers who have seen it must not judge of his workmanship by that. It was one of the earliest of the drop-a-penny-in-the-slot machines that are now so common: but it went one better, for it went for a halfpenny. There were holes, however, for other coins up to half-a-sovereign. Well, you dropped in your money, and the main engine started at once, driving the whole range of shafting, and setting in motion the vast array of lathes, planers, slotters, shapers, and drills, even to the grindstone. The time it kept in motion depended on the amount of money you put in. The model was first exhibited at the International Exhibition of 1862, and subsequently it was placed in the Patents Museum, where it was a never-failing attraction to engineers as well as to mere sight-seers. The children, of course, were delighted with it, and they used to put in their own small coins to make it work. Latterly, I saw it again in the South Kensington Museum, but the essential part of it was removed for some strange reason, known only to the authorities in charge. I believe the money deposited went to Mr James and his family, and I am very sure nobody grudged the outlay; for I well recollect the pleasure it gave me when I was a little boy, and dropped my penny in the slot. What has become of the model since then is more than I know.

## WAS I A COWARD?

### I.

Was I a coward? Reader, you shall hear my story, and judge for yourself.

Before describing the supreme moment of my life, when my courage was tried to the uttermost, it is necessary to the right understanding of my tale to give a brief account of my early days.

During childhood I was weak and sickly, passing through several severe illnesses, the consequence of which was that I did not go to school till some two years after the usual age; and all this time I had been much coddled at home, and carefully kept from seeing anything of the rough side of life. Perhaps this accounts for my great weakness, which was an absolute horror of fighting or rough usage of any sort—even an unkind or harsh word would make me miserable for a day or two afterwards.

With this weakness strong upon me, I was sent to a rough-and-tumble old-fashioned grammar school, where the boys had to fight hard and often before they could command any respect or peace; and life was hardly endurable for those poor boys who, like myself, dreaded the ordeal of battle. Added to this, we were half-starved, and all our pocket-money used to go in buying food, chiefly black puddings (reader, do you know what they are?) to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

With all my fear of fighting, there was no fear of danger in other ways. If there was any daring thing to be done, incurring risk to limbs or even life, I was amongst the foremost to undertake it. For instance, we used to be kept carefully within bounds, and were never allowed outside the playground, so our only chance of procuring any extra food was by getting out of one of the bedroom windows at night, when everybody else had gone to bed, and going up into the town. To do this, we had to walk along a narrow shoot, and then with the help of an old vine, climb down a descending pipe. This I could do without the least fear, though a slip at the top meant almost certain death. But when it came to fighting, it was quite a different matter! I would do everything I possibly could to avoid it; and when forced to fight, as I sometimes was, I fought badly, and always got the worst of it. In justice to myself, I must say that I believe

my dislike to giving punishment was quite as great as my dread of receiving it. As a result, my first two years at school were years of misery; still during that rough time health and strength increased, and as I became very good at all games, particularly cricket and football, I lived down the bad name I had got for want of pluck.

Strange to say, with all my fear of fighting, as I grew up, my one great desire was to become a soldier. I studied with avidity all the books which told of the great soldiers and sailors of the early part of the century. Wellington, Napoleon, Nelson, Napier, Cochrane, and the like were my heroes; and my parents, after a time, finding I was bent upon entering the army, took me away from the old grammar school, and gave me a military education, and in due time I was gazetted to an infantry regiment.

It was the year 1852. Europe and the world in general seemed to be in a state of profound peace, and as far as man could judge, war was never farther away than it seemed then. Consequently, no fear of my ability to perform well a soldier's part in battle marred my joy at donning Her Majesty's uniform, and I set to work hard to learn all the details of a soldier's life, and even studied tactics and strategy on my own account.

As there was no fighting to be done, and as I was good at nearly everything else, a fair shot, a daring rider across country, and a good-tempered fellow to boot, I soon became a popular man in my regiment.

I had one special chum, Charlie Seton. He was a sub of about the same standing as myself, a splendid fellow in every way, six feet in height, and a perfect specimen of manly Saxon beauty; broad-shouldered, well-proportioned, with curly auburn hair and bright blue eyes, and the brightest, cheeriest, pluckiest fellow I ever had the good fortune to know. The only thing Charlie was not good at was his drill, and in that I was often able to help him, as we were generally working near each other, and I, from sheer love of the work, had very soon got my drill by heart. But though I knew my drill better than he, I was quite sure Charlie would lead his men better in action. In many a hard-fought cricket match, and in many a hard run, we were together, and if by any chance either could do the other a good turn, it was always done.

Time went on, and little clouds arose on the political horizon, and then one day, as we were just going on parade, I saw the newsboys in a state of great excitement, and heard one crying 'Declaration of war with Russia.' It made my heart jump into my mouth; and while other men were rejoicing at the prospect of active service, I had hard work to conceal the state of abject fear I was in. When I came off duty, and had a chance of looking at the paper, I found it was only a declaration of war by Turkey, in which we had not joined, so I breathed freely again, and my spirits revived. The fact was Russia, having occupied the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, which at that time belonged to Turkey, the Turks had no choice but to fight or see their whole country overrun by the Russian hordes. The ostensible cause of the Russian advance was to protect the Greek Christians at Jerusalem—the real cause was a desire to get hold of one more slice of Turkish territory. The war between Turkey and Russia broke out in October 1853, and for some time England looked on and did nothing, and my peace of mind returned. I began to think that England would do the looking on, and nothing else. At this time I tried with all my might to shake off my terrible weakness, but it was no use; the more I thought about it, the more my fears of fighting and death increased, so at last I gave up thinking about it as the best thing I could do.

Some months passed, and then came an evening I well remember. Mess was just over, and we were lighting our cigars, and those of us who had been out hunting (there had been a splendid run that day) were recounting our adventures, when a grim old sergeant entered, and saluting, handed some despatches to our dear old colonel. It was an unusual occurrence, and all eyes were turned on the old man, and I noticed that he looked very grave as he read; but when he had finished I saw a bright proud smile come over his face as he rose and said: 'Gentlemen, I regret to tell you that England and France have this day been forced to declare war against Russia.' Something like a cheer ran round the table, in which, to save my life, I could not have joined; but nobody noticed me. Raising his hand for silence, the colonel continued: 'Yes, gentlemen, I know, like good soldiers, you are longing for active service, and it has been the hope of my life to have the honour of leading my fine regiment into action, but still war is a terrible thing, not to be lightly entered on. I suppose you all know that our regiment is almost the first on the list for active service, so we may be called on to be off at a day's notice.' Shortly afterwards the colonel rose and left the table, beckoning to the major and adjutant to follow him, and very soon afterwards all the senior officers left the table, and we subs were left to our own devices, and a roaring time we had of it. More champagne was ordered, and war songs, with rattling choruses and noisy applause, were the order of the day. For once in my life I found myself drinking champagne for the sake of getting what is called 'Dutch courage;' it had the desired effect, and soon I was as noisy and ripe for mischief as any of the rest. After a time we found the mess-room oppressive, and agreed to sally out, and see what fun could be got out of the streets of the quiet country town in which we were quartered. As we entered the barrack square, we found to our surprise that it was full of our own men, a very unusual thing at that hour. The sight rather sobered us, and the senior sub asked what it meant. A sergeant came forward, and said that the men had heard all sorts of rumours of war, and were in a state of great excitement, and he would be much obliged, if we were at liberty to do so, if we would tell them what had happened. 'I think, gentlemen,' he added, 'they would go more quietly to their quarters if they are told.' He was answered that the news was

no secret, and that England and France had declared war against Russia. The men raised a wild cheer, but to my ears it sounded rather hollow; and somehow when we got out of the barracks half the fun seemed knocked out of us, and we did not do much more than give the townspeople some harmless chaff. To be sure, Charlie danced a polka in the market-place with a gipsy woman, while an old man seated on a barrel played the fiddle. But then Charlie was bound to do something out of the common, though there was no harm in his fun; and we ended rather tamely by going quietly back to our quarters earlier than usual.

A few days after this came orders to march to our port of embarkation, where a transport was waiting to take us in the first place to Malta. Nothing occurred worthy of note till we were half-way across the Bay of Biscay. Then one morning, when it was blowing rather stiffly from the west with a high sea, there was a cry of 'man overboard.' I was on deck at the time, right aft, talking to Charlie, but most of the fellows were below, hardly able to crawl out of their berths. Looking over the side, I saw one of our own men struggling in the water. Two life-belts had already been thrown to him, but being unable to swim, he could not reach them, and it was evident he must drown long before a boat could reach him; for though our engines were reversed, we should carry our way another quarter of a mile. I was a strong swimmer, so seizing a life-belt that was close to my hand, I dropped overboard just as the man had passed. A few strokes brought me to him, and then came the difficult job of getting the belt over him, for the man was struggling dangerously. I managed it at last, when he was nearly drowned, for it was not till then he had the sense to see that his best plan was to keep quiet. When I looked about for the ship, she seemed a very long way off, and often we lost sight of her altogether as we sank down between the waves. I was getting exhausted myself; the life-belt would only support one, so I looked round for another, and fortunately there was one not far off. I swam to it, and after getting my arms through it, returned to my man, and stayed quietly by him waiting for help. It was a trying time, for it was quite possible they might miss us in the heavy sea that was running. But I was pleased to see, as we rose on a wave, that there was an officer high up in the rigging signalling, which showed me that a boat had already put off, and that the officer could still see us. At last we saw the boat, but she was not heading for us; then we lost sight of her, but the next time we saw her she was nearer. I shouted with all my might; my shout was answered, and two minutes later we were hauled on board.

Poor Private Jones collapsed in the bottom of the boat, but I was not much the worse, only very cold. As we came near the vessel the captain sung out, 'Have you got them both?' The answering shout of 'Yes, all right,' was hardly given, when such a cheer arose from over eight hundred men as I never expect to hear again; and as we came up the side, our old colonel came forward and shook hands with me, saying: 'Well and bravely done, sir; I am proud of you.' As I was making my way below, Charlie gave me such a slap on the back as nearly sent me on my nose on the deck, saying: 'Splendidly done, old fellow. I knew the man was saved when you went over for him. I would have come with you, but you know I am a poor swimmer, and I should only have drowned myself without saving the man.' Poor Jones came to thank me next morning for a life saved. I told him he might very likely have a chance of doing the same for me before we saw home again.

In due time we arrived at Malta, where we were detained many weeks. While most of our fellows were fretting to get on, I confess I was quite contented to stay where I was; I quite enjoyed my visit to the island and all the strange scenes to be witnessed there.

Troops were constantly pouring in, and after a time several French regiments joined us, creating considerable interest and curiosity amongst our men, for Tommy Atkins was very anxious to stand treat on every possible occasion to his new friends.

At last we were off again, and our destination this time was Gallipoli. This did not alarm me much, as it was certain there was no fighting to be done there; and we seemed to be going so leisurely towards the seat of war that I began to be very much of opinion that there would be no fighting at all, and that we were only making a demonstration in force for political purposes. I shall not dwell on our stay at Gallipoli. We had not been there long before we were ordered up to Scutari, still far from danger; but after a short stay there, we were ordered to embark for Varna. This looked really like getting near the seat of war, and my miserable weakness returned to some extent, but I had so much to do that I had not time to dwell on it.

Arrived at Varna, we found everything at first in the wildest confusion, but after a time out of chaos came order. The English troops were not quartered in the town, but at several points farther inland. Here for about three months we remained kicking our heels, doing absolutely no good to our friends or harm to our enemies; but we had not been there long before we had a more terrible foe to fight than the Russians. The cholera broke out amongst us, at first slightly, but very soon severely; our field hospitals filled to overflowing, and our poor doctors worked day and night to save and relieve the sufferers till they themselves were ready to drop from sheer fatigue.

One evening our doctor, as good a fellow as ever stepped, came into my tent and threw himself down in a cane chair in a state of utter exhaustion; I mixed a stiff glass of grog and made him drink it, and then got him to light his pipe and pull himself together. He told me it was heartrending work, that they had not half enough doctors, and nothing like enough nurses, and that men were dying daily who, in all probability, would have lived with a little careful nursing, which alas! could not be given them. I asked him if I could be of any help, for, if so, I was quite willing to come and do what I could when off duty. The doctor thought for a minute, and then said: 'No. It

is my duty to risk my life from contagion in the hospitals, yours to risk your life from the bullets of the enemy, if we ever get a sight of them. It would not be fair to let you take the double risk.' When I insisted, and told him I had no fear of contagion, he admitted that any help was worth having just at that time. Accordingly I arranged to begin the next day. For several weeks, till a sufficient number of nurses arrived, I attended regularly when off duty, and I believe was of some little help to the overworked doctors. Our colonel came in one day to see some of his men and cheer them up a little, and seemed pleased I think to see me there, but he only said: 'So I see you go in for saving life on land as well as at sea.'

Oh what a dreary time that was at Varna! We came there a small army indeed, but in perfect health, strength, and discipline; when we left we had lost about a tenth of our number, and many hundreds of poor fellows had got the seeds of disease in them which eventually brought them to an early grave.

It might have been necessary from a political point of view to keep the army in reserve; but surely it should have been placed in some healthy spot where it might have retained its full strength.

II.

Towards the end of August there was a great increase in the number of vessels-of-war and transports off Varna. It was evident that some move was shortly to be made, and in the early days of September we received orders to hold ourselves in readiness to embark for the Crimea at an hour's notice.

We were now at last about to come face to face with the enemy, and the result to me was that all my dread of battle returned in full force. Why should I go and get killed while I was in the full enjoyment of youth, health, and strength, yes, and wealth (for I was well off) to boot? So argued my fears, while honour bade me go on and do my duty like a brave Englishman.

On the 5th September the French began their embarkation. On the 7th we were ordered on board ship, and soon after we got under weigh, and left behind us plague-stricken Varna and all its horrors. I do not suppose there was a man in all that vast fleet who ever wished to see Varna again, or who was not glad to go. Even I felt it a relief.

We sailed and steamed to a certain point in the Black Sea, and there anchored out of sight of land. It was the rendezvous for all the fleets. After we arrived, ships were constantly coming in, till at last there was gathered together a huge fleet of some seven hundred vessels, from the great man-of-war, carrying a hundred guns, to the impudent little gunboat with its one sixty-eight pounder. When all were assembled we again got under weigh, and soon appeared off Eupatoria. Two or three vessels were sent in to take possession of the place; as it was not fortified, no resistance was offered. Then we steamed away again to a part of the coast which had been decided on by our commanders for a landing.

It was late in the day when we arrived, and saw before us a low sandy coast farther to the south than Eupatoria and nearer to Sebastopol, subsequently known to our men as Old Fort. Late though it was, the landing at once commenced. A few Cossacks were to be seen galloping about in the distance, but it was very soon evident that there was no force to resist our landing, and by the time night fell, some twenty-five thousand soldiers of the British army and some twenty thousand Frenchmen were drawn up on shore; but what a landing it was! Early in the day the weather had been bright and fine, but all this changed towards evening, when it came on to blow and rain heavily. No tents were landed that night. I suppose our commanders were so anxious to get a strong force on shore to resist a possible attack that there was no time to do anything but land the men and horses. Or was it, as Charlie suggested, that they had determined to kill off the weakly ones, and have a survival only of the fittest?

Those who could get hold of anything to burn made camp fires, but many had to go without even this comfort. Charlie and I got a seat by one poor fire, and having eaten part of our cold rations, lay down side by side, and got what rest we could with the rain pouring down upon us. Even Charlie's spirits were depressed with the present misery. Day came at last, and then we found that during the night three poor fellows belonging to our regiment had passed away: the cholera was following us.

Three days were spent in landing the artillery and stores, the weather improved, and after the first night we had our tents. Then on the 19th came the order to return all tents on board ship; there was no help for it, but it meant throwing away the last chance for many a weakly one. We marched early on the morning of the 19th. The day was fine, and it was a splendid sight to see that army of over sixty thousand men advancing in line of columns; at first the stirring sight made me forget that it was possible we might be in action before the evening. We had about fifteen miles of perfectly bare waterless country to cross before we got to our first river, the Bulganak; the heat was great, and many a man fell out during that fifteen miles march, some never to rejoin their regiments. As we approached the Bulganak we could see in the distance some of the handiwork of Cossacks, in the shape of burning villages; they were determined to leave us nothing worth having, and by the time we arrived at the banks of the river we could plainly see large bodies of cavalry on the hills to our left front. That sight brought back all my selfish fears again, though there was no immediate cause for alarm. Some of our light cavalry were sent forward to reconnoitre the enemy, and having advanced as near to them as was necessary, were about to retire when the enemy's cavalry opened out, and showed a battery of horse artillery in their midst. The battery got into action, and I saw one horse and man go down on our side, and presently a poor fellow was carried to the rear with a smashed leg—he passed near me, and the sight altogether unmanned me. One of our batteries

soon got into action against the enemy, and shortly after the Russians retired.

When our whole force had crossed the river we were ordered to halt and bivouac for the night. Rations were served out, and without tents, and for the most part without fires, we lay down to rest. Fortunately it was a fine night. Charlie and I had managed to keep a blanket each as well as our great-coats, and we lay down together under them, but neither of us could sleep. Somehow it became known that there must be a great battle on the morrow. Charlie was wildly excited, and I was depressed beyond measure, not so much by the fear of death as by the fear of disgracing myself; and I almost prayed that an early bullet might take me off before I broke down. Charlie noticed my depression, and I could not help telling him something of my fears, but he scouted the idea at once.

'Don't tell me,' he said, 'that the man who could jump overboard in a gale of wind to save a poor fellow's life, with every chance of never getting back again, is going to show the white feather before these rascally Russians, for I won't believe it. Come, let us go to sleep; you are a little unstrung and tired out; a night's rest will make another man of you.'

Five minutes later Charlie was sleeping as peacefully as a little child, but it was towards morning before I slept, and then I slept the sleep of utter exhaustion. When I awoke Charlie informed me that he had been kicking me for the last five minutes, and he thought I was never going to wake again. Then a hasty breakfast was eaten, the order to fall in was given, and we were on the march which was to end in the terrible battle of the Alma.

Close to the sea marched the French, next them the Turks, and the English farther inland. Soon after we had begun to advance, we could see the heights we should have to storm. Now a cloud of skirmishers were thrown forward to our front and left flank, and as we got nearer we could see the formidable earthworks and batteries prepared for our reception. I confess that when I saw all this, and realised what a terrible struggle was before us, all my old fears came back upon me, and I shook in my boots. We were halted for a considerable time just out of range of the Russian position while the French opened the ball. I am not going to attempt to give any account of the battle, but I must say I watched with admiration, despite my fears, the plucky way in which the French scaled the heights on the right, where they were much steeper than in front of us; in fact it was a regular scramble. Fortunately at first there was nobody to oppose them, as the Russians did not expect an attack from that quarter, the ascent being so steep; but when the French had got a footing on the top a fierce fight began.

Now came our turn, and we advanced towards the river Alma, which flowed all along the front of the Russian position; and as we came within range, the Russian batteries opened upon us, and then men began to fall around me. It is impossible to describe what I felt, but the fear of death was strong upon me, and it was only by a great effort of will that I forced myself to keep my place in my company. As we continued to advance, the fire grew hotter, and musketry, to which as yet we made no return, was added to the artillery fire we had to bear. At last we reached the river, and plunged in; the banks on both sides were high, but highest on the farther side, and high enough when we were down in the river to protect us from the intolerable fire of the enemy, and for a moment we were in safety. I confess that here I hesitated, and could not at first force myself to mount the bank. The captain of my company had already fallen, so there was no officer to notice my movements closely, but I knew it was impossible to stay there long, and that I was setting a very bad example to my men. Just at that moment I caught sight of Charlie; he was up on the farther bank encouraging his men to scramble up and come on. I saw him look at me, and a surprised and puzzled expression came over his face. It was enough; I would rather have died a hundred deaths than have lost Charlie's good opinion, and up I went, and cheered on my men. Again we advanced in tolerable order, but the fire of the enemy was more severe than ever now—heavy musketry, and the artillery firing grape; our men were falling fast on all sides, though we were replying to the fire. It was more than I could bear, and I shook so that I could hardly hold my sword. In despair I looked again for Charlie, and again I saw him bright and cheery as ever, trying to encourage his men—the next moment I saw him fall. The effect on me was instantaneous; fear was absolutely gone; rage, fury, and an intense desire to avenge my comrade had taken its place. Our men were hanging back as well they might, for their numbers were terribly thinned, and it was evident that till they were joined by the supports, which were fast coming on, they were not in sufficient numbers to take the redoubt that was in our front. I rushed to the front, and called upon them, if they were Englishmen, to come on and drive the Russians from the redoubt; and being joined a minute afterwards by the second line, all rushed on together, the remains of my company keeping close together, and near to me. Where we were advancing, we outflanked the redoubt; so we passed it, and wheeling round, entered by the gorge, while others were climbing over the rough parapet. Then ensued a fierce hand-to-hand fight, in the midst of which a burly Russian made a strong thrust at me with his bayonet. I parried the thrust with my sword, with a strength that seemed perfectly irresistible, and getting within his guard, ran him through the body. I remember even now, with horror, the force with which the hilt of my sword struck against the poor fellow's ribs; but at the time there was only a feeling of stern joy that one man at least had paid the penalty for poor Charlie's fall. The Russians were driven out of the redoubt, and fled in confusion for two or three hundred yards; then their officers succeeded in rallying them, but they made but a doubtful stand, and it was evident, even to my inexperienced eye, that nearly all the fighting was knocked

out of them. They stayed long enough however for us once more to get up to them, and again, well ahead of my men, I plunged into their midst, but not quite alone, for close by my side was Private Jones. Indeed, the good fellow had been sticking close to me all day, intent upon nothing but saving my worthless life, and during this last fight he did save it by knocking aside the musket of a Russian just as he was pulling the trigger. This second fight lasted scarcely a minute, but I believe I again used my sword with deadly effect. I had a loaded revolver in a pouch at my belt, but I never used it, never even thought of it. The Russians broke again and fled, this time in utter disorder, but we could not pursue them closely, as an order was passed along our front to halt and reform the ranks. It was time; we were nothing but an armed mob. The ranks being reformed, we again advanced, but by this time the Russians had disappeared over the crest of the hill, and we saw no more of them till we gained the top. Then, indeed, we saw them at some distance, but to our surprise they were retiring again in good order. We exchanged a few volleys with them till they were out of range, but were not allowed to pursue them farther; the battle of the Alma was over. As soon as there was any chance of my request being granted, I asked leave (not, indeed, of our dear old colonel, who was lying grievously wounded at the bottom of the hill, but of the senior captain, who now commanded what was left of the regiment) to fall out and go and look for poor Charlie, as I had still some faint hope that I might find him alive. He said he had no authority to let anybody fall out, but he could not refuse a request made by an officer who had led his men as well as I had, and he hoped I should find the poor fellow alive, and not much hurt. 'Led his men as well as I had'—little he knew of all that had happened!

I hurried down the hill, past the dreadful redoubt, full of dead and dying, and then a little farther on I found him—dead—lying on his back, with one arm stretched upwards as if appealing to heaven against being thus cut off in all the joy of youth and strength, his bright curly hair dabbled in blood, his poor eyes open. He had not even the peaceful expression that many men have when suddenly killed in battle; death had not come soon enough, and he had had time to realise the horror of it. The sight fairly maddened me. I closed his eyes and composed his limbs, and then cursing war, and the rulers who brought it on us, I staggered back to my regiment I know not how.

That night I was struck down with cholera, and remembered nothing more till I found myself being landed at Scutari. The cholera left me alive, but so utterly broken down in strength that the doctors decided that my only chance of life was to be sent home. Accordingly I was shipped off to Old England, and many long weary months passed while the struggle between life and death went on. At last health and strength gradually returned, but by the time I was fit for duty the Crimean war was just over. Accordingly I availed myself of the opportunity of resigning my commission without dishonour, as I had come to the conclusion that soldiering was not my vocation.

Private Jones is now my head-gardener. He loves his master, he loves his flowers, and is the best servant I ever had.

## THE STORY OF THE GUINEA.

Familiar to most of us—though not so familiar as most of us would like—as is the appearance of the golden sovereign, the story of how it came to be the successor of the golden guinea is by no means generally known. The pound sterling, once an actual, tangible measure of value, has become a figure of speech, the repeated expression of which is agreeable to everybody. As represented in the sovereign it is a recognisable quantity. But the guinea is an expression of value dear to the hearts of all professional persons, and revered by the collectors of charitable subscriptions, which is no longer represented in a negotiable coin. It is curious how much we pay and receive in guineas, although the metallic guinea no longer exists as a current coin, and the figurative guinea is not a legal measure of value. Without entering into the great currency controversy it will be of interest to see how this change in our gold currency came about.

Golden guineas were first coined in 1663, and the name was given to the coin because the gold from which it was struck was brought from the coast of Guinea in Africa. According to the late Sir Richard Burton, Western Africa was the first field that supplied gold to mediæval Europe. The French claim to have imported the metal from Elmina so long ago as 1382, but the claim has never been properly established; and the first authenticated gold from Africa was that brought by a Portuguese navigator, Gonzales Baldeza, who got it from the natives near Bojadet in 1442. Afterwards a Portuguese Company, in which Prince Henry the Navigator took part, was formed to carry on the gold trade between Africa and Portugal. So much gold was found on the Gold Coast before the close of the sixteenth century that one place was named by the Portuguese San Jorje da Mina, which by the English traders came to be known as Elmina, its present name. Captain Thomas Wyndham is believed to have been the first to bring gold from Africa to England. He visited the Gold Coast in 1551, and brought home one hundred and fifty pounds of gold-dust. It was more than a hundred years later, however, before the gold of West Africa began to be coined into guineas.

The first order for the coinage of guineas is dated Whitehall, 24th December 1663, and under it 'Charles R.' declares his 'will and pleasure' to his trusty and well-beloved Sir Ralph Freeman, Knight, and Henry Slingsby, Esq., masters and workers of the mint, that they shall 'cause to be coyned all such gold and silver as hereafter shall be brought into our mint and delivered unto you in the name and for the use of the Company of Royal Adventurers of England trading into Africa, with a little elephant in such convenient place upon our gold and silver coynes respectively as you shall judge fitting,

which Wee intend as a marke of distinction from the rest of our gold and silver moneys and an Incouragement unto the said Company in the importing of gold and silver to be coyned. And that our Twenty shillings piece of Crowne gold to be coyned by the Mill and Presse may be even Twenty shillings in value after the rate commanded and allowed in our late Proclamation for the raising the price of gold in this Our Kingdom of England, or as neere as conveniently may bee. Our further will and pleasure is, and wee doe hereby likewise command and authorise you to cause the pound Troy of our Crowne gold hereafter to be cutt into forty and fower peeces and an-halfe, the whole peece being to pass for Twenty shillings, and the halfe for Tenn, and soe the rest of our gold coynes accordingly in proportion.'

The second half of the seventeenth century was memorable for a great monetary revolution, and it was a good thing for England, as Macaulay has pointed out, that she had at that time four men disinterested and far-seeing enough to deal with the problem. These men were Somers and Montague, politicians; Locke and Newton, philosophers. To these four men England owed the restoration of her currency and the long series of prosperous years which followed. The standard currency of the country at the time was silver, but it had become frightfully debased, worn, and clipped, the bad coins being made to circulate as equal value with the full weight, newly-minted, good coins. As has been said, it is doubtful whether all the preceding miseries caused by bad kings, bad parliaments, and bad judges, were equal to the misery caused by bad crowns and bad shillings, and it was a misery which grew daily in magnitude in the full eye of the people. Very early in the last decade of the century a general re-coinage became imperative, but was not effected until 1696.

And now we come to the part played by the guinea in our monetary history. Silver was the standard, although gold coins were struck in the thirteenth, and sovereigns in the fifteenth, century without coming into general circulation or affecting the measure of value. In 1663 a new coin was minted from the gold brought in by the Royal Company of Merchant-Adventurers trading to Africa, bearing on the reverse side the impression of an elephant. These coins were pieces of twenty shillings, and being made of Guinea gold, came, as we have seen, to be known as guineas. The value was fixed by act of parliament, which decreed that the weight of the new twenty-shilling gold piece should be some eight and a half per cent. lower than the gold coins till then current. Up to this time, too, there had been a seigniorage, or charge for minting, but by an act of parliament of 1666 the minting of the gold and silver coins was made free to all comers, whether English or foreign.

Now whether due to the superior quality of the gold, or to the degeneration of the silver coins, the twenty-shilling pieces called guineas were not long in existence before they changed for twenty-one shillings. Then they rose to twenty-one and sixpence, at which their value was fixed for a long time, but as the silver coins became more and more clipped and worn, and all the heaviest and purest of them were exported to pay off obligations abroad, the silver value of the new gold coin rose rapidly from twenty-two shillings to thirty shillings, which seems to have been its value when the state of the currency secured the attention of the four great men we have named.

The matter reached a climax when the Secretary of the Treasury submitted a formal report proposing a scheme for making the crown-piece value for seventy-five instead of sixty pence. Without going into the details of legislation, it is sufficient to say that the efforts of Montague, Somers, Locke, and Newton resulted in a re-calling and re-coinage of the silver currency. Dates were fixed after which the light and debased coins would not be accepted at their face-value, and after which the use of them would be illegal: the old light coins were gradually absorbed by the Mint; and the capacity of the Mint was greatly enlarged under Sir Isaac Newton. And, what is specially pertinent to our subject, by a series of parliamentary resolutions the silver-value of the guinea was fixed at twenty-eight shillings and then reduced by successive steps to twenty-six, twenty-five, twenty-four, and finally to twenty-two.

The acts fixing the value of the guinea at different times are curious pages on our Statute Book. We have given an example of one. Another in 1666 established free coinage by abolishing the charges that had previously been made for mintage, namely, fifteen shillings to the pound of crown gold and two shillings to the pound of standard silver. This act is said to have encouraged the clipping of the silver coins—which alone circulated to any extent among the masses—for the metal thus obtained could be turned into cash by any one at the Mint. In a 'Mint Indenture' of 1686 one Thomas Neale covenants to make 'four sorts of money of crown gold, one piece to be called one ten-shilling piece running for ten shillings sterling and there shall be four score and nine of those in the pound weight Troy; one other piece which shall be called one twenty-shilling piece running for twenty shillings sterling, and there shall be forty-four of those and one ten shilling piece, or the weight of a ten-shilling piece, in the pound weight Troy.'

In the Journals of the House of Commons for 1695 there appears the petition of divers Merchants and Traders of the City of London setting forth, 'That by reason of the badness of our silver coins some men have taken occasion to raise guineas to thirty shillings a piece, which, being about forty per cent. value here above the proportion of gold to silver in any other part of Europe hath caused the bringing over to us vast quantities of gold, causing the exchange to fall, and consequently the carrying of our silver in that disadvantageous proportion to the impoverishment of the kingdom.' A later petition complains of the 'unsettled price of guineas,' the Bankers and Goldsmiths taking them only at twenty-nine shillings while the petitioners were compelled either to take them at thirty shillings from their customers or receive payment in bad silver. In due time was passed the Act of 1696 which decreed that 'for preventing the further increase of the rate

of coined gold and the mischief which may thence befall this Realme, Be it enacted that from and after the twenty-fifth day of March 1696, no person shall receive, take, or pay any of the pieces of gold coin of this kingdom commonly called guineas, at any greater or higher rate than Twenty-six shillings for each guinea, and not to exceed the same in proportion for the Pieces of gold called Half-Guineas, Double-Guineas and five-pound pieces.' The penalty for every offence against this statute was double the amount of the gold received or paid, *plus* the sum of twenty pounds, of which one half went to 'His Majestie' and the other half to the informer. But as the same act contained a clause that no one should be compelled to receive guineas at the rate of twenty-six shillings, the inference is that the coin was not legal tender.

About the same time was passed another act repealing the obligations on the Mint to coin guineas for any one who brought gold. These Acts were quickly followed by another act decreeing that 'no person shall utter or receive any of the pieces of gold coin commonly called guineas, at any higher or greater Rate or value than two-and-twenty shillings for each guinea and so proportionately for every greater or lesser piece of coined gold.' An order of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury was issued in 1697 to the Tellers in the receipt of Exchequer 'that they receive guineas at twenty-two shillings each.' At the instance of John Locke, however, the 'Lords Justices in Council' ordered the price to be reduced to twenty-one shillings and sixpence, 'it having been represented to their Excellencies that the value of guineas at two-and-twenty shillings each is very prejudicial to the trade of the kingdom and particularly to the Importation of Silver Bullion.'

The great re-coinage scheme of which Macaulay tells the story, is said to have cost the government nearly three millions sterling, an enormous sum when it is remembered that at William's Ascension the coined money in the country did not exceed about eleven millions, both gold and silver, that the population was under six millions, and that the national revenue did not exceed two millions sterling. In the Treasury Papers of 1702 there is a report, signed by Isaac Newton, on the gold coinage of other countries, in which it is stated that 'gold is at too high a rate in England by about tenpence or a shilling in the guinea and this tending to the decrease of the silver coin we humbly conceive that our way of preserving this coin is to lower the price of gold suppose by taking 6d., 9d., or 12d. from the price of the guinea so as that gold may be of the same value in England as in the neighbouring parts of Europe.' This was not immediately acted on, and the government continued to receive the guinea at twenty-one shillings and sixpence at the receipt of custom. But towards the end of 1717, at the request of the House of Commons, a Proclamation was issued reducing the value of the guinea from twenty-one shillings and sixpence to twenty-one shillings, the price at which we still acknowledge it as an uncoined expression of value.

But while the guinea was current at all the different prices we have named at different periods, it does not appear to have been 'legal tender' for more than twenty shillings until May 1718, when it was formally declared legal-tender-value for twenty-one shillings. After 1816 it was, along with the silver coinage, supplanted by the gold sovereign issued by George III., at the suggestion of Lord Liverpool. This famous Proclamation, upon which our currency rests, was issued after a report of the Lords of Committee of Council, recommending that an act be passed declaring gold coin alone to be the standard coin of this realm, and that silver coins be hereafter considered only as representative coins and to be a legal tender only in payment of sums not exceeding two guineas.

And in this way came in the now familiar golden sovereign to displace the once familiar golden guinea, whose checkered history we have followed to the year when it ceased to be coined.

## AN UNFORGOTTEN KISS.

The rain is rattling on the pane, the wind is sweeping by,
Now with discordant shriek, anon with melancholy cry.
A lonely man, I sit and read beside the dying fire
The daily tale of love and crime, of greed and vain desire.

The letters blur and fade, the room grows dim and disappears,
And in its stead old scenes come back across the waste of years;
And set in frame of golden hair a fair young face I see,
Whose two soft eyes of deepest blue look wistfully on me.

Once, on a memorable eve, when heart and hope were young,
Those luminous eyes upon my life a sudden glory flung:
As she was then I see her now, my young, my only choice,
The brightness on her sunny brow, the music in her voice.

One question, and but one I ask, then for an answer wait;
My very heart is motionless, expectant of its fate!
A wondrous light—the light of love—glows in the tender eyes—
Her breath is warm upon my face—O sweetest of replies!

But bless my heart! The driving rain is coming in, I fear—
Or is that shining little drop upon the page a tear?
Well, who would think an old gray head could be so soft as this,
When more than thirty years have fled since that fond, foolish kiss!

JOHN SCOTT.

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## HOW TO REDUCE THE GAS BILLS.

The ways in which gas bills may be reduced in most households are chiefly two: First, to avoid burning gas unnecessarily; and secondly, to see to it that the method of consuming is such that the largest possible amount of light is obtained from the smallest possible quantity of gas. By a little attention to both these points, most householders might very materially economise.

If the truth could always be known, it would often be surprising what an amount of gas may be absolutely wasted by allowing burners to flare away in places where they are wanted only very occasionally. In remote passages and bedrooms, in pantries and lavatories, and other parts of the premises, where a light may be required, perhaps, for a few minutes once or twice in the course of an evening, it is very customary to light up the gas at dusk, and let it flare away for hours. Of course it is very convenient to have every part of your premises lighted up. It is tiresome and provoking, if you want to go into a room for a moment, to have to find matches and light the gas; but to keep a number of gas-burners going all through the dark hours of the evening, all through the winter, comes expensive, even though they may be turned low when they are not in use.

For the avoidance of this waste there are two ingenious contrivances that have recently been brought into the market, either of which is well worth the attention of housekeepers. The first is what is called a 'by-pass' arrangement, by which a tiny jet of flame may always be kept burning, as a means of lighting up by merely turning on the gas, and without the application of a match. A light is then always ready when it is wanted, and the consumption of gas by the small auxiliary jet is hardly worth consideration. The one objection to it is that in draughty situations it is possible that the small jet may sometimes be blown out and the gas escape. The other device referred to is one to which it seems difficult to find an objection on any score whatever. It is simply a little contrivance fixed to the side of an ordinary gas-jet in such a way that when the gas is turned on it impinges on a small piece of spongy platinum. The mere passage of coal-gas over this substance has the curious effect of rendering it so intensely hot that in a second or two it becomes a glowing white, and the gas, rushing over it, is ignited. The light may then be turned on and off just as readily as the electric light.

But what is even more important than the lighting and extinguishing of gas is the mode of burning it when it is alight. Every gas-consuming household necessarily has somewhere about the premises a 'meter' for measuring the gas supplied. The calculations of this mysterious piece of mechanism are often of an unpleasantly surprising character. If, however, instead of a gas-meter for measuring gas, every household had a photometer for the measurement of the light given by the gas, there would often be a revelation still more surprising. It is really very curious that we should, most of us, be so particular about getting the gas we are charged for, while, at the same time, we rarely trouble ourselves to insure that we are getting all the light the gas we pay for ought to yield us. If we have the least suspicion that the gas-meter is not doing quite fairly and squarely by us—that it is not working properly, and that it is registering against us five or ten per cent. more gas than we actually receive—we feel it necessary at once to take steps for remedying so ruinous a proceeding. But it is the commonest thing in the world for people to be burning gas that gives an amount of light five and twenty per cent. less than it ought to give without being in any way concerned about it. Sometimes, of course, it is because they are unaware of it; but even when they have to complain of a bad light, the only remedy they can think of is to turn on more gas; they rarely think to insist upon it that the gas they are actually using shall give them a better light.

'It is very absurd,' said the managing director of one of the great London gas companies, some

time ago, 'it is very absurd for people to make a fuss about an increase or decrease of a penny a thousand feet in the price of gas, when, if they would only take a little care, they might often reduce their gas bills by fifty or sixty per cent.'

Perhaps that was rather an extreme statement, but it was much nearer the truth than most people would suppose. A few years ago the gas referees appointed by the Board of Trade made an exhaustive inquiry into the efficiency of gas-burners in general use, and they found that some of them gave scarcely a fifth part of the light the gas would have given if burned as it ought to have been. The practical effect of that, of course, would be that consumers using such burners were paying at least five times as much for their gas as they need have done. Of every twenty shillings they paid away for gas, sixteen shillings was mere waste. These, of course, were extreme cases, but they found many kinds of burners yielding only half as much light as they should have done, and not a few in which the light was not more than a third or fourth of what it might have been. The referees reckoned that at a very moderate computation London thus paid half a million of money every year more than it need have done for its gas. That, however, was over twenty years ago. Some years later than that the gas examiner of Glasgow showed that that city similarly wasted at least £130,000 a year.

No doubt the pecuniary importance of the matter is now more generally recognised than it was then, and the proportion of waste is probably less. But that there is still a great amount of it is quite certain, and in households where no intelligent consideration is given to the matter it is often as great as ever it was.

Every housekeeper ought to know that a thousand cubic feet of gas of a certain standard quality represents so much light. The amount of light may be quite as accurately measured as the amount of gas, and with the necessary appliances almost anybody may measure it. For the majority of people this, however, is of course impracticable. They cannot do the measuring for themselves, but they may be quite assured that when scientific authorities state that a certain gas-burner gives only a half, or a third, or a quarter the illumination it should do, they are saying what is quite as easily proved as it would be easy to prove that a jug which should hold a pint of milk contains only half a pint.

The first thing to be done in the economical burning of gas is to get a good burner; but it ought clearly to be understood that it is not the only thing. The philosophy of the matter is extremely simple. The burning of gas is merely the chemical combination of the gas with the oxygen of the air. This combination is attended by intense heat, which makes the particles of carbon in the gas white hot. It is this glowing white of the carbon that gives the light. Now it is quite clear that the gas and the oxygen cannot combine unless they come in contact with each other, and the gas-burner is simply a little contrivance for bringing them into contact. If the gas blows out of an open pipe in an uninterrupted stream, it presents so little surface to the air that it cannot get oxygen enough to combine with. The carbonaceous particles do not get hot enough to become white, and the light is red and smoky. If, however, the stream of gas is made to pass through a well-constructed burner, it is spread out in a fan-like form, presenting two large surfaces to the air, and thus getting plenty of oxygen. In some burners the gas issues through a slit which spreads it out to the oxygen. In others it comes through two holes in two small streams so arranged as to rush against each other, and the same effect is produced. But whether it is a 'bat-wing' or a 'fish-tail,' the purpose of either burner is the same—merely to spread out the gas to the surrounding air. In order to do this perfectly, the burner must be made with great nicety, and is always intended to consume a definite quantity of gas per hour. That is what so many gas-consumers do not know or do not consider. They may get the best burner that money can buy, but that in itself is not sufficient for economical use; a perfect burner requires a perfect gas-supply. If less than the proper quantity of gas passes through it, the flame does not get properly spread out, its carbon particles do not get properly white with heat, and there is a great falling off in the quantity of light afforded in proportion to the gas consumed. It may be true that only half the gas is being burned, but the probability is that a good deal less than half the light is afforded. On the other hand, the pressure of gas may be too great and more gas forced through than the burner is intended for. The difficulty in this case is not that the gas does not get sufficient exposure to the air, but that it gets too much. If it rushes through with too great a force, it sucks in more air than it can combine with; the excess of air cools the flame, combustion is imperfect, and the amount of light is less than would be yielded by a smaller amount of gas. There is more expense and there is less light. The falling off of the light is indeed the chief mischief, for whatever the excess of pressure may be the increase in the consumption of gas is proportionately only small. But if the gas rushes through with a swirl and a roar, more than enough air is drawn in, and the excess only serves to lower the temperature and reduce the light.

It will thus be seen that the economical burning of gas depends chiefly upon a nice adjustment of the supply of air to the supply of gas, and this is true whatever form of burner may be employed. The Argand burner is merely another device for effecting this adjustment in another way. The Argand is a ring perforated by a number of very small holes, and the glass chimney is applied as a means of securing just the right supply of air. If the burner be lighted without the glass and turned on to its full height, the gas will be insufficiently supplied with oxygen, and it will stream up in a long yellow smoky flame, consuming an amount of gas out of all proportion to the light given. By putting a chimney round the flame, a strong draught is created; the air is sucked up right through the flame. The higher the chimney the stronger will be the draught and the greater will be the supply of air. The chimney may be too high and the current too strong. As with the other burners the temperature of the flame will be lowered and the light reduced. If, on the other hand, the chimney be too short, the draught will be insufficient to feed the flame. The particles of carbon will not be of

a sufficiently white heat. They will not glow with sufficient intensity, and the light will be less than the consumption of gas ought properly to afford.

## MY KAFFIR.

### CHAPTER II.

It was dark on the third day when we drove up to a comfortable-looking stone house, and received a warm welcome from Mary, who, I fancied, seemed more than merely pleased to see me.

When I rose in the morning and went out for an early smoke, the first object to catch my eye, just outside the garden fence of smart, white-painted palings, was the koppie — the identical stony, flat-topped hill of that long-ago trek.

It, as well as its surroundings, was changed. Many gaps and cuttings in its sides showed where the materials for the snug buildings around me had been procured. But for the white, three-cornered patch, plain, if not plainer than ever, I doubt whether I should have recognised it again. As it was, I knew that I could not be mistaken. I looked for the big tree, but saw no signs of it. Only the long veldt grass, and the so-familiar gum leaves on many saplings shimmering in the morning sun.

After a time, and with some effort of memory, I decided that, as nearly as possible, the spot on which the tree had stood was now occupied by a rustic summer-house, built in what was evidently the middle of Mary's flower-garden.

And then, as I caught the flutter of a white dress through a leafy alley-way of vines, I started in pursuit, and, for the nonce, once more consigned my Kaffir to oblivion.

Each day I stayed on at Draakenspruit the more deeply I felt that I must either win Mary Johnston or die a bachelor. And, as time passed, I flattered myself that, as the phrase goes, I was not wholly indifferent to her.

But I was afraid to speak. Her father was, I knew, one of the richest settlers in the Transvaal; owning, besides a couple of fine farms, many shares in some of the best mines on the Rand.

No, I must go away at once; and, somehow, by hook or by crook, do what so many were doing just then—find gold, and plenty of it. Then I might, without misgiving, return and claim Mary.

Forty pounds out of the one hundred had gone to Osborne in Melbourne, leaving a remainder in hand of about an equal amount. Clearly, I must depart before I made a fool of myself. And that I had sternly resolved on not doing. But when a pretty girl is one of the factors in a resolution, it is an utter impossibility to forecast events.

And, one evening, sitting in the summer-house, exactly over the spot where I reckoned my Kaffir's bones should be; the odour of orange blossoms heavy on the warm air, and the great white lilies outside looking like cups of frosted silver in the moonlight; things, somehow, fell out as I intended them not to do.

I had been telling Mary of my intention to trek to the new diggings in Manicaland; and when I saw the sudden pallor steal over her face, and the look of pain and sorrow that crept into her dear eyes as she turned them upon me, I forgot all my self-imposed caution, and, there and then, awkwardly enough, I daresay, when I come to think of it, blurted out that I loved her, and her only of all women in the wide world.

And presently, she nestled closer to me and shyly confessed, in reply to much questioning, that, ever since that stormy day on board the steamer, when for a minute she lay faint and trembling in my arms, she had thought of no one else—nor, indeed, ever before.

And then I kissed her again, and told her that now, more than ever, I must leave her to search for fortune, knowing, as I did, that her father would never consent; and that what I was doing was altogether wrong; and that I ought to have known better. But she was so happy she only laughed, and said that her father could refuse her nothing—not even a hard-up digger-man.

I, however, was very doubtful; and when I heard the old man's voice calling us in to supper, I jumped like a fellow at the first touch of a cold shower on a day with the glass at one hundred and ten degrees.

That night I plucked up courage and told him I loved his daughter; and that there was nothing I wouldn't do to win her.

He listened smoking, and not interrupting. Then as I finished, he shook his head, and said, not unkindly, 'I'm afraid it won't do, lad. By your own account you've been wandering about the world, come-day go-day fashion, with sometimes a few pounds in pocket, and more times nothing. Now, s'pose I let you have Mary, how am I to know that, as soon as I am gone, that wild strain won't show up again, and make you shift your hurdles till everything's frittered away? No, you're only a stranger yet—great as the service you've done us—and Mary's all I've got, and I mean to take care of her. But,' he continued, after a pause, during which I kept silence and strove to hide my chagrin at the exact justness of his remarks, 'if you honestly think you can steady down—why, I must admit that I like what I've seen of you very well—and there's the place over at Ermelo, you can manage that for me. I can't always be running back'ards and for'ards. I'll give you a hundred a year and found, and after a bit, why, we'll see. I don't think I can say fairer just now.'

This was, in reality, more, in every way, than I had any right to expect—was, in fact, a very handsome offer. But I was in a terrible hurry to make Mary my own at once, and the very idea of such a humdrum sort of waiting vexed my inmost soul.

Still I had the grace to thank him. But I'm afraid not very heartily; for he said, with a twinkle in his eye, 'Ay, lad, I was young once myself, and as hot-blooded, and strong, and impatient, but, at long and last I had to calm down. And a man can't rush his pile. You might trek away—(I had mentioned my notion of trying the new field)—t' other side of Mashonyland and prospeck for years and years,

and return, if you ever returned, a lot poorer 'n you started. The steady, constant worker's the one that gets home first, after all's said and done. I've found that out.'

All at once, as he finished, there flashed through me, like a mild shock from an electric battery, the old warning feeling that now or never was the time to look up my Kaffir. And, taking the risk of being laughed at, I told Johnston the whole story.

'Terrible romancers, Kaffirs,' commented he as I finished. 'And some of them would play a practical joke like that with their last breath. And there's one tribe that makes a practice of always cutting their dead open after death to let the spirit escape. Your friend may have had that notion in his cunning old head. Of course he possibly was telling the truth. But I doubt it. Ay, there was a big tree, I recollect, growing right in front of the house. I grubbed it to make more room in the garden. About three or four hundred yards from the koppie? Why, that'll be slap in the middle of Mary's flower-beds. You'll have to talk that matter over with her.' And he laughed, as he added, 'Never mind your Kaffir. Think over the offer I have made you just now. Take your time. And you'll get more by Ermelo farm than ever you will by rooting up poor Mary's flowers.' And the old man laughed again as he went off to his room.

Next morning at breakfast the subject cropped up again. Old Johnston had been thinking, and had made up his mind that the outermost branches of the tree would have just covered the lily plot, Mary's especial pride.

This, I believe, was meant purely as a joke on his side.

But Mary, who had been eagerly listening, at once insisted on a thorough search being made. Much more wonderful things, she vowed, had happened. Did we think that because the poor Kaffir was black he was therefore devoid of all gratitude? And dig I must. And if I didn't, she would. Lilies! What were they compared to diamonds the size of mealie-ears—and bigger! And she thought, too, that I was right and her father mistaken; for she remembered seeing a great stump once, where the summer-house now stood, when she came over from Ermelo, quite a little girl, shortly after old Johann Weenen sold the farm. So, partly to please my mistress, and partly to set at rest for ever that indescribable monitor, spoken of many times in this history, I dug in the bed of great lilies—dug them all up till they lay in rows of bruised and shattered loveliness on each side of the deep wide trench I made in the soft mould—with my trouble for my pains.

Fain would I then have desisted, but Mary would have me explore the floor of the little summer-house in which only last night we had talked of love.

So, to please her this time wholly, I dug in a half-hearted fashion, and old Johnston, laughing at the madness of the thing, went inside, followed presently by Mary to get a can of beer for her workman.

Three feet down in the stiff blue clay I came across something that made me ply pick and shovel frantically. And by the time Mary and her father returned I was almost out of sight in a deep hole that nearly took in the whole floor.

'Good Lord!' laughed Johnston, 'you surely never planted him as deep as that.'

'No,' I answered, popping up. 'I can't find him, unless, indeed, his bones have turned into this stuff,' handing him, as I spoke, half-a-dozen specimens in which one had to look very closely to see the quartz—so thick was the gold.

The old man whistled loud and long, as he fingered them lovingly, and as scarcely able to believe his eyesight.

'So it's here,' he exclaimed at last, 'the lost lead runs they've been trying to trace from the Rand. Well, who'd have dreamt of such a thing! No farming now, I suppose. Eh, lad? Why, it's a regular jeweller's shop! And looks like dipping into the horse-paddock, too! No mistake about its being the true reef. My boy, I shouldn't wonder if you've dropped on to one of the best things in the district. And that's saying a good deal, let me tell you. Good old Kaffir! He did mean business, after all then, in a way!' And so did we! For before we finished the work begun that morning, Johnston and I took £25,000 each out of the claim, and then sold our interest for as much again. People over there still talk with respect of the rich Geldenberg Mine, although there have been heavier finds since, but nothing like at such shallow sinking.

Of my Kaffir not the remotest trace was ever found in all the turning-up the country presently got. Nor did I ever experience a recurrence of that strange feeling impelling me to go and look for him.

But, as Osborne says, who can doubt for an instant that his was the psychic force exerted in some extraordinary and persistent manner to bring to pass that dying promise of his: 'And on a day, not too far distant, it shall be very well with thee.'

And, as Osborne puts it again, who can doubt that my Kaffir made his reward take the form it did; because he presently discovered that, in the matter of the diamonds, I should be simply standing in the position of a receiver of stolen property. And we all agreed that it was very curious that this aspect of the case had never struck any of us before.

But I will scoff no more. For I am not quite sure that in this story I have rendered my Kaffir full justice. The question is really such a perplexing one that I have decided to leave it open.

Mary and I were married in Durban, and we took our honeymoon trip to Australia. We chose it for various reasons; but chiefly to bring the Osbornes back with us They were to have the Ermelo farm as a gift from me.

Also I was taking Osborne a convert.

One evening, coming on deck, I found my wife watching the splendour of the swirling fire in the wake of the screw, boiling like a huge cauldron of liquescent opals, and with a light by the glory of which one could see to read the smallest print.

For a while we silently gazed together. I

was thinking, for my part, of another night not so very long ago, when, from the other end of this same ship I sat and watched the jewelled water and called myself names for having ventured on a wild-goose chase.

Presently Mary slipped her hand into mine, and said, 'Jack, dear, I've been thinking.'

'Yes, my love?' I replied, with the due deference becoming a fortnight-married man.

'Yes, Jack,' she answered earnestly, 'and I've made up my mind to agree with your friend, Mr Osborne, that we owe all our luck and all our happiness to your poor old Kaffir.'

'But what is "psychic force," Jack?'

'My dear,' I said authoritatively, 'there goes four bells—time for you to go below, out of the night air, and turn in.'

## MECHANICAL POWER FOR TRAMWAY CARS.

By an Expert.

THE question of getting some better means of traction for street tramway cars than that afforded by horses is one which even in this country is beginning to attract some share of public attention; and eyes are directed to America, where such vast strides in street-railway improvement have been made in recent years. Whether from the point of view of tramway companies or from that of the travelling public, what is wanted is a method of propelling the cars at a higher speed, which shall at the same time cost less in working expenses than when horses are employed. Having turned my attention for several years to this subject, and just returned from a visit to several cities in the United States where improved methods are in use, I may venture to give here some indication of the relative merits of different systems. There is the greater necessity for the British public now looking into the matter, as the country is on the eve of great changes in the domain of tramway motors. Of horse tramways we have had more than enough in this country. The inefficiency of traction by animal power, especially in severe weather, or on hilly routes, need not be dwelt upon, nor the fact that the working of the system is so expensive that very often little profit can be made out of it. Another discredited method is the use of steam locomotives. They have proved as expensive, and often more expensive than horses, and are such a nuisance in the streets that they have generally met with public disfavour. Many have been the experiments with gas, oil, and compressed-air engines; but none of these motors have yet come into general use. In most cases they have been found wanting, either mechanically or financially. In all such methods the power is generated directly on the car, and that being so, it is in the nature of things that the production of power should be more expensive than when the generation of energy takes place in a large, central station, and is distributed to the cars on the line. Every one knows that a multitude of small prime movers cost far more to run than one large engine generating the same power as the sum of the small units. Starting from this fundamental basis, the question is to find a means of distributing the power from a central station to a large number of moving cars on the lines without incurring losses of energy in transmission as great as that arising from the use of separate prime movers for each car. The statement here to be made with all possible emphasis, and to be briefly explained in what follows, is, that such means exists, and has been demonstrated to be a thorough success. The two successful methods of applying to the cars the energy produced in the central power station are cable and electric traction. The former, being of older date, will first be touched upon.

Cable traction was first applied to street cars twenty-three years ago in San Francisco. On this plan, an endless steel wire cable runs upon pulleys in an underground conduit situated between the rails of each track, and it is continually driven at a fixed given rate of speed by engines and driving mechanism in a central power station through which it is deflected. There is a continuous slot in the surface of the street through which connection is made between the car and the ever-moving cable. The connection consists of a gripper which is a kind of a vice with one movable jaw. When the driver, by a wheel or lever, closes the gripper tightly on the cable, the car moves along at the same speed as the rope. If he grips the cable loosely, so as to allow the rope to partially slip through the jaws, the car can be made to move as slowly as may be desired. If he opens the gripper completely the cable runs free and the car comes to a standstill. At each end of the line or section of the line the cable is brought round from one track to the other by means of a large horizontal underground pulley. These are the broad principles of the operation of the system, and though they are exceedingly simple, a great deal of ingenuity and nicety of adjustment are required in working out the details. The cable system was adopted in San Francisco to enable cars to be worked up and down the very heavy gradients in that city, and one of the great benefits of the system is the fact that slopes of any steepness can be tackled. Indeed, it works even better on gradients than on the level, excellent as its performance is in both cases.

One great drawback which has prevented cable traction from extending even more than it has done in America is the fact that the construction of the conduit, especially where many underground pipes have to be removed, is an expensive matter. Another drawback is that if there are many sharp curves, the line is more expensive both to construct and to work than where it is approximately straight. In England and Scotland, however, we have several cable tramways built with a shallower conduit and with a different kind of curve construction, and these modifications have greatly minimised the above-mentioned hindrances. It is probable that there will be a considerable extension of cable lines on this improved method in this country. The first great step in this direction is now being taken in Edinburgh, where soon practically all the lines will be run on the cable system.

Regarding working expenses, the great feature of the cable system is that the more frequently cars have to be run, the lower the cost proportionately becomes. If the interval between the cars is very long, say a quarter of an hour, a cable line

is expensive to work, as a large proportion of the total power is expended in hauling the dead-weight of the rope. But when cars require to be run on a very short headway the amount of power expended increases comparatively little, and the losses in application through the agency of the grippers are very small. It has thus been found that, for a great city traffic where the interval between the cars is only two minutes or perhaps one minute, cable traction is the cheapest form of haulage known. The total working expenses in such cases may be set down for this country as at most fivepence per car mile run, which is only one-half of the cost on many horse and steam tramways. If the cars require to be run at longer intervals, say of from five to ten minutes, the cost per mile run is somewhat greater than that on a two-minute headway; but there is still a margin for larger profits than can be obtained from horse traction.

There are three methods of propelling cars by electricity, but only one of these has come into general use. The carrying of charged accumulators or storage batteries in the cars to supply current to the electric motors has often been tried, but the cost of maintaining the batteries has been found prohibitive. Another plan is to construct a conduit between the rails, similar to that for a cable, but equipped with electrical conductors, which are supplied with current from a central electric power station. The electricity is picked up by the car by means of a brush or plow which descends through the slot in the street, and slides or rolls on the conductors in the conduit. This plan is in successful operation at Budapest in Hungary, and at Washington and New York in the United States; but the first cost is very great, seeing that the expense of electric equipment of cars, &c., has to be added to that of the conduits. There is, besides, great difficulty in maintaining the insulation of the conductors in wet weather. There are also various designs of closed conduits with magneto-electro devices, but these have never passed the experimental stage.

The method which has come into such wide use in the United States, and is now spreading on the continent of Europe, is known as the trolley system. In this case, the electricity from the power station is conducted along the lines on continuous wires, which are suspended above the centre line of each track. These trolley wires run overhead twenty feet or so from the ground along the whole length of the tramway. They are suspended either from cross wires attached to poles erected at intervals on each side of the street or directly from poles with long brackets. The car has a trolley pole attached to the roof, and extending backwards and upwards to the wire, where it terminates in a trolley, or deeply-grooved wheel, which runs along the underside of the wire. Strong springs at the base of the pole hold the trolley firmly up against the wire. The current is led down the pole to the two electric motors, which are geared one to each axle of the car. By means of a controlling device the current can be switched on or off, and while the car is running a continuous supply of electricity passes from the wire, down the trolley pole, along the car wiring, through the motors, and then to the rails, which, along with auxiliary conductors, form the return part of the circuit to the power station. Heavy feeder wires feed at intervals into the overhead conductor, and the joints of the rails are bonded with copper rods to secure a continuous return.

It is only eight years since the first practical tramway of this kind was laid in the United States, and now there are thousands of miles of such roads. The fact that the cost of construction, apart from the track rails, varies almost in proportion to the amount of traffic to be provided for, has allowed of the building of electric lines over quiet suburban and country routes, while its flexibility of application renders it suitable for tortuous routes, and the easy smoothness and rapidity of the car motion have found great favour with the public. Higher speeds than would be allowed in this country suit the system best, from an economical point of view; but even at low speeds it can be worked rather more cheaply than horse traction, while the improved service leads to an enormous increase in the receipts. The expensive form of cable tramway construction in the United States has cost enormous sums, ranging up, in the case of Broadway, New York, to about £200,000 per mile of street. The building of that line, however, necessitated the removal and reconstruction of the whole sewerage and gas and water-pipe systems under the street. In this country cable lines can be built and equipped, including everything necessary, for £20,000 to £25,000 per mile of street. Electric lines in either country, double track in all cases being postulated, may be built for a light traffic at £10,000 or £12,000 per mile of street; but for a very heavy service they will cost about the same as the British style of cable roads.

The working expenses of an electric tramway do not show, as traffic increases, the same great reduction in cost per mile run as is the case with the cable system. The reason largely is that the power developed at the central station is proportionate to the requirements of the service, and that the losses in the application of the power increase as the number of cars increases. It is no doubt true that a large system can be worked more economically than a small one, but the slow speed and traffic blocks in crowded streets are apt to tell considerably against electricity. In America the working expenses vary enormously in different localities, but in Britain it is probably safe to say that, on the average, they will not exceed sevenpence or so per car mile run. As on any system the receipts may be expected to be twopence or threepence per car mile higher, a reasonable margin of profit may be looked for.

The main objection to electric traction is the use of poles and the overhead wires in the streets. This is largely a matter of usage, and the people in America, who at one time bitterly opposed the system, are now quite reconciled to the existence of the wires, in view of the great advantages of easy and rapid transit. The danger of shocks from broken wires has been greatly exaggerated, and it is stated that nobody has ever been killed in this way. The pressure employed is 500 volts, and though this is often dangerous for horses, the human body is less sensitive. After all, a good, substantial, overhead construction kept in proper repair does not give way.

I found generally in America that there is great

public satisfaction both with cable and electric traction, and that in New York and Washington —the two cities in which the use of overhead wires is prohibited—the street-railway systems are not developed as they otherwise would be. It was also made plain to me that within the last two or three years there has been an enormous advance in the efficiency and reliability both of the generating machinery and the car motors. They are cheaper to buy, cheaper to work, and cheaper to maintain than formerly. Indeed, an electric car, fitted complete, can be bought for one-third less money than a few years ago, and it is the cars that cost in the equipment of an electric line for a heavy service. I heard everywhere of cases where street railway companies had enormously improved their financial position by changing from horse to electric traction, despite the necessary increase of capitalisation, and I was assured that the experience had been almost universal. This is very encouraging, because while the cable system has been an established financial success, for many years there has been much dubiety as to the outcome of electricity. Even now, however, it cannot be said that absolute knowledge of permanent financial results has been attained; but there seems no reason to doubt that electric traction will be of permanent value to the tramway shareholders, as well as to the general public.

People who have had no personal experience of cable or electric cars can have no idea of the convenience arising from the use of such methods of traction. Enormous traffic can be carried, and the lines can be led into districts where horse traction would be impracticable. Instead of a light, jolting horse car, we have a large, roomy, and comfortable vehicle of weight and solidity running smoothly, and at as high a speed as the law will allow. It is beautifully finished externally and internally, because every ounce of weight has not to be considered, as in the case of a horse car. At night it is brilliantly lighted either with gas or electricity; and a man can take a comfortable corner, and read his newspaper at ease. There is a great saving in the street space occupied, owing to the absence of the horses, and from the same cause the streets are much cleaner. No one in America would think of going back to horse traction on any account.

Hitherto the operation of the purchase clause of the Tramways Act of 1870 has prevented advance in the adoption of mechanical power for tramways in this country; but the purchases by local authorities now going on, and the renewal of leases in other cases, will lead to great changes within the next few years. After our chief towns have been supplied with cable and electric traction we shall be ready for the next step in advance, which has already been largely carried out in America. This consists in running the electric lines out into the country districts, and on to neighbouring towns. The system of a uniform five cent fare for any distance, which prevails in America, is causing a revolution in the life of city-dwellers, especially in that of the working-classes, because the people are enabled to live in healthy suburbs instead of in crowded tenements in the centre of the cities. I found generally in America that this desirable result was experienced; but whether we shall ever enjoy the benefits of the uniform fare in this country is doubtful. The interests of the short-distance rider would be raised in active protest. Nevertheless, the uniform fare is one of the greatest social reforming agencies which America possesses.

## A STORY OF THE HINTERLAND.

By the Author of *Rising of the Brassmen*, &c.

A GAUNT, rugged-featured white man, Charles T. Conditt, representative of an American syndicate of rubber manufacturers, lay sucking at a damp cigar in a swaying hammock, as his half-naked Krooboy bearers stumbled wearily along through the dismal bush of the Lagos 'hinterland.'

Dense columns of mist rose from the steamy lagoon beside their path, while between the forest and the stagnant water, what had once been putrefying ooze lay baked into the likeness of concrete slabs; for it was then the middle of the dry season of West Africa, and the sun shone fiercely down out of a sky of brass.

'Sing there; why don't you sing the "Acha ho," hammock boy?' said Conditt, for he knew that nothing will raise the drooping energies of the Krooboys like a song. Then the full-throated, marching chanty of the Kroo nation burst forth, and as the swinging chorus "Acha ho-hyah hallah hoh" rang out and echoed far across the misty forest, the weary bearers swung more briskly along beneath their load.

'Guess it would be safer on foot, but I'll risk it,' said the white man, as the Krooboys stepped out on the baked mud which lined the banks of a forest creek. Next moment there was a crisp sound like the breaking of thin ice; the feet of the leading bearer broke through the hardened surface, and he sank up to the knees in the slime beneath. Hammock-pad and palm-rib pole slid from his woolly crown, and the white man rolled out headforemost and came down with a crash, jamming his sun-helmet far over his eyes and his cigar half-way down his throat.

Finding all his bones intact, he sat up with his mouth full of ashes and disintegrated tobacco, and dragging it off by main force, ruefully regarded the flattened headgear. 'Should have known better than trust the mud. Gave a guinea for that thing in Lagos, and the dryest cigar in the lot wasted,' he said, as he kicked the useless helmet away. Then he turned fiercely towards the head Krooboy, who leaned against a palm-trunk with his hands upon his sides, and asked, 'What are you laughing at?'

'Ho, ho, ho,' roared the burly negro, with true African appreciation of a joke at the expense of some one else. 'Two time sah, the Lord give me sense too much. Savvy what say in we country. One time one fool, two time one d—n fool.'

'The Lord gives precious little sense to any nigger. Take up the hammock—guess I'm safer on foot,' was all Conditt answered, and he limped forward, scraping the mud from off his face and clothes. Half-an-hour later there was a hoarse challenge from a grinning Yoruba sentry, 'Who

come dah;' and as the white man advanced out of the shadow of the cottonwoods, a palm-thatched, wooden building, raised high on piles, became visible. A Maxim and a Nordenfelt gun peeped down from the broad veranda, and a black Yoruba soldier stood on guard at either side of the stairway; for this was one of the chain of outposts erected here and there by the Colonial Government in the heart of the lonely forest.

As Conditt ascended the creaking stairway, a white man, whose thin frame and puffy cheeks showed that he suffered both from fever and too much alcohol, came out upon the veranda, and leaning against a pillar, relapsed into noiseless laughter. 'Been crawling after catfish in the mud; nice amusement, but rough on one's clothes,' he said. 'No, you needn't frown, let me laugh; it's not often one can in this land of the shadow.'

Jevons was right. There was very little amusement in his life, for he dwelt far apart from all white men in the steamy forest, trying to keep sane amid the awful isolation, and to avoid being poisoned by negro traders who owed him much palm oil for cloth and gin received. In short, he was one of those unfortunate traders to whom the name of 'palm oil ruffian' was applied, and the species is not yet extinct. Presently, he raised his hand. 'Softly, softly, Musgrave's very sick at last. I can't make it out; seems more like poison than fever,' he said. Treading noiselessly the two entered the darkened room, where with the perspiration standing in great beads upon his yellow forehead and streaming from his soaking hair, the lieutenant in charge of the station lay moaning in pain. When he saw the American the sick man's face brightened.

'So good of you to come, forty miles too, in this heat,' he said, 'and I am dull company anyway. Down at last, you see.'

'Well,' answered the American, 'if a man will work night and day, trying to keep peace among niggers who are never happy unless they're burning each other's huts, or stealing somebody else's wives, and go poking his nose into disease-stricken villages where he gets shot at for his pains, he must expect to have fever.' Then Conditt turned to Jevons, asking sharply: 'Have you sent down to the coast for a doctor?'

'Yes,' was the answer. 'I sent two Yorubas a week ago. Musgrave wouldn't let them go at first; said the Ilorin raiders would get them, so I packed them off at night. Fine fellows both; wanted to swear by all sorts of things over a handful of salt that they'd go through at any cost.'

'Sent two Yorubas!' interjected the American wrathfully. 'Why didn't you send half the guard? they'll be speared by now. I'd have written the secretary a letter fit to make him jump. Half my rubber-gatherers are dying with smallpox, three applications have been sent for help and drugs, and there's no answer.'

'Steady, steady. It's not good to get excited this weather,' said Jevons. 'Probably the drugs have been sent and the Ilorins have annexed them on the way up. The wily bushman is great on medicines, especially poisons.'

Then the sick man raised his head. 'My friends,' he said, 'you are both very kind. Jevons here has left his place when the new oil is coming down, the only profitable time of the year, and has nursed me ten days. Still, you must let me manage Government business a little longer. If they can get a Colonial surgeon through he'll be sent.'

The American poured himself out a glass of claret; then he said: 'Christmas in three days—"peace on earth and goodwill towards men." Let's see how it figures out in Africa—cholera and smallpox clearing out half my people; Musgrave very sick; and the Bushmen ready to turn the place over our heads. Something wrong with the works, eh? (Not very apparent, eh?)'

'You can't philosophise worth a cent, as you people say, you pessimist, but you can sing,' answered the sick man faintly. 'Take up the banjo—claret's not unlimited in the bush.'

The American lugged a dilapidated banjo from its case, and presently rapped out a few crisp notes; then his voice rang out clear, and Jevons nodded approval as he sang of Sherman's march to the sea—a ditty commonplace enough, but one which, nevertheless, had stirred men's hearts before that day. When the words 'From Atlanta to the sea' died away, he said quietly, 'I was there too—makes me feel an old man! I spent another strange Christmas that year, in bitter frost and deep snow, with neither boots nor blankets, and precious little to eat. However, perhaps this is more appropriate;' and the clear voice rose in the chorus of 'My heart's turned back to Dixie and I must go.'

Then Jevons said: 'Reminds me of home too, and the last Christmas I spent before I came out here and learned to fall back on the whisky-bottle in the awful loneliness. There was white frost on the fir trees, and black ice ringing beneath my skates, as, with a smiling girl upon my arm, I swung along upon the outside edge. Poor Florence—she's dead now, and I'm a drunken African trader. But no man can escape his fate, as the Yorubas say. Hallo! Musgrave's asleep.'

Conditt threw back the persianos, and a flood of crimson light shone upon the hollow cheeks and closed eyes of the sufferer, as the sun sank behind the cottonwoods. 'I'm afraid the poor fellow will go under,' he said. Then a big Yoruba sergeant came noiselessly in, and after a brief glance at the drawn face, remarked when he moved towards the door again, 'White man sick, too much, live for die three day.'

'Get out, you black croaker,' was the reply of the irate American, and the soldier ducked his head as a whisky-bottle whizzed past him, and hastily descended.

'Useless waste. Come out on the veranda,' said Jevons; and the two leaned over the balustrade. A deep voice was speaking below, in the Yoruba tongue. 'The white man is sick unto death, and he is a just man, and a valiant soldier. It is in my mind, that if it be the will of Allah, we may save his life, for the Feddah of the heathen are wise in the poisons of the forest. Had it been the trader man, who is gross and drunken (here Conditt chuckled and nudged Jevons), or the thin man, who, like the black monkey, never rests, and whose words come through his nostrils (this time Jevons laughed

softly and the American frowned), it were not worth the risk.' Then there was a hurried consultation below, and presently the big sergeant went away.

'Gone for salt to swear more ridiculous oaths,' said Jevons; but the rattle of arms interrupted him; and presently six Yorubas slipped away into the misty forest, the last of the sunset light flashing upon their Snider barrels.

Conditt whistled softly. 'There 'll be unlimited trouble now; but they wouldn't come back for us. Besides, it 's not good to interfere in the business of the British Government,' he said.

One night march through an African forest greatly resembles another, and Sergeant Amaro and his men alternately waded knee-deep in scented lilies, as they traversed the misty avenues beneath the palms, or stumbled blindly through dripping bushes and matted creepers. At last, splashing up out of a shallow ford, they crept like flitting ghosts amid the dark shadows of broad-leaved bananas, and halted before a palm-thatched hut, outside a native village. Two tall wands stood before the doorway, hung with tassels of rags, stained red in blood which was probably more precious than that of fowls; while from the fronds of the palm that rustled drily overhead hung strings of fetich charms—many of them ghastly ones, including various portions of human anatomy.

A ray of misty moonlight fell upon the face of the Yoruba sergeant, and it was hard and set as he raised his hand for silence, and, drawing his bayonet from its sheath, went softly forward with the keen steel flashing in his hand. The soldiers waited breathlessly, their fingers tightening on the rifle-stocks as they gazed, now at the gloomy interior of the hut, and now at the sleeping village which lay before them, dim and shadowy, the silence which hung over it broken only by the howling of a restless cur baying the moon.

Then there was a smothered cry inside the hut, a brief struggle, and the sergeant came forth again, pushing before him a decrepit old man, upon whose shrivelled chest hung strings of curious charms, leopards' claws, human finger-bones, and the like. The captive struggled fiercely, hit at the hands which held him, and would doubtless have howled lustily, but that his mouth was filled with a ball of palm fibre, until the Yoruba shook him so that the charms rattled, and held his bayonet-point to the naked breast.

'The magic of the heathen may not hurt the true believer, Allah be praised,' said the sergeant softly. 'Nevertheless, it would not go well with us if the sleeping bushmen found our hands upon their priest—there is need of haste.'

So, glancing back over their shoulders towards the silent village at every step, and grasping their rifles tightly, the Yorubas strode through the ford just as gray dawn broke across the forest.

'If we would save our own lives as well as the white officer, we must travel fast this day,' said the leader; and knowing that their only chance of safety lay in reaching the station before a horde of savages, armed with matchet and flint-lock guns, followed hard along the trail of bent grasses, they pressed fiercely onwards, tearing through thorny thickets—cruel, stabbing thorns that rent their flesh and garments alike—disregarding also the saw-like edges of the sword grass, and wading alligator-haunted creeks, in peril of being smothered in depths of bubbling slime.

It was high noon when, worn out and tattered, plastered with mud, and bleeding from many a wound, the Yorubas marched into the sun-scorched compound. The two white men hurried down the veranda stairway, and gazed in astonishment at the sight.

'General Jackson! Where did you get him? What is he, anyway?' gasped Conditt, as his eyes fell upon the panting soldiers and the half-naked form of the prisoner, who gazed about him with venomous hatred in his eyes.

'Be great Ju-Ju, sah. Savvy much medicine. Stole him, sah;' said the sergeant proudly.

Jevons burst into a hearty laugh as he answered, 'By jove, Amaro's right. There 's not a plant in all the forest whose properties the fetich priest doesn't know all about, though they generally make a bad use of them. These fellows learn things handed down through many generations, and if Musgrave 's been poisoned, ten to one he can cure him.'

'H'm, a little risky, isn't it?' answered the American. 'However, the poor fellow 's dying anyway, and it 's a last chance. Come along, Mephistopheles—bring him by the neck, sergeant.'

Two minutes later the unfortunate fetich priest was dragged unceremoniously into the room, where Lieutenant Musgrave lay unconscious with only a faint, fluttering breath issuing from the cracked and blackened lips to show he was alive.

'Poor Musgrave, I 'm afraid it 's all over with him,' said Jevons. 'He did his work like a man, and he 's well out of it—no more loneliness and fever. I don't know that I 'd thank any one to save me; however, we 'll try. Here, you black wretch,' and as he dragged the Ju-Ju man forward, one of the Yorubas tried various dialects, but failed to make him understand. Then Jevons, pointing to the pallid face before him, plucked a leaf from a flowering lily and bruised it in his hands. Instantly, a look of fiendish malevolence flashed into the negro's face, and the white man shook him like a rat, gasping 'You murdering villain.'

'Go slow before you choke him. I know a better pantomime than that,' said Conditt, and closing his eyes he let his head droop slowly forward, and made as if he would sink to the floor. Then he jammed the muzzle of his revolver against the sable forehead, so hard that the steel left an indented ring when he raised his hand.

'Scene one: now for scene two. Open the stores, sergeant, and bring up all the cloth you can carry,' he said, and as the Yorubas piled up the long rolls of Manchester cotton, he lay down near the sick man, and slowly rose upright; then he pointed to the cloth. The negro's eyes glistened. 'Go on,' said the American, 'more cloth; throw in cases of gin and a long-dane gun or two.'

At last, when he saw wealth enough before him to make him rich for life, the Ju-Ju man pointed out through the open casement towards the sombre forest.

'Wants to gather herbs,' said Jevons, and the American answered 'Good; but where he goes I

go along too, in case he forgets to come back, or brings his friends upon us. I've seen that game before. Follow with two men, sergeant.'

So, with a Yoruba on either side, and the muzzle of Conditt's revolver a foot or two behind the back of his head, the Ju-Ju man moved to and fro beneath the palms, and when he returned, loaded with various parasitic plants and fungoids grubbed up out of the slime, it was falling dusk. A big fire was lighted in the compound, and while the Yorubas watched him, rifle in hand, the Ju-Ju man bent over a bubbling rice cauldron, crooning a monotonous song.

Meantime, the sick lieutenant lay still and white, until as the moon rose above the cotton-woods, and the pale light streamed in upon his drawn face, he broke out into moans of pain.

Jevons shuddered. 'Poor fellow,' he said gently. 'A ghastly Christmas eve—virtue rewarded. This is what a man gets for doing his work too well. It's more like a scene from an opera than a Government outpost in the nineteenth century; that wretched nigger makes me shiver, or else I'm sick too; he looks like the evil one himself,' and he pointed to the moonlit compound.

Conditt glanced at the shrivelled figure of the Ju-Ju man flitting to and fro about the cauldron, with the red light of the fire upon his wicked face, while the monotonous song or incantation rose through the rolling smoke. 'Pray on old man, and pray hard, for, by Jupiter, if your gods are deaf, or the magic works the wrong way, I wouldn't give a red cent for your life.'

Presently the negro entered the room, and forcing apart the clenched teeth of the sufferer, poured a steaming liquid down his blackened throat; then he bathed forehead and breast, and afterwards chafed all the limbs with a hot fomentation. This done, he seated himself cross-legged on the ground, and waited motionless by the sick man's couch, until it was time to repeat the proceeding, which he did at intervals. The soft radiance of the tropic moon, streaming in through the open casement, threw a long black shadow of the crouching magician across the white boards. The odour of kerosene from the dimly-burning lamp, and of rangoon oil from the arm rack, was heavy on the air, save when a fitful gust of wind wafted in the scent of lilies from the surrounding forest; and there was no sound to break the oppressive stillness save the mournful sighing of the night breeze, and the intermittent rustle of the palm fronds. So the three strangely-assorted watchers sat in anxious suspense as the long dark hours dragged slowly by, Jevons whispering to his companion now and then in low tones as he felt his weary eyes grow heavy; but Conditt's hand never left his revolver butt, and though this was the fourth night he had passed without sleep, he kept his gaze steadfastly on the sick man's couch.

At last, shortly before dawn, the Ju-Ju man rose to his feet, and when Conditt hurried across with the lamp in his hand, he pointed triumphantly to the sufferer, and the American noticed a flush of colour in the pale cheeks, while a profuse perspiration streamed from every pore.

'Thank heaven,' he said quietly, and grasped Jevons's hand, but the negro placed his fingers upon his lips, and repeated the draught. Presently a faint, gray light filtered into the room, and Lieutenant Musgrave opened his eyes and gazed vacantly around; then, raising his head, he murmured, 'The pain's gone. I must have slept. I'm very sleepy now,' and again, as the heavy lids came down, he lapsed into peaceful slumber.

'He'll do now—and it's Christmas day. Bravo Mephistopheles,' said Jevons, and he smote the Ju-Ju man on the shoulder; then hearing a creaking of the boards and a heavy breath behind him, he turned suddenly and saw the tall sergeant gliding softly from the room.

A few hours later Lieutenant Musgrave lifted himself feebly on one elbow, and sat up with Conditt's arm round his shoulders. 'I am very weak, but my head is clear, and my blood is cool. What I suffered yesterday was awful, and I could not speak,' he said. Then he listened with brightening eyes to the story of the midnight raid, and when Sergeant Amaro came in with a bowl of steaming broth, his face twitched as he said in the vernacular, 'The Yorubas are very faithful. I was very near unto death, when they brought me aid.'

'Allah has preserved the life of the white officer, for his time has not yet come,' said the Moslem soldier gravely, and drawing himself up proudly, he added: 'As for the thing we did, it is nought, for the white officer and the Yorubas have fought side by side. We are brothers of the sword, for I too am a servant of the White Queen, and all men are the same beneath the skin.'

'Yes, I suppose so. There's certainly both devotion and courage in the heart of a negro when you know how to get at it—but I'm too happy to go into conundrums of that kind,' said Conditt. 'You know their tongue best, Jevons; tell him he's a fine fellow and a good soldier. I was a soldier too, though I do move about like a black monkey, as he was kind enough to observe, and I am proud to shake his hand,' and easing down the lieutenant tenderly into the pillows again, he gripped the black fingers of the Yoruba until the joints creaked.

Presently, on the principle that it is wise to let well alone, they sent the Ju-Ju man forth with as much treasure in cloth and guns as two stout Kroomen could carry; and the American observed grimly, 'If the headman of the village is at all covetous, Mephistopheles there had better lie close in his hut in dark nights, or he may have the efficacy of his charms severely tested.' Hour by hour the lieutenant's strength came back, until at noon, though weak and languid, he lay in happy content, listening with smiling eyes to the gay sallies of his companions, for now a reaction had set in.

By-and-by they heard a distant rustling in the forest, and the tread of marching feet and a jingle of arms came down the listless breeze, and later the cottonwoods echoed with the hoarse shouts of Krooboy bearers, who saw the end of their journey in view. Then a carrier train swung into the dusty sun-scorched compound, a line of half-naked negroes, each one panting beneath the heavy deal case he bore poised on his woolly head; while behind them a guard of Yorubas marched out of the shadowy forest. A young white officer gave the word 'halt,' and as the tired troops came to a standstill, a stout little man crawled out of

his swaying hammock. The young lieutenant—he was but little more than a lad—grasped the hands of the two white men who hastened to meet him.

'Got through all right, though we're every one about used up,' he said. 'We marched night and day, for we heard you were all sick up here; and came across a party of Ilorins on the war-path, but they bolted at the sight of the bayonets. Brought you up the English stores from Neville, too, and the best doctor we ever had; got him from the Protectorate people. Let me introduce Surgeon Wreath. How this day and night marching in the tropics does take it out of one!'

The listeners laughed. They knew the young officer would get used to it before he had been long in Africa, and they entered the residency together. Now the fever had spared Surgeon Wreath to dwell some time in the land, and the hidden things of native life were a favourite study of his. Therefore, when he had carefully examined the patient, he listened very gravely to the story, and answered: 'I've been too long in Africa to despise the Ju-Ju man. He knows a good deal, though he occasionally makes a bad use of his knowledge, and I'd have given six months' pay to have seen my black rival at work. You've had fever, Lieutenant Musgrave, and you've got it now, a little; but there was poison or something else, which I'm not quite sure about at the moment. Meantime, you couldn't be doing better.'

'Now,' said Conditt, 'it's Christmas day, and there's hard work before us to-morrow. All concerned having done their best for the patient, according to their opportunity, we have a right to enjoy ourselves if noise won't hurt him.' The surgeon shook his head, the new stores were brought in and opened, and presently, raising himself feebly from his pillows upon one arm, the lieutenant held a glass of sparkling champagne in his trembling hand, and gave the toast, 'Her Majesty the Queen—God bless her.' Afterwards, they raised their hands, and standing on tiptoe, clinked their glasses against the rafter beams as they drank to 'absent comrades;' then the American said, 'Here's to Sergeant Amaro—a valiant soldier and a very faithful servant, if his skin is black—as he says, "all men are brothers beneath the skin."'

And so, in spite of the shadow of the pestilence which hung over one and all, and the heat and steam of the swamps, these dwellers in the lonely forest held their Christmas in far-away Africa with laughter and mirth; each one glad at heart, with a vague consciousness that, as the American put it, he too, according to his opportunity, had done a little in the cause of 'peace on earth and goodwill towards men.'

Outside, the westing sun sank slowly towards the forest; puffs of hot wind licked up clouds of red dust and whirled them across the compound; the palms rustled drily, and the thermometer stood at considerably more than ninety degrees in the shade. Inside the darkened room, the hearts of both officer and trader went back across endless leagues of rolling water to the distant homeland, as they sang the songs of Britain with sparkling eyes and stirring blood in a strange and dreary land. Then the sun dipped behind the forest, and all the world was dark, until at length a silvery light filtered down through the palm-fronds, and the stirring of the forest creatures showed that it was time for beast to hunt and man to sleep. With a hearty handshake all round, the men retired to rest, and save for a faint light where Sergeant Amaro watched by his master's bedside, the residency lay dark and silent.

## CURIOSITIES OF RENT.

THERE is perhaps nothing very attractive to the general reader in the mention of 'Rent;' but when we come to consider the quaint forms which it has often adopted, the subject will not be found wholly devoid of romantic interest. In days gone by, when kings had perforce to maintain a large crowd of retainers, and nobles vied with each other in the numbers of their retinue, it was not always easy to find the wherewithal with which to carry on the provisioning of such large households; and so landlords, royal and otherwise, were often glad to accept useful commodities, such as the herrings of Yarmouth or thirteen hundred eggs with one hundred and forty hens from Banbury, in place of the usual military service due to them for different estates. In other instances the tenants bound themselves to perform certain necessary offices for their overlord's household, as in the case of Emma de Hamton, whose duty it was to cut out linen clothes for the king and queen, or Robert Testard, who had to maintain a certain number of royal laundresses. A third class of tenures consisted of those which were practically nominal obligations, such as the presentation of a 'quhyt feather' for the lands of Balgonie, or a July clover flower for an estate in Hereford, or again the three peppercorns which were paid in 1348 for Bermeton. Nor was this practice confined to our own shores. A dying Queen of Hungary bequeathed a city and province to one of her court lords on condition that he and his successors should always keep up a certain number of peacocks; and the chroniclers of the Spanish conquest of Mexico tell us that the great Aztec nobles were often obliged to provide for the repair of the royal palaces, and to pay an annual offering of fruit or flowers in lieu of the military service due for their estates.

The earliest mention of blanch-holdings (so called apparently from the fact that they were often paid in silver or *white* money) which I have been able to discover is in a charter by Canute, who granted the lands of Pusey, Berkshire, on condition that a certain horn was always treasured in the family, and this valuable heirloom bore the following inscription:

Kyng Knowde geve Wyllyam Perose
Thys horne to holde by thy londe.

These tenures appear to have been frequently granted from the time of the Norman Conquest to the fifteenth century, but we find an occasional instance occurring from that date almost to the present time. Visitors to the beautiful chapel of St George at Windsor will have seen the two small silken banners which are fastened together on one of the pillars, and represent the rent paid to the crown by the Dukes of Marlborough and

Wellington for the splendid estates of Woodstock and Strathfieldsaye respectively. They are supposed to be presented on the anniversaries of the battles of Blenheim (fought on the 2d August 1704) and Waterloo (18th June 1815).

On the abolition of ward holdings under George II., all the lands which were formerly held by the crown were converted into blanch-holdings, but as there appears to have been a generally understood rule that the obligation of performing any specified duties should lapse if not demanded within a given time, the greater majority of these curious old customs have disappeared. So late, however, as the coronation of Queen Victoria, an interesting service was performed by the lord of Worksop Manor, to whose predecessors Henry VIII. had granted that estate in 1542, on condition that they provided a right-hand glove for the king at his coronation, and supported his arm on that day so long as he should hold the sceptre. This right was inherited by the Duke of Norfolk, who officiated in 1838.

Another long surviving custom dating from the time of Edward III. was observed about four hundred years later when the owner of Liston, Essex, presented George III. at his coronation with a number of wafers, and on the same occasion the king received a bowl of porridge from the tenant of Addington. It is interesting to note that this estate was granted originally to Tezelin, a cook, by William the Conqueror, and it has been supposed that the manor in question was an appendage of the king's cook, as Sheen was of the royal butler. This explains the origin of the duty imposed upon the tenant of making porridge on coronation day.

We find interesting traces of the habits of the times in the service demanded from William de Alesbury, who held lands in Buckinghamshire, and bound himself in return to find straw for the king's bed, and also for the floor of his room, if ever he should chance to visit Alesbury in winter. Three eels were also to be paid at the same time. Should the royal visit take place in summer, straw had again to be provided for the bed, but grass or rushes for the floor, and two green geese instead of the eels. These services were only to be performed twice a year, even should His Majesty pay three visits in that time. For the fortunate family of Wilmington (who were descended from Robert de Wilmington, a cook to the Earl of Boulogne) in Kent, rent day must have been more honoured in the breach than in the observance, as they were only asked to find a pot-hook for the king's meat whenever he chanced to visit their manor. Rather a trying office fell to the lot of Eba, Countess of Warwick, who in return for the lands of Hokinorton, Oxfordshire, had the doubtful honour of carving at the table of Edward I. on his birthday, but she was graciously allowed to keep the knife which the king used, as a souvenir of the occasion. John de Rockes of Winterslow, Wilts, must also have felt a responsible person, as when the sovereign happened to visit Clarendon, it was ordained that De Rockes should come to the palace of the king, 'and go into the buttery, and draw out of any vessel he should find in the same buttery at his choice as much wine as should be needful for making a pitcher of the claret which he should make at the king's charge, and that he should serve the king with a cup, and have the remainder of the wine after the king had drunk, and the vessel.'

Among the blanch-holdings which existed in Scotland are the following: A red falcon and a tercel for the thanedom of Glamis; two falcon hoods for the barony of Muirhouse, Edinburgh; three broad arrows for Lochindorb, described as a good centre for hunting; the Dewar lands in Glen Dochart, held in virtue of custody of a relic of St Fillan; the barony of Penicuik for blowing six blasts on a horn on the 'moor of the burgh of Edinburgh' when the king should hunt there, and the barony of Carnwath, whose owner was enjoined to present two pairs of shoes, each containing half an ell of English cloth, to the man who was first in a race from the east end of Carnwath to the Tallow Cross, this to take place on Midsummer Day. The estate of Foulis was granted to Donald Munro in the eleventh century by King Malcolm II. upon the condition that when called upon to do so, he and his successors should always supply the king with a bucketful of snow, no matter at what time of the year this was demanded. But the lords of Foulis had no cause to be uneasy as to the fulfilment of their part of the bargain, for did they not possess a part of Ben Wyvis on which the sun never shone, so that snow remained there all the year round? The service in question was performed for the last time on the night before the battle of Culloden, when it is said that Sir Robert Munro presented the Duke of Cumberland with a bucket of snow for cooling his wine. It must have been rather more difficult to obtain the garland of roses at Christmas time which was demanded of the tenant of Crendon, Bucks, but the thousand clusters of nuts for John, Earl of Warrenne and Surrey, would be gathered in due season at Wakefield.

It is curious to find Henry IV. requiring a catapult (described in an old chronicle as an ancient war-like engine to shoot darts) in exchange for the lands of Carlton; and there is a quaint flavour about the terms of the holding for a manor in Salop, by which Robert Corbet bound himself to find one footman in time of war who was to follow the army into Wales, carrying with him a salted hog. On coming up with the soldiers, the man had to deliver a share of the bacon to the king's marshal, and so long as this sufficed to provide a daily dinner for one person, the footman was obliged to remain with the army. Directly it was finished, he was free to return home. Sir Osbert de Longchamp also undertook to follow the king and his army into Wales, and it is specified that he must bring with him a horse of the price of six shillings, a sack of the price of sixpence, and a needle to the sack. The footman, provided by the tenant of Brineston, was only required to follow the army into Scotland, but had to do this barefoot, and armed only with a bow in one hand, and an unfeathered arrow in the other; and he was altogether worse off than Richard Miles, who could return from following the king directly he had worn out a pair of shoes of the value of fourpence.

A grand old mansion in Cheshire, rendered famous in our own time as being the residence of a great living statesman, was formerly held by Robert de Montrault, Earl of Arundel, for the

somewhat easy duty of attending the Earl of Chester on Christmas Day at Chester, and placing the first dish upon his table; while an oar paid for the estate of Grange near Hastings, and even this was only demanded when the king happened to sail in that direction. Many tenants fulfilled all obligations by keeping hounds or falcons for their landlords, while others shod the king's horses (and had to replace those which were lamed in the process); but it is difficult to understand the exact significance of one old record which says that Hugh de Sottehoe held the lands of Shottesbrook in the time of Henry II. by virtue of finding *coals* for making the crown of the king and his royal ornaments. Were these the original black diamonds?

Even crowned heads were not exempt from the conditions of tenure; for we find that at one time the king of England accepted three hundred pounds of land down from the king of Scotland in lieu of homage for some land in Bedfordshire, and also paid an annual rent of one jerfalcon (one of the varieties of large Arctic falcons). A pound of land, it should be mentioned, is generally reckoned at about fifty-two acres, so the commutation was a very substantial one. A somewhat similar holding to the barony of Penicuik was that of the Manor of Horton in Yorkshire, whose tenant was required to blow a horn at stated periods, and I believe that the horn used on these occasions is still carefully preserved. Such holdings were called 'hornblow lands;' and 'wolf hunt land' was the term applied to some crown property at Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts, which was granted by Henry VI. to Sir Robert de Plumpton in return for his blowing a horn, and chasing the wolves, then fairly plentiful, in Shirewood (now Sherwood) Forest. The land so granted was one bovat or oxgang, which is about fifteen acres, that being taken as the amount which one ox can plough in a year, and the surname 'wolf-hunter' was to be met with in the district up to the end of the last century.

In some cases a property carried with it the duty of holding a certain office in the state, as for instance in the case of Scrivelsby in Lincolnshire, which was for generations the home of the Dymoke family, who for many years regularly provided the 'champion of England' at coronation time. We will all agree with the eminent lawyer Coke, who says that the worst tenure of which he had ever heard was the obligation of acting as public executioner. There is an amusing note to the *Ingoldsby Legends*, in which the author states that Jehan de Ketche acted as Provost Marshal to the army of William the Conqueror, and received from that monarch a gift of land known by the name of the 'Old Bailie' on regular payment of 'ane hempen cravate,' but as a matter of fact I may mention that the name Jack Ketch was applied to hangmen from the time of Richard Jaquett, to whom the manor of Tyburn once belonged.

Lord Grey de Wilton's crest is a jerfalcon sejant upon a glove, which is a reminder of the days when his ancestors held the lands of Acton, Buckingham, in exchange for keeping one of these birds for the king; while another reminiscence of ancient times is found in a clause which occurs in the leases of the tenants on the estate of Wallingwells, Notts. This clause demands that no attempt shall be made to grow *woad* on the landlord's ground, and the injunction which dates from hundreds of years back is maintained to the present day, as is also the obligation on the farmer's side to do so many days' work with cart and horses for his landlord as part payment of the rent. 'So long as grass doth grow and water doth flow' is the poetical form taken by a lease of some land in Lancashire; and Adam de Oakes escaped with an equally light obligation when he undertook to pay a halfpenny a year for Pinley, Warwick, to Edward II. As the purchasing power of money was four times its present value in the Stuart times, we must allow for a still more ample expansion at the beginning of the fourteenth century, but in any case the payment was comparatively trifling.

Though the march of progress has brought us countless unmixed benefits, we must sometimes feel a touch of regret that it has also swept away many picturesque customs which were formerly in vogue, and among these we must certainly include the quaint duties and ceremonies which constituted payment of rent, an obligation which in our day has been reduced to a prosaic, if more practical, matter of pounds, shillings, and pence.

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Dr Nansen's recently published narrative of his marvellous Arctic expedition, which has been so rich in scientific results, brings before the reader, in a more graphic manner than has ever before been done, the terrible nature of the ice-pressure which forms the chief danger to navigation in such high latitudes. It was quickly discovered that this pressure was dependent on the tidal current, the ice parting and packing together again twice in the twenty-four hours. The ice piled itself up and crashed against the sides of the good ship *Fram* with a noise so great that the voyagers could not hear themselves speak; and the vessel was often lifted up several feet, to drop back again as the ice parted. Still more terrible was this pressure of the ice in the winter-time, when the *Fram* was frozen hard into a solid mass of ice thirty feet in thickness. On the top of this sea of ice came immense masses, 'gliding with irresistible force against our port side. The pressure was tremendous. The ice piled itself up above the gunwales and high up the rigging, threatening, if not to crush her, at least to bury her.' But the *Fram* was so strongly and well built that, although she creaked and groaned under the rough embrace of the ice, not a single crack was made in, or a single splinter detached from, her strong sides.

The Turners' Company, which was the first of the great City guilds to recognise that the best remedy for foreign competition in our markets was the spread of technical education at home, has recently held its annual exhibition of turnery at the Mansion House, London, under the auspices of the Lord Mayor. Thirty years ago, when the first of these exhibitions was promoted,

the sole articles sent in for competition consisted of a fishing-rod and a rolling-pin. Now a large number of workmen send in the products of their skill, encouragement being given to useful rather than ornamental articles. The first prize was, for instance, awarded to a set of stair balusters, which exhibited much ingenuity in construction and beauty of design; and it was noteworthy that the work was done by the hand alone, without help of slide-rest or other mechanical aid. This applied to most of the exhibits, which were the result of simple gouge and chisel work. Many of the great City companies have followed the course originally adopted by the Turners' Company, and have been instrumental in establishing technical schools where first-class instruction is given, and from which we may confidently expect first-class workmen to emerge.

Much has been said, and, we fear, very little done, with regard to saving the big game of South Africa from extermination; but it would seem, from a report on the German colonies by an official of the British Embassy in Berlin, that at last a check is to be put on indiscriminate slaughter. A regulation has been drafted with regard to game in German East Africa, which will oblige every hunter to take out an annual license, for which the fee varies from five to five hundred rupees, according to the particular animals hunted. No license will be required for shooting animals for food, or those damaging cultivated land, nor for beasts of prey, wild boars, reptiles, and birds—with the exception of ostriches and cranes. The shooting of all young game is absolutely prohibited. Game sanctuaries are to be established, in which no shooting whatever will be allowed without special permission, and these districts are to extend in each direction at least ten hours' journey on foot. Suggestions are invited with regard to various points. Mr Gosselin, to whom this report is due, believes that the best method of preventing the extermination of the elephant would be to fix by international agreement amongst all the powers on the East African coast a close time for the animal, and to render illegal the sale or exportation of tusks under a certain age. But this regulation would have to be firmly carried out along the entire coast; for if the control in any one colony were lax, the illicit ivory would gravitate there, and the African elephant would not benefit.

In the recent report of the Fire Brigade Committee of the London County Council, the curious fact is noted that the number of false alarms of fires shows a steady increase. Three false alarms were actually recorded in the course of one morning, inflicting an amount of trouble and work upon the men which was as exasperating as it was unnecessary. It is extremely difficult to comprehend the state of mind which can induce any one, out of mere wanton mischief, to give all this needless trouble, and still more extraordinary is it that these mischievous persons will actually pay for the telegrams which in many cases convey the false news. Whether this be the act of madmen, or of pickpockets who hope to profit by the assemblage of a crowd, some means should be found to stop these false alarms, and every well-wisher to such a useful body of men as the Fire Brigade will agree with the chairman of the committee in asserting that if a stop cannot be put to this mischief it will be necessary to apply to parliament for powers to deal with it.

The engineers engaged at the Kent coal-field works near Dover are so confident of the existence of coal in paying quantities that they have just started a second colliery shaft, about two hundred feet east of the first pit. It is estimated that coal will be reached by the end of next spring. The pits are of large diameter, and will enable about eight tons of coal to be handled at one operation. The depth at which—according to the borings—coal will be touched is 1113 feet.

Every month there is issued in London an official report by the chemists attached to the various water companies and the analyst to the Local Government Board, dealing with the state of the water supplied to the Metropolis; and these reports have always been such as to give the public the greatest confidence in the purity of the water supplied to them. This confidence has lately been rudely shaken by a report issued by the London County Council, which embodies the results of both chemical and bacteriological analyses made by the foremost chemists of the day. It is clear from this report that existing methods of filtration are quite insufficient. In the case of one company, it is estimated that no less than 1145 tons of wet mud per annum escape through the filter-beds into the mains. The filters certainly retain the coarser particles of suspended matter, but a superabundance of microbes, some presumably of a dangerous character, get through, and some of them point to the imperfect filtration of sewage-polluted water. This report is the strongest argument for a new source of water-supply for the Metropolis which has yet been brought forward; in the meantime consumers can protect themselves by the use of efficient filters in their own houses.

Some months ago the railway carriages on one of our underground lines were fitted with penny-in-the-slot machines, by which an electric light could be obtained for the comfort of those wishing to read, each coin deposited insuring half-an-hour's radiance. These lamps were not sufficiently patronised to warrant their continuance, and they have now been removed. It is questionable whether a similar system applied to private houses would be better appreciated, but a lamp has been devised for the purpose which will give six hours' light for a penny. This invention has possibly been prompted by the enormous success of the penny-in-the-slot gas-meters; a success which the electric light cannot possibly attain until mains are, like the gas-pipes, run through the streets of the poorest neighbourhoods.

A consular report, dealing with the trade of Corsica for 1895, tells us that there are only three industries carried on in the island which can be deemed of any importance. At a chestnut wood at Pruno, near Bastia, gallic acid is manufactured, and at Bastia itself there is some trade in candied citron, but it has of late suffered from American competition. The remaining industry is the manufacture of (so-called) briar-wood pipes at Ajaccio. These favourite smoking implements are cut from the root of the giant heath, or 'Bruyère,' and the word has been corrupted into briar. This shrub is plentiful throughout Corsica, and there are several places on the island where sawing and

rough trimming of the wood is carried on. The pipes, roughly shaped, are exported to the Continent, where they receive their finish on the lathe.

Mr J. G. Kirtley, of Sunderland, has invented a self-adjusting pipe-joint for drains and sewers, which is a great improvement on the common method of joining up such pipes. The ends of the pipes are so constructed that when brought together there is an annular space which can be filled with any suitable cement. Such a joint, when the cement hardens, is the strongest part of the pipe, and from it leakage of liquid or gas is impossible. The patentee claims for this method of laying drain-pipes, uniformity of the alignment of bore, without the use of spun yarn; that the joints can be made without skilled labour, and with economy of cost, the addition to the price of the pipes being more than made up by the saving of labour in jointing. The invention has been favourably reported on by the Sanitary Institute of Great Britain.

The Vegetarian Society, founded at Manchester, has just held its forty-ninth annual meeting, on which occasion the chairman stated that there were three capital arguments which induced people to adopt a vegetarian diet. These were the humane argument, the economic, and the health aspects of their practice. Since the importation of cheap meat from distant parts of the world vegetarianism had not increased, a statement which was challenged by other speakers. Of late years in London many vegetarian restaurants have been established, and some of these afford daily accommodation for some hundreds of customers. A well-cooked meal of three courses for sixpence can be had at any of these places, and they doubtless attract that large class which used to lunch on bread and cheese and beer.

Some curious experiments with regard to the flotation of metals and glass upon the surface of liquids have recently been described by Professor A. M. Meyer, who attributes the power of such substances to sustain themselves on a liquid to a film of air which is condensed upon them. A ring of platinum wire $\frac{4}{10}$ of a millimetre in thickness will float upon water, but if heated to redness and placed on the liquid as soon as it is cold, it will sink. Also, when withdrawn from the water and wiped dry, it will sink; but if, after drying, it be allowed to remain in the air for about fifteen minutes, it will again float. Also, if, after heating to redness, it remains in the air for half-an-hour, it will float. A glass rod drawn out in a spirit flame until it is only one millimetre in thickness will behave in the same way as platinum wire, provided that the length is not more than about five centimetres.

A novel method of preserving oysters, clams, &c., has recently been patented in Philadelphia. The aim of this invention is to compel the bivalves to which it is applied to retain their natural juices, so that, when required for use, they may be found in a fresh state. For this purpose the shells are rigidly fastened together by small plugs of wood, which are driven through the outer edges at the opposite side to the hinge of the shell. The wooden plug is driven through perforations made for its reception, and as it quickly swells with the moisture, it is firmly held in position, and the oyster is hermetically sealed, until the edge of the shell is broken previous to the insertion of the fishmonger's knife.

Professor Scripture has lately recorded some curious results obtained in a series of experiments which were intended to show that hallucinations can be measured. First with regard to hearing. The person experimented with was placed in a quiet room, and was told that a telegraph-sounder there whenever it clicked would be accompanied by a faint tone of sound, which would every time increase in intensity. Every time he heard the tone he was to touch a telegraph key, so that the operator in a distant room who originated the sounds would know that the apparatus was working satisfactorily. After the first few occasions it was sufficient to work the sounder only, the person experimented with being firmly convinced that he yet heard the extra tone as well. Experiments of a similar nature were made on other senses. For example, a metronome was set in action, and at each recurrent beat a pith-ball was dropped on the back of the patient's hand; but after a few times the ball was not used, the patient feeling its touch all the same by pure hallucination. It was found that the taste could be deceived with equal success. By dropping on a patient's tongue a solution of sugar and water, followed by pure water, the sugar was still apparent to the man, although no sugar was there. Experiments with the organs of hearing and sight gave much the same results, showing at least that this deception of the senses, called hallucination, is a thing which must be recognised and allowed for. It must be noted that the persons who offered themselves for experiment were perfectly sane, and were not drawn from any one class; nor did they know the purport of the experiments, further than that they were to undergo certain tests for sensation. Professor Scripture believes that the experiments may be valuable in their application to mental pathology, and also as a beginning to the scientific treatment of hypnotism and suggestion.

Dr Baldwin of Columbus, writing to the *Scientific American*, protests against the apparently authenticated reports, which from time to time make their appearance in the press, of persons being buried alive, and he asserts that there is little doubt 'that these newspaper yarns are, without exception, pure and simple fabrications, without the slightest real foundation in fact.' He points out that with our ordinary method of sepulture burial alive is an actual impossibility, for even supposing that a supposed dead person were in a trance, he must die from suffocation by closure of the coffin long before the grave could be reached. He in common with his medical friends have for some years taken the trouble to sift all cases of the kind which were reported in the local papers, and in not a single instance have any of the cases investigated been found to have any foundation in fact. One case of alleged suspended animation he gives at length, and proceeds to describe how it was found to be, from beginning to end, a piece of pure invention on the part of some mendacious scribe. Some good people have such a horrible dread of premature burial that this investigation by Dr Baldwin may prove of considerable value in allaying their fears.

What is erroneously called 'The New Photography' still forms the subject of innumerable

communications to the newspapers, and reports of what the famous X-rays will or will not do are many in number. One of these states that the continued action of these radiations upon the flesh gives rise to very painful results, in one case an experimenter who had worked the Röntgen apparatus for some weeks finding his hand covered with sores and his nails dropping away from his fingers. We have heard of two or three similar cases, and have no reason to doubt the truth of the report in question. Possibly good may eventually come from evil, and the rays be found to exert a beneficial action in cases of obstinate skin disease. We may note that the distressing symptoms alluded to only make their appearance after a very long use of the Röntgen apparatus, an occasional application being quite harmless.

Mr Richard Brown, secretary of the Edinburgh Society of Accountants, calls attention to what was quite an unintentional act of injustice on the part of the writer of 'Accountancy' in last month's *Journal* towards the Scottish societies. It appears that royal charters, incorporating the Scottish societies, were granted a long time before those for England (1880), as mentioned in the article. The Edinburgh society received its charter in 1854, the Glasgow society in 1855, and that of Aberdeen in 1867. It will thus be seen that the profession of accountant is of much older standing in Scotland than in England. In this connection the official directory of Scottish accountants has just been published, and proves how thoroughly organised the Scottish societies have now become.

## TIME.

TIME the Revealer! Lo! he passeth by,
Flashing his torch upon the buried year;
As writing hidden long from mortal eye
Before the flame starts forth in letters clear;
So shall the story of our past be seen,
So must we look at last on what hath been.

Time the Avenger! bringing forth to view
Mistake and folly—bitter word and deed,
How here we failed a friend, or proved untrue,
To one who leaned, and found—a broken reed;
What we have written ne'er can we efface,
Or change one word, one letter from its place.

Time the Consoler! showing us at last
Whose hand has set the lesson of our years;
A line of purpose through the blotted past
In that new vision suddenly appears;
And past and present, linked in one, grow plain—
Life's lessons never seem so hard again.

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